

Cannon Valley Elder Collegium

Course Descriptions

Spring Term 2009 March 23 – May 15, 2009

You May Contact Teachers for Additional Information

This page updated Feb 27

THE HISTORY AND CHEMISTRY OF CHOCOLATE Jerry Mohrig **jmohrig@carleton.edu**

We will examine the allure and romance of chocolate while probing the history of cacao from the Mayas and Aztecs to its embrace by 18th century Europeans and finally to the modern age. Along the way we will consider the evolution of chocolate from a drink for the nobility to mass produced candies for the masses and now a swing back to gourmet chocolates. We will explore the constituents and chemistry of chocolate and how its many varieties are manufactured. The class may take a field trip to a chocolatier in the Twin Cities and will watch the 2000 film *Chocolat*. We will use "The True History of Chocolate" by Sophie and Michael Coe as a text. It would be natural to do some judicious tasting and the sharing of recipes.

Jerry Mohrig is Professor of Chemistry emeritus at Carleton College, where taught a variety of chemistry courses for 36 years before his retirement in 2003. He also taught courses on Science and Society and Technology and History at Carleton. Jerry has been an amateur historian most of his life and believes that there is nothing wrong with having fun while learning the chemistry and history of one of our favorite foods.

FANITULLEN (THE DEVIL'S TUNE): MUSIC IN NORWEGIAN CULTURE

Ruth Marie Sylte rmsylte@yahoo.com

This class is an overview of Norwegian music from the Viking age through today's Roots/World music scene with an emphasis on the intertwined forms of traditional music and dance through the centuries. The various traditional instruments, the four major dance traditions, secular/sacred traditions and the unique geographical forms of music/dance will be introduced using audio, video and when possible, live examples. Also included will be new research in the Norwegian Sámi (formerly known as "Lapp") and Romani (also known as "gypsies" or "tatter") traditions.

Ruth Marie Sylte grew up in a Norwegian-American home and began serious study of Norwegian folk culture/music/dance in the late 1980s after her first trip to Norway. Since then, she has attended five Norwegian national folk music competitions, many smaller regional competitions and studied with music and dance "tradition bearers" in Norway. She has been an invited teacher and performer of traditional Norwegian music and dance at Norsk Hostfest since 2001. A graduate of St. Olaf College in political science and religion (church history), her academic interests have influenced her study of folk traditions to include broader contexts.

All Talking! All Singing! All Dancing! Myrna Johnson

This course will cover the history of movie musicals from before talkies to the present. Multi-media and possibly some guest artists will enliven the presentations in the way only Myrna can

do it. This promises to again be another exciting class.

Myrna Johnson served as Artistic Theater Director at the Northfield Arts Guild for 37 years. During that time she directed and produced many Broadway musicals and “regular” plays. In 1974 she and several other theater people established the Northfield Musical Theater (NMT) in conjunction with NAG Theater. As a company, NMT produced one, two, or three musicals each summer for over 25 years. Myrna retired as Artistic Director of NAG in 1996 but she has remained active as Theater and Guild Archivist.

E. M. FORSTER: TWO NOVELS —*Howard’s End* and *A Passage to India*. George Soule gsoule@charter.net

These are Forster’s two greatest novels, published in 1910 and 1924 respectively. They are great stories (and have been made into great films), but they differ in many significant ways. Happily, even though they are packed with meanings, neither of them is excessively long.

George Soule is Professor of English emeritus at Carleton College. He teaches the range of English literature from Shakespeare to Wordsworth to the 20th century British novel.

AFTER THE SOVIET UNION -- WHAT? Bill Woehrlin wwoehrli@carleton.edu

This course will begin with an analysis of the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. How can that dramatic event be explained? When the Soviet empire collapsed there was hope in the West that a new market-oriented, democratic Russia would emerge. The past 17 years have seen this hope partially fulfilled, but also seriously distorted. To evaluate the legacy of Yeltsin and Putin we will read and discuss the book by Lilia Shevtsova, *Russia: Lost in Transition*, a few articles with a different point of view, and some short selections of post-Soviet literature.

William F. Woehrlin, Professor of History Emeritus at Carleton College, taught Russian history, 19th century Europe, technology in history, and freshmen seminars on the American Revolution.

WHAT DOES THE NEWEST ARCHAEOLOGY TELL US ABOUT THE BIBLE

Ruth Hansen tulla_ruth@msn.com

In the last three years there has been much discussion and blaring headlines about ossuaries (bone boxes) found in the Holy Land. They have been attributed to those of Jesus, Herod, and James, the brother of Jesus. We will discuss the authenticity of each of these claims and many other finds (earliest synagogue in Jordan?). The course will include an introduction to Biblical archaeology and how we can learn more of the daily lives of Biblical people through recent excavations. There will be slides and DVD’s showing important sites mentioned in the Bible. One lecture will be devoted to the Dead Sea Scrolls and its ever-expanding relationship to early Christianity.

Ruth Hansen is a graduate of St. Olaf with a music degree and a former choral director. She later took graduate courses at the University of Wisconsin in Biblical Archaeology and has continued to study in this field through annual seminars and through her 21 trips to the Middle East. She claims that being old is an advantage; one is privileged to have known great men who are no longer alive! In the field of archaeology she is able to count the late Nelson Glueck, the man who discovered over 1,000 sites in the Negev and throughout the Middle East as one of her mentors. She was also surprised to see at the end of the two-hour special on T.V. of the Jesus

MOCKING THE SUPREME COURT Charles Umbanhower, Sr umbanhow@stolaf.edu

While many see the Supreme Court as the "least dangerous branch" and yet its work often stirs more political passion than the other two more dangerous ones. After a brief introduction to legal reasoning and how the Supreme Court functions, we will discuss a few recent decisions selected by the instructor. Then we will form ourselves as the Mock Supreme Court and select several cases from the current docket (2008-09) and collectively decide those cases through discussion and voting. The instructor will assume the role of the Chief Justice guiding the discussion and assigning opinions (briefs)

Charles Umbanhowar is Professor Emeritus at St. Olaf College where he taught, among other things, constitutional law for twenty-six years.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS TURKMENISTAN? Michelle Yarmakov

yarma001@Juno.com Having a long border with Afghanistan, Turkmenistan took on great significance for the United States after 9/11. In addition to its long border with Afghanistan, Turkmenistan also borders Iran, another area of concern for the United States. Its location interests the United States along with Turkmenistan's large reserves of both natural gas and oil. Besides energy and strategic interests, we will also discuss the history, geography and cultural life of Turkmenistan, a Sunni Muslim country. Come learn more about this ancient country that was once at the center of world affairs as part of the Silk Road and is once again becoming part of world affairs. Long neglected under Soviet rule, Turkmenistan is quickly becoming an important global player. For political, strategic and energy reasons, the United States and countries around the world are taking notice of Turkmenistan.

Michelle Yarmakov lived and worked in Turkmenistan for over two years as a US Peace Corps volunteer in the very first group of volunteers to enter Turkmenistan. Over the past few years, she has enjoyed teaching many people in Edina, Minneapolis and Northfield about Turkmenistan. She even taught a language class which included Turkmen and Russian, German and Chinese all four of the languages that she has studied. She has a Masters Degree in Russian and studied Russian and Chinese in China.

THE NATURE OF ORGANIC ARCHITECTURE: RALPH WALDO EMERSON TO FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT Barbara Evans BarbJEvans@aol.com

Explore the roots of Frank Lloyd Wright's organic architecture by examining the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson and other American transcendentalists. These same transcendentalists influenced the thoughts of others including Buckminster Fuller. The philosophy of living in harmony with nature was expressed in the words of Emerson and Thoreau and then reflected in the walls of Wright's structures like his Prairie School homes, the Johnson Wax building, Falling Water and many more. We'll read Emerson's "Nature" and other of his essays. We'll also read essays and speeches by other transcendentalists, organic thinkers, and Frank Lloyd Wright."

Barbara Evans taught American Literature, Drama, Debate and Composition in Rochester, MN for 34 years. She is a graduate of and has been a visiting professor at St. Olaf College, teaching public speaking and first year writing. Barbara is currently a substitute teacher at Shattuck-St. Mary's Academy in Faribault. Her interests include literary travel (Hemingway, Sandoz, McMurtry and others), amateur photography, and restoration of her arts and crafts home here in Northfield. Barbara also belongs to a preservation group working to restore the Park Inn, the only remaining Frank Lloyd Wright hotel located in Mason City, Iowa.

WAR AND PEACE IN A LAND CALLED HOLY: THE ROLES OF FAITH AND HOPE

Charles Lutz lutzch@comcast.net

The course explores the history of and current prospects for resolution of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis. It gives particular focus to behavior of the three Abrahamic faith traditions in both prolonging the conflict and in pursuing healing and reconciliation. Minnesota Jewish and Muslim voices are scheduled to be heard. Attention is given to roles of the U.S. government and of American citizens in pursuit of a just peace. Specific actions to be explored include: citizen advocacy, use of economic pressures, support of humanitarian assistance, and opportunities for solidarity visits.

Charles P. Lutz has visited Israel/Palestine eight times, five of them as leader of peace-seeking pilgrimage groups. He is Minnesota grassroots coordinator with Churches for Middle East Peace, a consortium of 22 church agencies focusing on U.S. policy. He is co-author (with Robert O. Smith) of “Christians and a Land Called Holy: How We Can Foster Justice, Peace, and Hope” (Fortress, 2006). His Minneapolis congregation has had a 20-year-long sister parish relationship with Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, Palestine. He is a graduate of Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa (B.A. In English, 1953), Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio (M.Div., 1957), and Wartburg gave him the honorary Doctor of Letters degree in 1987.

The following is for Web page only!

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04-03. It's “Holy” Land?—Who Says So?

(history of faith claims on the troubled land at the Mediterranean's SE corner, “from the river to the sea”)

04-10. A Land of Too Much Promise? How We Arrived at Today

(a review of peoples, “Chosen” or not, and the land most of them believe is theirs by divine will)

04-17. Other Perspectives: a Muslim American, a Jewish American

(input by two guest discussants who will present at this session)

04-24. Peace Processes: Facts on the Ground Keep Building Barriers

(an overview look at the conflict: failures from both sides over 6 decades of peace quest and today's sources of hope)

05-01. The Place of Political Advocacy Practiced by Americans

(role of U.S. government and how lobbying plays a part, for good or ill)

05-08. The Place of Economic Tools Used by Americans

(politics of money, from official U.S. grants to push for economic sanctions to promotion of private investment)

05-15. The Place of Humanitarian Assistance

(how outside aid—mostly from private sources—has helped people survive through decades of conflict)

05-22. For Concerned Americans: Where Now?

(what can we do hasten a just peace? and is there any hope?)

