

Morning Group Seminars – 2018

Morning Groups run for 4 days, from 9:00 am – Noon.

Morning seminars will be capped at 15 participants. Additional participants will be added solely at the discretion of the convener.

Historical Fiction

The Historical Fiction Morning Group will discuss four novels this summer. Janet Edwards will lead off with a discussion of Anthony Trollope's *Can You Forgive Her?* Tom Stockdale will then moderate a discussion of George Saunders' *Lincoln in the Bardo*, considered by many critics to be one of the best books of 2017. David Dornan will lead a discussion of Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, a central work in the Native American canon, and we will conclude the group with discussion of Wendell Berry's *Hannah Coulter* facilitated by Joel Cunningham.

Convener: Mary Papke - papke@utk.edu

Exploring Seattle

Interested in visiting some of Seattle's attractions? This group will meet and head into the city via light rail to landmarks such as the Space Needle and Pike's Place Market. Let us know if you have any suggestions for what you'd like to see. Participants will be responsible for their own costs.

Convener: Jeremiah Howard – society@svhe.org

Pop Culture

The Pop Culture Morning Seminar examines the values that are presented, and received, through every imaginable form of popular culture, from broadcast television to video games, from pot boilers to heavy metal.

This year, in keeping with the conference theme, we are addressing freedom, power and personal identity as depicted, and as created, by pop culture.

- 1) Eric Ecklund (associate professor, Saint Francis University) will be leading the group in exploring Ada Palmer's debut 2016 science fiction novel *Too Like the Lightning*. Professor Palmer (University of Chicago) introduces the reader to a richly detailed future (set in 2454) in which changes in concepts of political affiliation, nation/state loyalties, religion, and gender identity create an apparently peaceful utopian world teetering on the brink of dystopian dissolution.
- 2) The group will do a field trip to the Museum of Pop Culture, to dive into some of Marvel's most beloved characters – like Spider-Man, Black Panther, and Doctor Strange -and their connection to and impact on issues of gender, race and mental illness.
- 3) Filmmaker activist John de Graaf, author of the international bestseller *Affluenza*, will present his current projects, *Beauty for All* and *The Backpacking Theory of Life*, and ways of reaching young people around issue of wealth and what we value.
- 4) Melissa Houghton (executive director, Women in Film and Video) will guide the group in a discussion of gender and objectification in film and television.

Attendees are asked to:

- 1) Read *Too Like Lightening* (and are encouraged to read the second and third books in the soon-to-be four book Terra Ignota series) and come ready to discuss the implications of this future society to our own turbulent present. Attendees may want to visit Professor Palmer's site and this interview for a deeper background on its exceptionally gifted author.
- 2) Watch and read
 - a. Black Panther (2018 film) and [http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/T'Challa_\(Earth-616\)](http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/T'Challa_(Earth-616))
 - b. Doctor Strange (2016 film) and [http://marvel.com/universe/Doctor_Strange_\(Stephen_Strange\)](http://marvel.com/universe/Doctor_Strange_(Stephen_Strange))
- 3) Read <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/green-life/backpacker-s-theory-life>
- 4) Email the convener a list of the pop culture you've consumed in the last 10 years or so that has been influential on your world view. You don't have to explain why, just a list will do.

Theorizing Culture

This year the group will be exploring the deeper philosophical and historical dimensions of the concept of personal identity. We will focus on chapters from Gerald Izenberg's *Identity: The Necessity of a Modern Idea* and Derek Parfit's *Reasons and Persons*. Izenberg traces the historical development of contemporary concepts of personal identity. He argues that while these concepts are not simply given as facts that we discover through introspection, they do have an objective foundation in our lives as social beings. Parfit argues that many of our passionately held beliefs about identity are false and that they distort our ethical judgments and our self-understanding. Participants should get the Parfit book on their own, but electronic copies of select chapters from Izenberg will be provided to all participants. Conveners: Allen Dunn - ardunn@utk.edu and Eric Bain-Selbo - ebainsel@iu.edu.

Vital Center

Discussions will center on the role of civil religion in fostering civility in public discourse. The group will be considering arguments put forth by Philip Gorski in his book *American Covenant: A History of Civil Religion from the Puritans to the Present*. Conveners: John Wilsey - johnwilsey@gmail.com and David Stewart - david.stewart@csulb.edu

Values Driven Teaching Workshop

Interested in exploring teaching methods grounded in fundamental values that drive your teaching? Want to receive honest feedback from your peers on your teaching strategies without the pressure of career evaluation? Excited about sharing teaching ideas with an interdisciplinary group of higher education instructors from institutions across the country? Need an excuse to justify conference travel? Participants in the Value-Driven Teaching Workshop will engage with practical pedagogical skills based on the fundamental values that drive their teaching, including:

- Values-Driven Pedagogy: Participants will discover the values that inform their teaching and how to capitalize on those values in their teaching
- Practical Pedagogical Skills: Participants will learn, share, and evaluate ready-to-use pedagogical techniques
- Teaching Practice: Participants will have the opportunity to practice a particular teaching skill in a low stakes, collegial setting
- Presentation Opportunity: Participants will share ideas, expertise, and experiences
- Peer Feedback: Participants will receive feedback on their teaching from supportive peers in a low pressure, interdisciplinary setting
- Certificate of Completion: Participants will receive a certificate certifying their successful completion of the workshop
- Free book: Participants will receive a complimentary copy of the book *Small Teaching* by James Lang

Convener: Melanie Howard - melanie.howard@fresno.edu

Writing Memory, Writing Life: The Crafting of Bio-Poetry

Historical, subversive, surreal, postcard, polaroid, embodied: bio-poetry or the poetry of identity can be deceptive, tough, and magically accessible. We all wonder who we are or who we were at different moments of our lives, in order to understand where we are going or what we can produce. Instead of trying to pin down this elusive form, we will examine several manifestations of it in order to expand our notion of what is possible in a bio-poem. We will play with appearance, discover potential source materials, and generate our own poems that bridge the ordinary and the extraordinary.

Convener: Roxana Cazan - rcazan@francis.edu