

# HONORS 392 SEMINARS

SPRING 2024

This seminar counts toward AUCC credit. There are various topics, so choose one that is of interest to you!

## CONTEMPORARY EAST ASIAN CINEMA

Instructor | Hye Seung Chung

392.001 | TR 2:00 - 3:15 | CRN: 18132

This course examines representative and remarkable examples of both contemporary art cinema and commercial filmmaking in Japan, Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and South Korea. Students will explore how the global/local geopolitics specific to the post-Berlin Wall era (the dismantling of Cold War institutions; the passing of authoritarian regimes; the boom and bust of the Asian economy; the canonization of Asian films in the film festival circuit) have influenced the reshaping of New Asian cinemas across borders. The first section of our course will investigate the ways in which historical traumas (wars, massacres, revolutions, and uprisings) have been revisited and redressed in the post-Cold War cinemas of Japan, China, Taiwan, and South Korea. What is the relationship between history and national cinema? How do such concepts as imperialism, nationalism, postcolonialism, guilt and trauma play a role in films that shoulder the “burden of history” and represent the “unrepresentable”? The second section provides insights into selected auteurs and stars familiar to international cinephiles (such as John Woo, Chow Yun-fat, Wong Kar-wai, Zhang Yimou, Gong Li, Tsai Ming-liang, Kim Ki-duk, Oshima Nagisa, and Kitano “Beat” Takeshi). In the process, we will identify the themes, styles, genres and ideological/cultural content of East Asian film canons in the West. Are there specific aesthetic trends and thematic echoes among these auteur films from different nations? Is canon-making itself an Orientalist act of cultural imperialism? The final weeks we will devote to border-crossing films such as Ang Lee’s *The Wedding Banquet* (1993) and Park Chan-wook’s *Oldboy* (2003), works that highlight such critical concerns as diaspora, hybridity, transnationalism, and globalization.



## SPAIN AS DRAMA: FROM COMEDY TO TRAGEDY



Instructor | Jose Suarez-Garcia

392.002 | MWF 10:00 - 10:50 | CRN: 10565

Why do Spaniards regularly talk very loudly, and use many proverbs from literature and oral traditions in their daily language? Why are they such idealist individuals, and why do almost all mention in every conversation jamón serrano or manchego cheese, drink Rioja wine with meals, or cook with tons of olive oil? Why are Spaniards, familiar or unknown, often involved in political verbal confrontations and cannot seem to agree on regional identities? Why is there so much discussion and division about the monarchy as an institution in modern times? Why do literature, history and traditions play important roles in modern Spain? This seminar aims to answer some of these questions using drama and theater terminology to analyze and interpret modern Spanish society. Exploring as far back as the Spanish Golden Age and Spanish Commedia through modern society, students will read excerpts

from Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* (17th century) and Lorca’s *The House of Bernarda Alba* (20th century), explore Picasso’s *Guernica* painting (1937), evaluate the famous Mediterranean diet, judge the controversy of Catalonia seeking separation from Spanish monarchy, investigate the changes and the problems of urban areas and finally discuss the environment and climate change in Spain, a country politically, socially, and economically dedicated to respect the environment while also leaving tons of garbage on every street corner. At the end of the semester students will have a better understanding of Spanish society, its values, and its own identity as a member of the European Union as well as be able to critically discuss cultural peculiarities of modern Spain.

# FRIENDSHIP IN THE WESTERN WORLD: ANCIENT GREECE, MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

Instructor | Andre Archie  
392.003 | TR 2:00 - 3:15 | CRN: 10566

The purpose of the seminar is to critically analyze the ancient Greek conception of friendship – *philia* – (i.e., Plato and Aristotle) in relation to early modern and contemporary conceptions of friendship. According to Aristotle, friendship has to do with the self. Thus, in reflecting on friendship we enter upon self-discovery. In contrast to the ancients' preoccupation with the self, modern and contemporary reflections on friendship tend to focus on rules and acts. The main question of the seminar is, "Which position on friendship is more compelling: the ancient Greek, modern or contemporary position?"



## THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE



Instructor | Zach Hutchins  
392.002 | TR 12:30 - 1:45 | CRN: 10567

This course will invite students to read the Bible as they might a novel or poem, considering its text as text, and not as an oracular source of truth. Although we speak of "the Bible," this course will work to deconstruct the notion that this library of writings from the Judeo-Christian tradition is one book or even one clearly defined set of books. We will read the Bible using the tools of literary criticism, focusing more on narrative structure, literary devices, and intertextual exchanges than theology. Doing so will emphasize the human contributions to texts whose authorship has traditionally been attributed to God. Learning to read the Bible as literature reveals the remarkably beautiful ideas and moving language that have led to the preservation of these texts while also preparing students to better understand works in the Western tradition, many—and perhaps most—of which have been written in

response to or in conversation with this Judeo-Christian canon. Although the Bible is not a book, it has been the inspiration for many books, from Milton's *Paradise Lost* to Marilynne Robinson's *Gilead*, which students will be better prepared to appreciate after this course of study.

## THE ECOLOGY OF LANGUAGE

Instructor | Maite Correa  
392.005 | TR 9:30 - 10:45 | CRN: 10568

Linguists agree that all languages and dialects follow consistent grammatical patterns and that no language/dialect is inherently better than any other. Among other questions we will discuss the following: What does it mean to know language? How did language come about? Does language shape the mind? Does your language determine how you construe reality? What's the difference between human language and the communication systems of other animals? Are all languages equally complex? Are some more logical or more beautiful than others? Is there such a thing as a primitive language? Do some people speak more grammatically than others? Is the English language undergoing a process of decay? Do Inuit languages have hundreds of words for snow? Why can children acquire language with no explicit instruction, while they have to be taught to do much simpler tasks, such as tie their shoes or add and subtract?



## TIKKUN OLAM



Instructor | Anne Marie Merline

392.006 | TR 2:00 - 3:15 | CRN: 12844

"Tikkun Olam" is a Jewish concept defined by acts of kindness performed to perfect or repair the world. The phrase is found in the Mishnah, a body of classical rabbinic teachings. It is often used when discussing issues of social policy, ensuring a safeguard to those who may be at a disadvantage. This seminar is about community engagement and activism. Using *Bowling Alone*, *The Community Resilience Reader* and *The Great Good Place* we will learn effective community organizing, how to work with existing municipal, grassroots and other local groups to identify and complete one or several projects that need to be completed in Fort Collins that have to do with human and environmental sustainability.

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## FROM THE CRADLE TO THE GRAVE: ABRAHAM LINCOLN, WHAT'S UP WITH THAT HAT?

Instructor | Pam Vaughan Knaus

392.007 | MW 3:00 - 4:15 | CRN: 14059

\*\*\*This seminar contains a small, CSU-based service component.\*\*\*

As we examine Abraham Lincoln's life and times, we consider the man, both myths and truths. The focus of this seminar, America's 16th president, provides a portal through which to consider United States society and history. This seminar provides an introduction to comparative social history, written by an historian and lifelong Lincoln admirer. It uses broad cultural and geographic diffusion of American values and traditions over time to examine diverse and changing social, economic, and political meanings of the world's then-newest democracy. Examining different cultural settings and emphasizing the ways in which a single individual may alter history provides both challenge and quandary. Although America's antebellum years, then Civil War and Reconstruction eras demand attention as the most striking examples of Lincoln's pervasive impact, the seminar will consider Lincoln as a global phenomenon, exploring his impact in some European and African societies, for example. As an introduction, the seminar will confine itself to English language texts, but it will use a wide range of primary sources, including newspapers and journals, memoirs, correspondence, promotional materials, and photographs to introduce students to basic concepts of historical method and problems of evidence. Students will be encouraged to consider Abraham Lincoln's impact in particular historical contexts as a 'cultural process', from the manner of his nature through his adaption into the White House to the emergence of his distinctive proprietary and patriotic attitudes. Among the many topics absorbed, this seminar will return periodically to questions of American divisions and US inclusive aspirations, race and class relations, and the emergence and sustainability of a free labor market economy. Students' assignments will require a combination of reading, writing, and research skills, and the seminar will utilize through readings and discussion--the variety of academic materials available for the study of this vital subject.



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## YOU'D BE MURDERED FOR THIS: ART, POLITICAL REGIMES AND MORALITY



Instructor | Sarah Zwick-Tapley

392.008 | TR 12:30 - 1:45 | CRN: 16043

392.009 | TR 3:30 - 4:45 | CRN: 21805

**Warning: The material presented may be offensive to some students. This seminar covers extensive sexual violence.**

Imagine a painting so scandalous you'd be imprisoned. Imagine a play so threatening you'd be tortured. Imagine a book so controversial you'd be exiled for life. Imagine a film so revolutionary you'd be killed. Throughout history art has challenged dictators, religion and sexual norms and has been blamed for the destruction of morality and civilization. What are these works of art and what made them so threatening? And did these works of art succeed in bringing about the change so feared? This class will explore controversial art from around the world (Europe, Asia, South America and Africa) and look at the political, sociological, and psychological frameworks specific to each culture. Art forms covered will include theatre, dance, the visual arts, film and literature.