

THINK ABOUT THE SYMBOLIC WORLD (USSY)

USSY 204. System Thinking. 3 Units.

This is a seminar course in which students critically examine the way that language is used to model and analyze the social world and its organizations. System thinking is used by business leaders, economists, policy analysts and planners to represent the socio-economic world so that they can manage it. During the seminar, students will read and discuss key works that lay the foundations of system thinking and will apply system thinking techniques to a socio-economic situation of interest to them. The emphasis will be on questioning the premises of system thinking, surfacing its strengths and weaknesses, and grappling with its ethical implications. Some key ideas related to system thinking that will be explored include: information theory, cybernetics, system modeling, language, meta language, modeling and intervention in social systems. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 211. Beethoven and the Age of Revolution. 3 Units.

Beethoven's music is symbolic of the age and spirit of change which reached its zenith with the French Revolution. Fueled by political, social, and emotional reactions, his oeuvre was remarkable in every way. From the early works, imitative of Haydn and Mozart, through his truly unique later compositions, Beethoven was revolutionary in his person and in his music. The course will center around specific Beethoven masterworks which are being presented by University Circle Institutions, and student attendance at these concerts will be required. Class sessions will involve discussions concerning the historical and cultural setting, influences, and analytic investigation into these masterworks. Readings will be taken from Joseph Kaman and Alan Tyson (*The New Grove Beethoven*), Frida Knight (*Beethoven and the Age of Revolution*), and George Marek (*Beethoven: Biography of a Genius*). This course is directed towards the general university student, and no specialized knowledge of music is necessary, although certain rudimentary aspects of musical discourse will be covered. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 229. Art Mirrors Art. 3 Units.

At the beginning of the Renaissance, about the year 1400, an important new theme arose in painting, sculpture and printmaking—the theme of art about art. At a time when the status of artists in society was rising, new subjects began to appear in western European art that depicted both the artist and the process of making art. Self portraits of artists, depictions of Saint Luke painting the Virgin Mary, images of women as artists and muses, classical and mythological stories of art making (Pygmalion and Galatea, Apelles painting the mistress of Alexander the Great), depictions of painting and sculpture studios and of art academies and instruction, scenes of art galleries and collections, still lifes about art, all reflected this new cultural interest in art as a topic in itself. This seminar will look at individual works of art and subject types to understand what they tell us about the role of the arts and the changing status of the artist in the Renaissance and early modern period, up to the eve of the French Revolution, about 1789. The works we study will thus be understood as symbolic indicators of social status and ideas about what art meant to European society. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 280. Passport to Eastern Europe. 3 Units.

Images and texts shape rather than merely reflect the world and its geopolitical structures. Novels, films, and myths make significant contributions to the varied ways that people make sense of continents, nations, and other (often too conveniently used) geopolitical categories such as the East and West. After considering the ways in which the European continent has been imagined over the centuries, we will explore texts and films that have contributed to the invention of East Central Europe and the Balkans and continue to shape our understanding of the eastern parts of Europe. The class will include analyses of current news coverage of this area to unpack representations disseminated by the media and to reflect on the forces that aim to shape our understanding of geopolitical entities. Ultimately, the course hopes to address geopolitical assumptions, evaluate cultural contexts, and help you think critically about the constructed nature of geopolitical categories. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 284. The Art of Madness. 3 Units.

Taking a historical approach, this course will examine the relationship between the evolution of social and medical attitudes toward mental illness and fictional representations of madness in literature. Beginning with the early modern period, students will compare period sociological and medical narratives on mental illness to fiction works with representations of madness. In so doing, students will consider how the interactive dynamics of art and science contribute to cultural and social thought. Specific areas of inquiry will include: the development of psychology and its effect on societal perceptions of mental illness; cultural developments that occurred in response to changing perceptions of mental illness over the centuries; and the use of representational structures and narrative conventions in understanding and communicating the experience of mental illness. Other interrogations will include the imaginative function of mental illness in literature (e.g., melancholy's role in creativity); the cultural myths in iconography of mental illness in different historical periods; and ethical dilemmas regarding mental illness as reflected in both medical and literary narratives. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 286S. Shakesploitation of an Icon: Four Hundred Years of Shakespeare Marketing. 3 Units.

Following the interregnum in England, William Shakespeare began a long, sustained trajectory as a cultural icon, first in England, but eventually among all English-speaking cultures. In the process, Shakespeare's works have been reinterpreted, adapted, re-contexted, commoditized, and re-purposed for the sake of art, educational relevance, and entertainment. In the process, Shakespeare has often become the tool of unabashed commercialism, a practice which has come to be known as "Shakesploitation." But why is Shakespeare's work so frequently purloined? Why are out of context references to him so ubiquitous? Why do people tend to equate the name of Shakespeare with qualities of genius? Why have his works been continually adapted (often shamelessly) not only for the stage, but into other genres, including operas, paintings, novels and films? How do we account for the proliferation of Shakespeare-based self-help books such as *Shakespeare on Leadership*? Why is the infant stimulation video *Baby Shakespeare* a best-seller? This course will explore these questions not only by reading a selection of Shakespeare's most enduring works, but also by examining criticism, adaptations, and marketing strategies that have been applied to Shakespeare's image and works over the last four centuries. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 286U. Puzzled. 3 Units.

"Puzzled" will look at the practice of puzzle making and puzzle-solving and explore the meaning of puzzles for different cultures throughout history. We will read works from the disciplines of math, history, anthropology, philosophy, and literature. We will explore why certain types of puzzles became popular and how puzzles have transferred from one culture to another. We will examine the role of code writing and code-breaking in the military and in the world of business. We will read examples of fiction and watch films that adopt the form of the puzzle as a narrative device. We will think about the function of puzzles as instruments to exercise the faculties of reason and logic and as a means of leisure or pleasant distraction. Students will be asked to both solve and create puzzles over the course of the semester. They will write analytical essays on topics related to the practice and history of puzzle making and puzzle solving, and they will pursue a research topic that revolves around an issue or problem that has "puzzled" them. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 287T. King Arthur's Days and Knights. 3 Units.

Few legends have remained popular and vital as long as the story of King Arthur has. Beginning with brief references in sixth-century histories, Arthur has risen again and again in medieval adventure stories, Victorian lyrics, and contemporary cinema. Over thirty-five films, in fact, have depicted the adventures of the Round Table. How can we explain this phenomenon? To investigate this question, this seminar will trace the development of the legend from its oldest remaining written manifestations to the present day. A chronological approach will allow us to see how Arthur's story accumulated new elements over time, including the famous love affair between Lancelot and Guinevere and the equally famous quest for the Holy Grail—neither of which appeared in the earliest versions of the story. We will discuss topics such as what Arthur has represented at different periods in time and how his story changes when it is retold in different genres and media. We will also consider how writers have adapted Round Table stories to suit political and social agendas. Finally, to broaden our perspective we will spend a unit exploring legends from a variety of cultures and comparing their presentation of heroism. Texts will include Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, pieces of Sir Thomas Malory's *The Death of Arthur*, the indispensable Monty Python and the Holy Grail, and portions of its new incarnation, *Spamalot*. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 288C. Fly Fishing: the Sport, the Metaphysics, and the Literature. 3 Units.

According to WorldCat—the world's largest database of library content—the amount of literature on fly fishing dwarfs that of any other sport. What explains this interest? In this seminar, we will examine the appeal and cultural significance of fly fishing, especially as a site for understanding an individual's relationship to the natural world. We will read both fiction and non-fiction works that will help us explore the fundamental nature of sport, how it varies from other forms of recreation, and whether sport can be considered art. We will also investigate what prompts authors to imbue fly fishing with metaphysical, spiritual, or aesthetic dimensions. And we will study how the intent and style of such works differ from traditional academic research writing, as well as how those elements of craft might be integrated into an effective academic writing style. We will also learn by experiencing some of the sport's skills, including fly tying and casting. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 288I. Diversions: Experimental Stories and New Media. 3 Units.

In this course, students will study works in which the authors and artists have experimented with traditional linear forms and created stories that are, for instance, labyrinthine, framed, collaged, geometrical, digressive, and even networked. While both print-based and digital texts offer spaces for diverse and deeply engaging written or visual performances, they also require further critical inquiry into the ways in which they create, reflect, or resist social and cultural values. Our focus in this course will be exploring how stories (and other texts) - in print, on screen, on canvas, in digital formats - that don't follow or that play with conventional rules of order encourage us to participate in making sense of our contemporary world. The goals of the course include: exploring the relationship between form and content in written and visual productions, developing a critical perspective from which to enjoy, assess, and respond creatively to traditional print and multimedia presentations, and making excellent use of research resources at CWRU and cultural resources at University Circle. In addition, students will work to develop their writing and presentation skills and to innovate novel models of research writing. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 288R. Cultural and Ethical Issues in American-Chinese Business Relations. 3 Units.

The American and Chinese economies are the two biggest economies in the world. The Chinese economy is the fastest growing large economy in the world. The dynamic American economy is unique in its combination of large multinational enterprises and small entrepreneurial firms. The American economy is characterized by a vast private sector, the rule of law, and the largest private capital markets in the world. The Chinese economy is 30 years into a period of reform from communist industrial organization to "socialism with Chinese characteristics", which includes a significant role for the private sector. The Chinese economy is still an experiment. The established American business system exists within a democratic political system, where corporate lobbying has a significant influence on the creation of laws and government policy. The Chinese economy is still under the tight control of the Chinese Communist Party, a one-party dictatorship. When Americans go to China to do business, they find the cultural, social, political, and moral systems vastly different than what they are familiar with. Transparency International Ranks China 27 out of 28 of the most corrupt large economies in the world. In China, bribery of government officials and kickbacks to sales and purchasing managers is common. Key questions we will investigate are: 1. In what ways are the two business systems similar and different? 2. What is the nature of Chinese social relations? How do they differ from American social relations? What effect do they have on business? 3. What is the nature of the Chinese political system? What impact does it have on business in China? 4. How do American business people negotiate the Chinese business system? Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 288V. Seclusion, Gender and the Exotic: Imagining the Harem. 3 Units.

When the term "harem" is invoked, the first image that comes to mind is of scantily clad women living in sequestered opulence in some exotic, yet vaguely "Eastern" place. This image has been reproduced and perpetuated through art, literature and music to the degree that even today, familiar themes of seduction, passivity and mystery related to the harem can be found throughout popular culture. Historically, gender segregation reaches into antiquity and existed in a variety of forms, cross-culturally. The term "harem" was not used regularly until the 13th century, and then only referred to the specific form of gender segregation used by the Ottoman court. Application of the word "harem" to all women's quarters in other cultures was the result of European contact with the Ottoman Empire, despite the fact that other cultures often had their own, distinct, terminology for women's spaces. In this seminar, we will explore the history and practice of gender segregation as a means to examine how the idea of the harem was constructed in the Eastern and Western imagination. Under what circumstances did women live separately? How were gendered spaces created, justified and maintained? Where did our image of the harem come from? Using primary and secondary sources, we will examine a selection of histories and representations of the harem in literature, slave and travel narratives, and religion. As the Western idea of the harem is part of what Edward Said theorized as "Orientalism", we will explore Said's theory as well as subsequent theories related to gender and the exotic. In addition, we will look at images of women's quarters from antiquity to the present and listen to representations of the exotic in music. Our goal is not only to study the historical fact of the harem, but also to engage issues related to gender, the exotic and representation from different disciplinary and cultural points of view. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 288Y. Shots in the Dark: Investigating Crime Films. 3 Units.

Crime movies and their subgenres (Gangster, film noir, detective, police) are the most enduringly popular of all Hollywood genres. They've been around since the silent era and attest to America's fascination with crime. But another reason we are so attracted to crime films stems from a pair of contradictory narrative projects that underline the genre. On the one hand, these films valorize the distinctions between the genre's stock characters—criminal, victim and avenger—in order to affirm the social, moral or institutional order. On the other hand, crime movies explore the relations between the three roles in order to mount a critique that challenges that order. In addition to emphasizing film studies, we will study the films for what they say about crime, criminals and criminal law. As most crime films contain an investigation, so too will the organization of the course. There are methods for analyzing film just as there are methods for investigating a crime scene. Investigation requires identifying, collecting, analyzing and interpreting evidence. We'll start by investigating what makes the genre so enduring—its mise-en-scene, intent or characters? You will be reporting your findings in three scholarly papers: a formal analysis on a specific film, a sociological analysis of a specific film and a research paper with documentation. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 289A. Do We Have Free Will?. 3 Units.

Concepts such as freedom, choice, moral responsibility, and autonomy are commonly invoked to describe our sense, as human beings, that our actions and thoughts are really our own. This seems like experiential commonsense—when I choose to read a novel instead of a philosophy text it feels like the decision to do so was made by me, that there was no coercion, or other seen or unseen force, that intervened to make me choose as I did. We extend this logic to the judgment of moral and legal responsibility. If you engage in good behavior, you get the praise; if you do bad things, you are blameworthy. Despite our self-perception that we freely make decisions and choose our actions, we sometimes invoke the notion that certain events are the result of some prior cause or circumstance that determines what occurs in the present. In this instance, we do not appear to be fully free in our choices because we cannot undo the causes that dictate what is taking place here and now. To the extent that we experience current actions as having a cause in the past, we are flirting with the idea that our behavior is not wholly free, but determined or conditioned by what has come before. Determinism, necessity, fate, destiny, predestination: these are terms typically used to describe the sense that our actions and thoughts are the result of unknown forces or circumstances beyond our control. This course uses classic and contemporary texts, taken from multiple cultural traditions, to explore the problem of free will and related issues of body/mind dualism and personal identity. Although the term "free will" does not appear in all cultural contexts, found everywhere are questions of whether we are free to act and think as we wish or whether our thoughts and actions are in some way determined. We also read science fiction short stories as thought experiments in order to help us understand the ramifications of various positions on free will and related problems. This course is discussion-based and writing-intensive. Classes focus on analysis and interpretation of texts and ideas. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 289G. The American West on Film. 3 Units.

Few geographical areas in the United States contain as many tall tales and mythological figures as the American frontier. From an extreme point of view, the West is the only American myth because no other nation can claim the cowboy, the Native American, or the immigrant worker on the transcontinental railroad. And yet, each of these figures remains spectacularly diverse. We celebrate their variety and lionize their individuality in film, popular novels, and cultural criticism. From the visions of the New World to the conquest of the frontier, the color of the American West proliferates and transforms, defining our culture. In this course, we will investigate how critics have understood our fascination with the Western frontier. The class will broadly explore version of the frontier in novels, films, and historical accounts. Reading about the history of the actual west, the course will then examine how the films of the twentieth century alter history in order to express the fantasies and anxieties of their own time. By studying both history and film, we will be able to interrogate manifest destiny and the myth of American exceptionalism. What makes the West such an integral part of our understanding of America? How has its actual history become myth? What does the American fascination with the cowboy, the Native American, or the outlaw imply about our nation? Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 289I. The Art of Science. 3 Units.

This is an interdisciplinary course that will explore the intersection between two disparate but often-connected fields, the history of art and the history of science. Although these fields are separated on college campuses today, they share a history that is united by a common philosophical question: how do we evaluate and know the world around us? The documentation of that knowledge is often visual—whether written or painted, tabulated or carved—images play an essential role in the shaping and recording of information. Beginning with the Renaissance revival of Pliny's *Natural History* (c. 77-79 BCE) this class will focus on the complex ways in which science and art overlap and enrich one another. Topics explored in this course include: mathematical theory and linear perspective; anatomical dissection and naturalism in figure painting; optics, lenses, and realism; Copernicus, Galileo and religious painting; botany and scientific illustration; natural history and fine art collecting, etc. Classes will be supplemented by visits to the Museum of Natural History, the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the Dittrick Museum of Medical History. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 289J. Beauty Myths Today. 3 Units.

Published just over 20 years ago, Naomi Wolf's influential study "The Beauty Myth" significantly influenced popular thinking about body image. Analyzing both cultural trends and empirical data, Wolf argued that as women made unprecedented advances in public life in the latter half of the 20th century, they were at the same time held to increasingly unrealistic standards of physical beauty. Wolf's study not only contributed to extant analyses of sexism in the media, but also introduced to mainstream readers the politics of the representation of women's bodies in popular culture. This course will examine to what extent Wolf's original claim hold true today. In other words, what physical standards must one meet in order to be considered professionally and personally successful? In exploring this question, we will look at the origins and current workings of the American beauty industry, considering the changing representation of the ideal body throughout the 20th century. We'll read texts by historians, philosophers, novelists, poets, cultural critics, and journalists who examine the politics of beauty. To both (re-)define and trace the continuing effects of beauty myths in the 21st century, we'll consider the rhetoric of ideal womanhood as it shows up in popular texts such as websites promoting anorexia, TV shows about plastic surgery, diet books, magazines, and guides for mothers. Students will have opportunities to define the beauty myth more broadly, exploring its effects on men and its mediating presence in other cultural sites. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 289X. Identity Theft, 1500-1800. 3 Units.

Religious persecution during the early modern period (16th-18th centuries) compelled Jews to attend Mass, Muslims to baptize their children and Protestants to count Hail Marys on a rosary. European exploration of Asia, Africa and the Americas inspired an Englishman to pass himself off as Taiwanese and an African to present himself as a European. The choice between marriage and a convert led one woman to cut off her hair, sew her skirt into britches and make herself into a conquistador in Peru. In pursuit of social mobility, courtiers remade themselves to suit the conventions of the court. Posing, passing and pretending, these early modern Europeans crossed lines of religion, gender, race and class. Today we might call some of these figures impostors but praise others as self-made men and women. What was the difference between lying and self-fashioning in early modern Europe? What forces and phenomena compelled people to remake themselves? Was the early modern period of the age of dissimulation? This course explores these questions by reading memoirs, handbooks, inquisitorial documents and plays from the period in light of contemporary theoretical literature. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 289Y. Reading and Writing Biography. 3 Units.

The study and practice of biography, that is, writing about someone's life, is an important tool for understanding how meaning is constructed. In this class, we will learn some of the history of biography and what it hopes to accomplish in its various sub-genres. Why are biographies so popular? Why are we so interested in them? What do they do? Is it possible to perfectly represent an objective truth of someone or does the discussion of someone else's life require a more symbolic interpretation of things? We will engage in reading and discussing some important and contemporary biographies in a variety of styles and genres from autobiography to works of near-fiction. We will learn how researchers use facts to construct more symbolic narratives around an argument that tells a story about someone's life in a way that engages with important issues of self, audience, and the location of truth. As our final research project, we will undertake our own biographical projects where we will do primary research in order to construct focused narratives of people of our own choosing. To work up to this point, we will work on our own autobiographies, look at the lives of things, and look at some films which foreground the narrative of life. This course will be of great use to writers and researchers who must be able to communicate by any kind of true account in a way that is both engaging and comprehensive. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 290C. Out of Proportion. 3 Units.

In this seminar, we will explore the meaning of things great and small, from the largest buildings and greatest distances, to nanotechnology and the smallest viruses. The seminar's goal will be to inspire critical thinking by confronting our fascination with things expanding and contracting, growing and shrinking, things speeded up and things slowed down. We will approach the subject from a variety of disciplines - cultural history, psychology, mathematics, philosophy, literature, economics, and the sciences - with the intention of unpacking both the topic itself and the tools that we use to explain our world. We will ask questions about why we find gigantism and dwarfism unsettling; how we define ugliness and beauty; how we understand the odds and statistics of horrific or wonderful things happening to us; and how this determines our behavior. After examining theory and examples of things "out of proportion", students will produce a research project that combines primary and secondary sources and will make an argument in behalf of an example that they find compelling. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 290G. Women and Warfare: Reality and Representation. 3 Units.

Most people do not think of women when they think of war. However, women's lives have been intimately involved with warfare from ancient times to present. Women have fought in combat, supported war efforts in various capacities, sent their husbands and sons to die in wars, and have been wounded, raped, and killed as civilian targets. Despite women's varied war experiences, there are a set of cultural symbols and tropes that have consistently been used to represent women in their relationship to war. Some of these include women waiting, women mourning, women as pacifists, women warriors, and promiscuous women. Through an international and interdisciplinary investigation, this seminar will examine both the disjunctions and the resonances between the historical realities and the cultural representations of women's lives during wartime. Questions it seeks to address are: In what ways have women's roles during wartime remained the same across history? In what ways have women's roles during wartime changed? How are women's wartime roles represented in art, literature, media, and war propaganda? How has women's entry into the armed forces during the twentieth century disrupted cultural stereotypes of women's relationship to warfare? Are there differences between male and female writers—and artists—representations of women and warfare? How has digital technology changed both military service members' and civilians' relationships to warfare and the public's exposure and access to war images? Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 2900. Everyone's a Critic! The Play. 3 Units.

Have you ever been to a play and afterwards said to someone, "That was terrible!", or hopefully, "That was incredible!" but found yourself unable to clearly communicate what made it good or bad? In theater, word of mouth is the best advertising and your words have the power to make or break a production. This course will examine the role of "audience as critic," as well as the role of the professional critic, and the influence each has on the success of live theater. The student will learn critical skills that will allow them to clearly identify what made a particular production a rousing success, or a dismal failure. The student will learn the process by which actors, directors and designers bring a play to life, and the analytical skills a critic uses to either keep the play alive, or bring it to an untimely end. The student will have the opportunity to see live productions of the plays we will discuss in class. The student will be required to attend at least five theatrical productions over the course of the semester at CWRU's Eldred Theater, the CWRU/CPH MFA collaboration, The Cleveland Playhouse, and other local theaters. We will compare and contrast these productions with past productions at other regional theaters and on Broadway. Actors, directors and designers of these local productions will come to class to discuss their process and defend their artistic choices. We will speak with local, professional theater critics and discuss their praises, and their pans! With the skills learned in this class the student will have the power to help a theater sell out every show, or force them to close the doors forever! Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 290T. Media Responses to 9/11. 3 Units.

For a generation of Americans, 9/11 was a defining event, the kind that slices life into before and after. The reverberations of that singular event continue to dominate our lives today, in ways we can readily recognize, and in ways that we cannot. In this class, we will examine how the discourse around 9/11 has shifted over the course of a decade, from the urgency of screaming newspaper headlines the day after, to the more elegiac responses shaped by novels and films over the years. We will also examine how different media—from graphic novels to films to novels—have responded to the same event and how these responses have shaped, and continue to shape, our collective narrative about the meaning of that event. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 290U. Poetry for People Who Hate Poetry. 3 Units.

You don't hate it. In fact, you probably already love poetry, even if you don't know it. You might copy moody indie rock lyrics into your journal or quote the rhymes in a rap verse to your friends. You might hum advertising jingles to yourself; you speak in slang and think in metaphor. Why do we tend to treat only some of these instances of figurative language as poems? Is there a difference between poems and poetry? What can our individual attitudes about poetry reveal about what and whom we value on a cultural scale? In this course we will ask these and other questions about our collective love/hate relationship with poetry. All of this attention to how poems and poetry work will help us understand how our own writing should work. This course also focuses on the development of independent research skills and the creation of complex, analytic, well-supported arguments. We will write in a variety of lengths and genres; our reading and research will culminate in a project challenging students to compile an anthology of essential "poetry" with a critical introduction. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 290V. Experiencing Mathematics. 3 Units.

You've studied mathematics, but have you really experienced it? In *Love and Math*, author and mathematician Edward Frenkel says that, for him, the experience is tantamount to love. Acknowledging that his field suffers from the reputation of being dry and inaccessible, he challenges this negative view by sharing the passion, beauty, and adventure from his career as one of the leading researchers in the groundbreaking Langlands program, the so-called grand unified theory of mathematics. Like Frenkel, we will discuss the appreciation and enjoyment of mathematics. Furthermore, we will consider other ways in which it is useful and interesting to talk about "experiencing mathematics." The question of what that phrase means is central to the approach we will take toward the various topics covered in class. We will examine cultural attitudes toward mathematicians and mathematics. Similarly, we will investigate the culture of mathematicians themselves, with particular attention to their ideas about community, collaboration, fairness, and merit. We will also look at the ways, from Big Data to high fashion, that the work of mathematicians actively shapes contemporary society. In addition, we will practice problem-solving techniques for contest mathematics; this activity requires no more than a pre-calculus background. You will not be graded on mathematical problems. Instead, you will reflect on your own problem-solving process. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 291B. Science (Fiction) Dystopias. 3 Units.

In 1927 the German science fiction classic *Metropolis* showed filmgoers a mechanized dystopian nightmare in which humans took on the roles of cogs and levers in a giant machine. Years later, George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* depicted a totalitarian regime reshaping post-war England in a similar way, using surveillance and repetitive activities to turn the population into something less than human. Appropriating science fiction motifs, dystopian narratives have forced us to reconsider how science and technology are used to complicate and at times augment our notion of what it means to be a social animal. In this class, we will consider a range of texts, including novels, short stories, films, and comic books, to explore the interaction between people and the things that they invent. The first half of the course will emphasize traditional utopian texts and readings will include selections from works like Margaret Cavendish's *Blazing World* (biological utopia), Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (mathematical dystopia), and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (technological dystopia). During the second half of the semester we will discuss utopian and dystopian worlds in popular fiction and film, such as science fiction short stories by Harlan Ellison, Alan Moore's *V for Vendetta*, and *Wall-E*, to consider how the utopia/dystopia changed in the latter half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 291F. Literary Arcadias: Idealized Landscapes and the Intrusion of Reality. 3 Units.

The literary genre of pastoral has long depicted the simplicity of life in a natural environment—a place situated at a time before environmental exploitation, colonization, and urbanization. These pastoral retreats are often given the generic name "Arcadia." As many critics and authors have noted, however, literary depictions of Arcadia often expose the delicate balance of conflicting realities: peace and war, rich and poor, rural and urban. In this seminar, we will investigate what happens when external reality disrupts Arcadia's Edenic space. Is the creation of these idyllic settings a way of masking the disturbing realities of class inequality, political power, and environmental degradation? Or are authors attempting to articulate an alternative to them? As part of our investigation, we will consider how the pastoral genre has evolved over time, noting especially how depictions of Arcadia have responded to various cultural, commercial, and political changes. We will also examine how the idea of Arcadia shapes contemporary culture and our own understanding of the relationship between nature and society in the modern world. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 291H. From Dr. Seuss to Wild Things: Radical Children's Literature. 3 Units.

What is the first book you remember reading? For most people, their earliest memories are tied to picture books that were read to them or that they encountered in grade school. These books not only introduce children to basic skills, but also to their culture's belief systems. In this course, we will take seemingly simplistic picture books, including Dr. Seuss' "The Cat in the Hat" and David Wiesner's "The Three Pigs" and analyze the underlying messages and the "hidden adult" present in their illustrations and text. We will engage with different theoretical approaches towards children's literature, including visual rhetoric, race studies, and adaptation theory, as we analyze their pictures and prose and the history of American children's literature. The key questions we will explore and answer together include: What is "children's literature?" What assumptions are made about the readers of these books? What function do the adult producers/purchasers/distributors of these books serve in the creation and circulation of these texts? How does adaptation and transmission of cultural beliefs affect the reader's reaction to picture books? Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 291J. Improvisation in Jazz and Beyond. 3 Units.

On the surface it might seem that a jazz concert, a medical procedure, and a religious sermon have little in common, but this course examines how all three in fact share certain significant traits. One of these traits is improvisation—the ability of a performer to respond to unanticipated stimuli and create something new. Another trait is the tension between specialization and integration that develops whenever a highly-trained expert performs with or for non-experts, as in the exchange between musicians and audience, doctors and patients, or clergy and congregants. To answer these questions, we will attend jazz concerts, medical lectures, and church services. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 291Q. P.R., Spin, and Inventing Reality. 3 Units.

Is it reality or is it spin? We all know the terms—"it's spin," "it's P.R.," "he's a flack"—and none of them are said kindly. Yet, over the past century public relations has become an often invisible multi-billion dollar manipulation of our collective perception of reality. Sometimes this manipulation is benign. But just as often it can weaken our democracy through weapons of words, images, and argument. This seminar will explore the origins and consequences of this silent, symbolic revolution. We will look at the uses of P.R. today in business, politics, and popular culture; examine the tools used to construct and sell those perceptions; and look into the values underlying these activities. We will do so through both academic and media materials, as well as through writing, research, and discussion. All of these are intended to deepen your critical thinking and writing skills, and build your research, discussion, and oral presentation strengths. Students who have received credit for USSO 260 may not receive credit for this course. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 291Z. Marriage Plots. 3 Units.

Why do so many stories end with a wedding? Our course will consider the form of the marriage plot: we will look at how stories often begin with young(ish) people meeting and falling in love, and how the process of storytelling denies (or frustrates) their initial connection. Through the telling of the story, however, the young lovers overcome obstacles in myriad forms: controlling parents, financial insecurity or class differences, religious difference, even magical spells. We will think about what these stories do for their readers and viewers. We will also think about how various other stories—of riots, of government, of dissatisfaction with life—get couched in marriage plots. What is it about a marriage plot that ensures stability, satisfies our desires, and gives us such necessary closure? How does the form of "comedy"—for this is the overarching genre that relies so heavily upon marriage plots—work with and reshape the marriage plot over time? We'll also briefly ponder how supporters of marriage equality have used the marriage plot. Finally, our investigation into the marriage plot will look at marriage plot comedies that refuse to conform to the typical marriage plot: dark humor from a novel like *Villette* to films like *Harold and Maude* or *The War of the Roses*. This course investigates the presence of the marriage plot across multiple literary genres: dramas, novels, film, and television. We will also read and view courtship narratives from across historical periods from the Renaissance until today. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292A. Drama and Social Protest Movements. 3 Units.

The complicated relationship between drama and politics dates back to at least ancient Greece. Today, playwrights continue to use political conflict as the basis for dramatic action, as well as use their plays to spark political protest—at times even risking imprisonment or exile. In this course, we will read a collection of protest plays alongside accounts of the protest movements that the plays and playwrights either depicted or participated in. As part of our investigation, we will ask the following questions: What do these plays tell us about the performative and emotional work done by protest? What role does theatricality play in the acts of persuasion, criticism, and direct action normally associated with political protest? Do these plays simply reproduce the goals and criticisms of protest movements, or does drama invite a style of social critique that sets it apart from other forms of political speech? Do these plays present protest as focused on the personal grievances of characters, or do they criticize larger social systems like class, gender, and racial hierarchy? We will also spend some class time discussing a few more modern anti-war, anti-racist and feminist protest movements, exploring the aesthetics and theatricality of protest and the extent to which they further political change. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292G. Interrogating Bullshit. 3 Units.

This course examines the role of specious and misleading claims in social, political and economic life. Colloquially, "bullshit" is the label we place on egregiously false statements, but as a verb, "to bullshit," the concept is more nuanced. It denotes indifference to truth rather than an active desire to deceive. Empirically, though, distinguishing between a "lie" and "bullshit" can be as difficult as separating either from truth. This course will examine logical fallacies, scams, conspiracy theories, and the analytic techniques necessary to distinguish truth from bullshit. The course will provide introductory instruction in probability theory, statistics and proper interpretation of statistical data, as well as research design and causal inference. Previous work in statistics is not required. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292I. The Cinema of Otherness. 3 Units.

One way that humans understand themselves is to consider some counterpart entity—an Other—against which the Self can be understood. This Other, though perhaps based on knowledge of a real person or people, is always shaped by the Self's projected fears and desires. At a cultural level, these projections result in generally held stereotypes that the powerful use to maintain their superior position in a hierarchical relationship. Movies are one place where stereotypes of the Other are created and maintained. Movies shape how we see, think and feel toward the Other. In this course, we will attempt to understand how film manufactures Otherness by studying several key Hollywood movies. We will examine their use of racial and ethnic categories of Otherness, as well as how they position the viewing Self as white. We will also examine other sites of difference, such as gender, sexual orientation, religion, bodily disfigurement, paying special attention to symbolic representations of these differences in the form of robots, monsters and aliens. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292K. 21st Century American Theater. 3 Units.

With its roots tracing back to Ancient Greece, theater is one of our earliest forms of storytelling and entertainment. However, in the age of streaming video on demand, and massively multiplayer online games, can this venerable art form still be considered relevant, when even our movie multiplexes are going by the wayside? Recent Broadway musicals such as *Hamilton* have certainly made a powerful case for the theater's continued relevancy, simultaneously breaking box office records and offering innovative approaches to content and form while appealing to younger and non-traditional theater audiences. In this seminar we will consider a number of major plays and musicals produced on and off Broadway since the year 2000. Among the questions to be considered over the course of the semester: What does it mean to create and experience theater in the context of emerging technologies? Has theater continued to evolve to address the changing needs and sensibilities of 21st century audiences? In what ways does it provide a voice to marginalized social groups? In addition to readings and class discussions, students will also be required to attend live performances (both professional and academic) and compose essays offering informed critiques evaluating particular aspects of the theatrical whole. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292N. Cli-Fi: Addressing Climate Change in Fact, Fiction, and Film. 3 Units.

This seminar examines the emerging literary genre of Cli-Fi, or climate fiction, which bridges genres such as science fiction and apocalyptic literature as it depicts imagined responses to the damage wrought by global climate change. In the early 1960s, well in advance of compelling scientific evidence of anthropogenic climate change, novelists were already speculating about the effects of global warming. Focusing on fiction, films, and non-fiction writing from the past three decades, we will consider how authors envision the effects of climate change. Specifically, we will read works by historians, journalists, philosophers, scientists, and cultural critics as a foundation for our analysis of several works of fiction. Further, we will consider how visual media, like feature and documentary films, depict the impacts of climate change. Centrally, we will evaluate how climate fiction complements existing popular and academic conversations about our transforming world. Ultimately, responding to the broadening field of narratives about human-generated transformations of the world, we will address climate fiction's potential to influence ethical paths shaped by those who seek to alter the disastrous trajectory that the genre imagines. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292P. "Hamlet" from Page to Stage to Screen. 3 Units.

This course asks what makes Hamlet recognizable as Hamlet. Is it a story about a man who needs to revenge his father? Is it "To be or not to be?" Is it Laurence Olivier wearing black and holding a skull? Or is it Simba confronting Scar? Over the course of the semester, we'll be studying the changing forms Hamlet has taken. We'll think first about the inspirations for Shakespeare's play in Danish sagas and Roman tragedy, and subsequently read Hamlet alongside a variety of reinterpretations and revisions in different media (from short stories, to films, to videogames) spanning 400 years and hailing from across the globe. We will learn about the cultural, social and political contexts that shape how adaptations are produced and received. We'll also think critically about the elements that constitute a particular work of art in a particular medium, and about the processes through which new works can be made out of old ones. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292Q. The Secret Lives of Animals. 3 Units.

Animals are instructive. When we study animals, their biological makeups and creaturely habits, we do so with hopes of learning something about them. At the same time, such investigations often betray an interest in our human selves. The study of animals, in scientific and literary laboratories alike, quickly turns to acts of self-discovery: not what it means to be animal, exactly, but what it means to be human-animals. So what more could we learn by cultivating new strategies for listening and new languages for communicating with animals? This seminar invites students to investigate the secret lives of animals as imagined in a sampling of classical, medieval and modern literatures. Thinking with animals past and present—in fables, manuals, and tales—we will examine human-animal relationships in imagined settings. Over the course of the semester, we will read, view, listen, and perform works in which animals are tasked with teaching moral lessons and testing the ethical obligations of their human audiences. Comparing treatments of companion animals past and present, we will reflect on the many ways literature can guide our evolving relationship to the animal kingdom. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292S. The Meaning of Life: A Novel Idea. 3 Units.

According to the critic Walter Benjamin, while short stories can convey a moral, "The 'meaning of life' is really the center about which the novel moves." Many critics share this view, arguing that the very idea of "the meaning of life" emerges alongside of the novel genre because of the ways novels portray individuals thinking about their lives. Novels characters internally reflect, make choices, and interact with others—often over long periods of time and through many changing circumstances. Furthermore, they depict how characters—personal choices—are influenced by a variety of external, social forces. In doing so, novels have offered their readers ways to think about what they value, and why. This seminar will take up the novel genre as a way to think carefully and deeply about just what the idea of "the meaning of life" involves. We will discuss how various novels have addressed—and continue to address—the desire for fulfillment and purpose. We will begin by examining how it came to be that novels came to be associated with and helped create the very concept of the "meaning of life." Then we read some classic novels to examine how the novel has portrayed the meaning of life. We will conclude the course with a contemporary novel and ask whether or not contemporary novels are creating experiences of meaning in the same way they did hundreds of years ago. If they are, is that meaning still the same? If not, are novels asking different kinds of big questions? Is "the meaning of life" not as vital as it used to be to how novels work? In addressing these questions we will strive to understand the history of this literary form, its uses for our own personal introspection and ethical thinking, as well as the continuing role of novels in our rapidly evolving society. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292U. Problems of Genre in Shakespeare and Film. 3 Units.

We use categories in order to make sense of the world. But unlike, say, the science of taxonomy, the study of literary genre may say more about us than it does about the works being categorized. Why do we consider Shakespearean tragedy to be a "high" genre and romantic comedies or detective stories to be "low" genres? Who determined these hierarchies? More importantly, what do they say about what we value in culture and in society? In this course, we will consider the impact of these issues upon not only Shakespeare's age but also our own, by reading a series of his plays alongside examples of American cinema. What happens when we read one of Shakespeare's plays as an "example" of noir or screwball comedy? Would that reading demonstrate or challenge the claim that Shakespeare's art is somehow "universal?" On the other hand, would we think more highly of a "slasher" film if we were to consider it in terms of a tragedy like Macbeth? In answering these and related questions, we will examine our own cultural assumptions about Shakespeare's legacy, while considering the aesthetic, political, and ethical issues informing the study of genre. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 292Z. Traditional Martial Arts. 3 Units.

This seminar will provide students with an understanding of the origins and representation of traditional martial arts through movies, novels, and comics. We will emphasize the moral, historical, and cognitive issues involved in the practice of these older fighting techniques. We will also examine how practitioners might have been forced to compromise some of their tenets to accommodate contemporary life and a broader audience. Additionally, we will see how Martial Arts originates in some countries of Asia, but has evolved nowadays with contributions from many other geographical areas. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293H. The Landscape of Memory. 3 Units.

"Never forget" has become an important command of the twentieth century. For survivors of the worst atrocities in recent history, remembering is seen as both a moral and political duty. But how should the memory of these mass traumas be carried forward in the public sphere? And what forms of commemoration are the most effective, accurate, or enduring? In this course, we will examine the remembering of trauma in a range of public "memory sites," including oral testimonies, published memoirs, monuments, museums, and films. We will also consider postmodern forms of "counter-memory" in contemporary photography and conceptual art. While we will discuss a range of "memory sites," we will focus primarily on those that reflect on the Holocaust and 9/11. We will examine how and why different memorial practices have evolved, and reflect on the value of passing on such horrific memories to future generations. We'll also discuss how the process of remembering alters the meaning of traumatic events. As a culminating project, students will analyze a memorial site or institution, using existing scholarship to investigate the creation of the site, its sources of funding, its design process, and the controversies it created. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293I. High Art and Guilty Pleasures. 3 Units.

How, and why, do we draw distinctions between art and entertainment? Lowbrow and highbrow? A crowd-pleasing "flick" and a critic-approved "film?" This seminar will explore the logic of this common sorting process, as well as its consequences. After all, such distinctions historically have been linked with other forms of discrimination—often amplifying or silencing certain voices on the basis of gender, race, or class. In this course we'll investigate these connections between critical evaluation and broader social dynamics, while also engaging critically with our own tastes, values, and received ideas. What makes *The Great Gatsby* so great? Is there any value in keeping up with the Kardashians? Who determines the criteria that make one work a "classic," the other a "guilty pleasure?" Traversing a range of artworks, novels, comics, and movies, we'll work both the high and the low ends of the cultural spectrum, paying special attention to works that seem to blur or combine the usual categories—compelling us to ask whether great art and guilty pleasures can sometimes be one and the same. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293J. Adapting and Re-imagining Shakespeare's "The Tempest". 3 Units.

In the 400 years since it was written, "The Tempest"—long believed to be Shakespeare's farewell to the theater—has inspired many works of art, literature, and music that have re-imagined the original play. These adaptations reflect changes in artistic and political values over time, resulting in versions of the play that have been characterized as royalist, Christian, feminist, and post-colonial, to name a few. Its language, plot, characters, and themes also have inspired a variety of non-theatrical adaptations, including works of art and music, poems, films, and comics. Over the course of the semester, we will read "The Tempest" alongside many of these adaptations, learning to pay attention to the elements that constitute different artistic mediums. We will discuss the social, historical and political forces and ideas that shape adaptation and the artistic process. To what extent has "The Tempest" become a conversation between artists from all over the globe, rather than a single play written by Shakespeare towards the end of his career? How do adaptations of Shakespeare's play—some of which draw attention to its potential racism and sexism—change the way that we see it? Why do certain themes in "The Tempest"—like race, gender, and artistic creation—shift in and out of fashion with adapters and performers of the play? Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293N. Global Shakespeares. 3 Units.

The British playwright Ben Jonson famously eulogized his friend and competitor William Shakespeare by saying, "...he was not of an age but for all time." Recently, however, scholars and theater practitioners have been far more engaged with the question of whether Shakespeare is for all nations. In this course, we will consider what it means to read Shakespeare globally. Shakespeare wrote his plays during the first era of British colonial expansion; today, we read those same plays during a supposedly "post-colonial" era. Accordingly, we will ask two related but possibly opposing questions: What did Shakespeare think of the world? and What does the world think about Shakespeare? In order to answer these questions, we will read three plays in which Shakespeare directly engages issues of cultural difference and empire alongside contemporary adaptations of those plays from Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. How aware was Shakespeare of the specific cultural identities of the Mediterranean or the "New World?" Conversely, is a work "still" Shakespeare when it has been translated into a different cultural setting? In addition to gaining a finer understanding of Shakespeare's work and its historical context, we will examine how and why Shakespeare's drama can be repurposed in different political and national contexts today. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 2930. Monsters and Disability. 3 Units.

Why are monsters everywhere in literature, film, and art? How does disability, mental illness, and medicine find their way into cultural fantasies and anxieties? Who or what are the monsters of our own cultural moment? In what ways do monsters represent and reinforce prejudices related to mental illness, disability, race, gender, religion, or nationality? What are the ethical conflicts and demands made by the monster? In this seminar, we will explore the history, art, and ethics of monsters in western culture. Using selections from disability studies, trauma theory, gender studies, critical race studies, and post-colonial studies, we will examine monsters not merely as super-natural creatures, but as figures that stand in for a wide range of "undesirables" and "others." Readings and films for this class will be drawn from the distant medieval past up to modern horror and fantasy films, and will feature the monsters said to live on the edge of the known world, mystical visionaries, sideshow freaks, hallucinatory apparitions, witches, and even a few vampires and werewolves. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293P. Music in Time and Place: A Window into the Development of American Identity. 3 Units.

Although American symphonic music grew out of the Western European tradition, it also developed distinct characteristics. Composers marveled at the qualities and character of the young nation, especially the vastness and beauty of its land. An aesthetic sense of the land influenced artists as they sought to capture their perspectives of time and space, as well as the American people themselves, and the role they played in those perspectives. In this course, we will examine a series of symphonic works that specifically reference geographical place in their titles. Through this study we will gain insight into the development of American cultural identity and how the focus of musical works shifted from rural to urban life. To enhance our understanding, we will consider the historical context of these American symphonic works, as well as related works of art. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293Q. Musical Ethics and Identities from Beethoven to Beyoncé. 3 Units.

In this course we will examine a number of stylistic and social upheavals in Western music since the early nineteenth century, with the goal of understanding their ethical ramifications (past and present) and their impact on perceptions of identity (social, political, economic, racial/ethnic, sexual, gender). Topics will include Ludwig van Beethoven and Richard Wagner, Modernism and avant-gardism, musical expression and repression under totalitarian regimes, the rock and hip-hop revolutions, and the evolving influence of feminist perspectives on popular music. We will give particular attention to cultural anxieties provoked by innovative music, and to the ways in which new historical trends and our own tastes have been shaped by ethical considerations. To what extent do we gravitate toward music that reinforces our existing beliefs, and to what extent can exposure to new music reorient our beliefs, and our sense of identity as a result? What factors explain strong ethical reactions (positive or negative) to different kinds of music? How do particular genres tend to reflect social or political status, how are cultural taboos broken through music, and in what ethical terms has musical progress historically been defined? How do we reconcile music we might like with offensive views that its creators might have held? Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293V. Justice and Literary Imagination. 3 Units.

Contemporary popular culture reflects our fascination with a justice system that sometimes does not appear to be just. Documentary TV series such as *The People v. O.J. Simpson*, *The Making of a Murderer*, and *The Staircase* are part of a long literary tradition that asks us to consider what happens when laws are not rational or punishments are unjust—and what, if anything, we can or should do about it. In this seminar, we will read a variety of literary and cinematic works to explore questions related to legal justice, including the difference between the rule of law and equity, the function of evidence and testimony in finding truth, the relationship between justice and punishment, the status of justice in an unequal society, and the various roles that people play within the justice system. In doing so, we will also consider how law and literature overlap in their emphases on storytelling and interpretation, as well as how both cultivate a tolerance for ambiguity and complexity. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293W. MeToo: Women Writing Violence Against Women in the 18th-Century Novel. 3 Units.

In recent years we have seen a growing public discourse surrounding sexual harassment and sexual assault, driven in part by women's use of social media to share their stories. While social media may be new, women have long turned to public narratives to respond to the threat of violence that is a part of their lives. The rise of the novel in the 18th century represents a particularly interesting counterpoint to the rise of social media in our own time. Women had very few legal rights and protections, and combined with economic pressures to marry and social expectations that they remain "virtuous," women had little recourse when they faced sexual harassment or assault. By the end of the 18th century, however, women began to write and publish novels themselves, and in numbers rivaling men. In this class, we will look at a selection of these novels through the lens of current discourse about gender-based violence, sexual harassment, consent, and rape culture. What connections do we find between the 18th century and today? What can we learn from these 18th-century women and these novels? What does this approach reveal about writing, about narrative, and about storytelling? To answer these questions, we will read novels like *Charlotte Temple* (1791), *The Victim of Prejudice* (1799), and *Northanger Abbey* (1817) alongside narratives like *Monica Lewinsky's* about her time working in the Clinton White House and *Susan Fowler's* about her time working at Uber. Framing our discussion will be Kate Manne's landmark book *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny* (2017). Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293Y. Shakespeare, Race, and Othello Over the Centuries. 3 Units.

This course explores artistic representations of race, gender, jealousy and evil by examining Shakespeare's *Othello*, *Moor of Venice* and adaptations of the work from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Shakespeare tells the story of how Othello, the only black man in the Venetian military, gets driven to murder his wife, Desdemona, by his enigmatic officer, Iago. The play raises questions about racism, misogyny, and tragedy which have been taken up by musicians, filmmakers, visual artists, and novelists over the centuries. Each adaptation of *Othello* makes subtle changes to the story and characters. For example, in his operatic version of the story, Giuseppe Verdi has Iago sing, "I believe in a Cruel God," imagining the character as a nihilist, while the hero of Tayeb Saleh's novel, *Season of the Migration of the North*, rejects Shakespeare, saying, "I am no Othello, Othello was a lie." The play's performance history proves equally fascinating because early productions always saw white actors playing the title character while wearing black make-up. Early black actors in the role faced prejudice, and only recently have they been predominantly cast as Shakespeare's tragic Moor. Thus, our class will examine performances and adaptations of this story, asking: How do different artistic forms like theater, music, art, and literature each create unique forms of meaning? To what extent do or should adaptations be faithful to Shakespeare? What are the different ways of depicting race on stage and in film, and what are the social and political implications of these differences? Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 293Z. Wildest Dreams: Medieval Visions/Modern Visionaries. 3 Units.

This course surveys sites of dreaming in experimental literature and art. Over the course of the semester, we will sample a range of medieval and modern works that find, in and through dreams, alternatives to their present moment. We will examine utopic and apocalyptic visions, daydream, and nightmare scenarios. Thinking through advances in queer theory, cognitive psychology, and sensory studies, we will explore dreamscapes as potential test sites for problem solving—for getting unstuck, for breaking through, for discovering new narrative and artistic forms. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294A. The Wild Man Within and Without. 3 Units.

There have always been myths about "The Wild Man", that figure who exists outside of society, as a kind of living rebuttal to the values of the "civilized" world. These primitives, barbarians, savages, or madmen live off of the land, out in the desert or in the woods, and their stories may be told either to horrify or to enchant. These stories are also rich social documents that illuminate how a culture defines itself in relation to those that it excludes or fears. Whether these myths present wild men as heretics, lunatics, or "noble savages", they exist to tell us something about ourselves and about our animal nature. They also provide a way of understanding, and all too often demonizing, the other. In this class, we will consider myths of wildness across literary history, from the "green men" of Arthurian legend to early colonialist accounts of indigenous peoples to recent portrayals of madmen in contemporary film. How have these myths changed over time, and for what purpose? How have these stories impacted new encounters with foreign cultures? How do they reflect a given culture's relationship with nature? What might the figure of the "Wild Woman" tell us about how a society views its established gender roles and expressions of sexuality or their transgressions? Perhaps most importantly, in what ways do the myths of wildness continue today? In answering these and related questions, we will examine the ways that cultural norms and values are constructed, reinforced, and challenged both in the past and in the present. As the literary critic Earl Miner suggests, the aim of these narratives is not so much to understand the Wild Man as to understand oneself. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294B. Transgender Literature: Gender Diversity and Reading Beyond Stereotypes. 3 Units.

Literature and literary genres possess the power to reinforce or revolutionize cultural norms. From love stories to coming-of-age stories, one of the most impactful ways that literary genres reflect and shape society is in the representation of gender and sexuality. Over the generations, literature has evolved with our understanding of human diversity. Contrary to stereotypes that imagine the existence of only two genders, society is increasingly recognizing that there is a wider range of embodiment and identity beyond male and female. Thus, the question arises: how do our books and films on our shelves reflect the experience of transgender, intersex, genderqueer, and other non-binary lives? What texts from the past help us understand the long history of sex and sexuality? What new stories are being told? How is society reflecting and affecting this transgender literature? In this seminar, all people and their questions are welcome as we continue the experiment begun by Edith Anisfield Wolf, who believed that books and reading can transform our world. Following in her mission of social justice and diversity, we will learn how to read beyond stereotypes about gender (and, in the process, about sexuality, disability, class, and race). So let us expand our book shelves together! Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294D. 20th Century American Music and Cultural Criticism. 3 Units.

We are all familiar with music as a mode of entertainment, an accompaniment to rituals and ceremonies, and as earworms that sell us things. But, have you ever thought about how music works? Not the nuts and bolts of ordering the sounds we call music, but how that same music is implicated in the gendered, racialized, and socioeconomic power structures that order our lives? For example: Is free jazz relevant to the civil rights movement of the 1960s? How and why is disco related to gay pride? What does musical minimalism have to do with capitalism? And how might hip-hop and contemporary beat music be related to racial representation and internet culture? With questions like these in mind, this seminar investigates American vernacular and art musics of the 20th century as phenomena that create, reproduce, and push at the boundaries of structures of cultural power and value. Using conceptual lenses of representation, appropriation, ideology, experimentation, globalization, and modes of resistance, we will weave through American avant-garde to post-bop, free jazz to Afrofuturism, minimalism to EDM, new-age to hip-hop, and more. This seminar does take music as its primary topic, but it is not a music seminar, per se. Rather, music serves here as a jumping-off point to think critically about the role of art in both creating the world we inhabit as well as informing how we navigate that world. As we approach different musics, we will engage with exemplary musical examples and texts from popular and scholarly sources to help frame our discussions and written responses. Furthermore, we will listen to music both in and out of class with the goal of identifying, describing, and contextualizing what we hear. No previous musical training is required; basic concepts and terminology will be explained in class. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294G. How to Read a Novel. 3 Units.

Henry James famously called novels "large, loose and baggy monsters," and we might well agree with him. Today novels dominate our library and bookstore shelves but sometimes finding time in our busy lives to sit down and read one seems impossible. However, novels might be exactly what we need. Novels can help us to better understand one another. They can help us to better understand ourselves. They can also allow us to escape. Novels can take us places we might otherwise never go, and they can help us to take a break from the stress of our lives. In this class, we will explore what novels can do for us by reading a sample of great novels from the past and present, some of which will be (or at least might seem) familiar from high school or from pop culture. As we read, we will think critically about the act of reading itself: how we read, what we read, why we read, and what keeps us from reading. We will also explore some techniques, approaches, and philosophical questions that can help us better understand and interpret these complicated works—and, hopefully, find the fun and value in reading novels. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294H. Mapping Spaces: Representations of Place and Mobility in Literature. 3 Units.

How do our experiences of mobility inform our understanding of the spaces where we live and travel? What barriers or incentives attend the travel of people of diverse socio-economic, national, and ethnic identities? To address such questions, we will study maps and how they represent places, create connections, tell stories about the world, and enforce borders. We will use these maps particularly to help us understand the spatial dynamics of literary texts that tell stories about place and mobility. Class readings, drawn from genres like fiction, essay, film, and digital documentary, will be concerned with issues of spatial justice and the social and political dynamics of migration and border crossing, especially between the Global North and South. Paired with this focus on global mobility, we consider the lived, embodied experience of individuals in local places, including our own University Circle, and try to develop insight into how we shape and are shaped by the spaces over which we travel in our everyday lives. To visualize spaces and practices of travel, we will experiment with digital mapping tools and other platforms that allow for media-rich writing and presentations. We will also continue to develop skills in the conventional and creative processes of research and writing. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294I. Black Women's Social Thought. 3 Units.

This course offers an introduction to the variety of Black American and Caribbean women's ideas about US politics and culture, with attention to the symbolic significance and difficulty of their position(s) within the power relations of American race, gender, class, and educational standing. Readings from social theory and philosophy by these authors examine basic social controversies such as the meaning of justice, the purpose of government, acceptable standards for private and public liberty, the value of sexuality and kinship ties, gender equality, the dynamics of racism, the relationship of truth to error and systematic deception, and the place of history and memory in knowledge. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294J. The Jazz Age, Revisited: Art & Literature of the 1920s. 3 Units.

Nearly a century later, the 1920s continue to exert their pull on the popular imagination. For many, the decade summons images of what F. Scott Fitzgerald called the Jazz Age: an era of reckless youth, high living, speakeasies and dance crazes, flappers and bootleggers. Of course, this superficial vision of the "Roaring Twenties" hardly tells the full story of that turbulent decade in the United States and beyond. Yet the rebellious spirit it evokes does convey something of the driving force behind the period's often groundbreaking literary and artistic innovations. In New York City, for instance, the Harlem Renaissance witnessed a remarkable flowering of African American art, literature, and music—while downtown the artists of the Dada movement were playfully undermining the very institutions of art. Across the Atlantic, artists and bohemians of all sorts congregated in Paris, Berlin, and other European capitals to mount related revolutions of word, image, and sound. In this course, we'll revisit the 1920s by way of its literature, art, music, and film. Among other things, we'll see what these artifacts can tell us about the period's racial and sexual politics, about the cultural reverberations of World War I (1914-1918), and about the abiding impact of a historical moment when artists and writers thought that art could change the world. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294M. Play Anything: Theorizing Videogames. 3 Units.

Videogames are ubiquitous. They seem to be everywhere, on phones, laptops, handheld devices and dedicated consoles, and they are played by all sorts of people, young and old, as both a solitary activity and a shared social experience. In the popular imagination, videogames are often thought of as entertainment, a mindless diversion. But really they are much more than that. Videogames are media texts, cultural artifacts, interactive artworks and also tools used for military recruiting and training. They are systems that structure social engagement virtually, but like other new media, sometimes they simply reproduce the problematic structures we know in real life. Videogames demand our labor in the pursuit of some random objective; playing is fun but achieving goals and following arbitrary rules is also a kind of work. Perhaps when we play videogames, they also play us. In this seminar, we will track the vigorous debates around videogames in the field of game studies through the writings of theorists, designers and critics (all of them gamers). The course provides a critical and theoretical framework for understanding videogames and videogame culture. Students will analyze and critique a range of videogames, from serious and art games to indie and commercial games. Students will also explore game design firsthand by creating a text-based Twine project. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294O. Shakespeare, Not Shakespeare: The Fidelity Debate in Adaptation Studies. 3 Units.

It is a truth universally acknowledged, at least in high school English classrooms, that the book is always better than the movie. But is this actually the case? In fact, in recent years, many critics have challenged the assumptions that a film adaptation is necessarily inferior to its literary source and that an adaptation should strive to be as "faithful" to its source as possible. This has been a particularly important discussion for scholars who study Shakespeare. Shakespeareans have long been interested in examining the ways that Shakespeare's texts are realized in performance and repurposed in intellectual history. These critics might ask whether a radical adaptation of one of Shakespeare's plays might be in some ways more faithful to the "spirit" of Shakespeare's work than a traditional staging. At the same time, other scholars are focused on examining how adaptations of Shakespeare's plays help to redress the ways that his texts reflect, or may have even contributed to, outmoded cultural values and attitudes. They ask whether it might in fact be unethical to replicate the author's vision if his understanding of the world is out of date or regressive. In this class, we will interrogate these familiar but still pressing, debates, by considering several unconventional adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. These films may not be marketed as being "based on" Shakespeare's plays, but they may invoke his drama, including under-examined or uncomfortable aspects of his drama, all the same. Examining the relationship between Shakespeare's drama and its wildest revisions may encourage us to interrogate our preconceptions about artistic originality and influence. At what point does an adaptation go from being "Shakespeare" to "Not Shakespeare?" Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 294W. Reading and Writing About Social Justice. 3 Units.

For more than 80 years, the Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards have honored the best fiction and non-fiction books that deepen our understanding racism, anti-Semitism, colonialism, and sexism. Award winners include Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Toni Morrison, N. Scott Momaday, and Sonia Sanchez. We will read a selection of these winners and other texts in considering some of the most pressing questions of our time: Who are the writers that most inform and inspire our work towards equity and social justice? What are the symbolic and social forces that produce systems of hate and oppression? How might public speeches, memoirs, poetry, literature, and film transform hearts and minds? Where might intersectional and coalitional experiences of gender, sexuality, disability, and class speak together to oppose social injustice? Ultimately we will explore the diversity of human experience and identify paths towards a more just society. Students who have taken FSSO 153 may not receive credit for this course. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 295A. Homelands: Exile and Return in Palestine/Israel. 3 Units.

In both Israeli and Palestinian literatures and experiences, "homeland" refers to the same contested space in the Middle East, a space whose borders remain fraught and complex. The relationship to that place is central, but not at all straightforward, and so exile from the land and return to it have become a constitutive part of the historical narrative and political identity for both peoples in different ways. Throughout the semester we will interrogate what "home" and "land" mean in Palestinian and Israeli narratives through reading literary texts and historical sources, accompanied by secondary sources. How are the Israeli and Palestinian experiences of the land and exile from it similar and how are they different? How do historical circumstances and power dynamics shape and inform these experiences? We will discuss how identity and belonging rely on a specific location; what nationalism means for Palestinians and Israelis; how historical and political narratives are shaped; as well as the advantages and limitations of comparison. Texts might include poems by Mahmoud Darwish and Haim Nahman Bialik, stories by Ghassan Kanafani and Ronit Matalon, personal narratives and historical documents, such as the Israeli declaration of independence. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 295B. Interactive Digital Storytelling. 3 Units.

Imagine a story that asks you to choose what path a character takes next or that requires your touch to make the plot progress, a story where your involvement changes the course of events or the appearance on the screen. In this course, we will read just such multi-sensory and interactive digital stories, including choose-your-own-adventure/hypertext narratives, multimedia digital documentaries, visual narratives, world-building, transmedia stories, and narrative video games. We will consider how features like choice, interaction, image, location, touch, and sound contribute to the meaning of a work, to its cultural and social relevance, and to the experience of the reader/user. In addition to reading and writing about interactive digital stories, students will also be making their own interactive works. Through seminar discussions, research writing, and multi-modal making, we will explore the intricate and unconventional relationship between digital forms and narrative content to consider how the stories we read on the computer make sense (or in some cases fail to make sense!) and to consider the insights that such interactive works give into how we understand our networked culture and exercise our agency in digital spaces. Learning goals for the seminar include creating person-centered, active small and large-group discussions, increasing our digital literacy, developing fluency in conducting research and writing persuasive, evidence-based arguments, and gaining experience in oral and multimodal communication. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.

USSY 295C. Systems Thinking for Equity. 3 Units.

Systems thinking is a way to understand the world by focusing on how the elements (people, communities, organizations, natural environment, built environment, etc.) interact over time create patterns that underlie many of the problems and issues of our day along with the opportunities for innovation and transformation of systems. In this seminar, we ask if and how we might apply such an approach to advance equity and specifically efforts to address the complex biological, social, economic, and environmental issues of our day. Prereq: Passing letter grade in a SAGES First Seminar, Academic Inquiry (AIQS) Seminar, or FSTS 100.