

FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR

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Department Assistant: Marsha Peru

Mission

Every Barnard first-year student is required to take a First-Year Seminar during her first or second semester at Barnard. First-Year Seminars are designed to develop further the essential and prerequisite skills a student brings to Barnard in critical reading and analysis, writing, and effective speaking. First-Year Seminars are intellectually challenging interdisciplinary courses which explore important issues through significant texts ranging across genres and historical periods. Seminars also serve to initiate students into the intellectual community of the college.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students in First-Year Seminars will develop their skills in critical reading and analysis, writing, and effective speaking.
2. They will assess and use textual evidence in support of oral and written arguments.
3. Students will explore important issues through significant texts ranging across genres, disciplines, and historical periods.

First-Year Seminars fall into two categories: **Special Topics** and **Reacting to the Past**.

Special Topics seminars reflect the variety of faculty interests and expertise, and thus vary in topic from year to year. They offer students and faculty opportunities to explore topics of interest across disciplinary lines, genres, and historical periods. Use the "Courses" tab above to view the full Special Topics offerings; current semester offerings are indicated with schedule details.

In Reacting to the Past seminars, students participate in role-playing games that enable them to relive important intellectual debates in three separate historical moments.

In The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C., students draw on Plato's Republic as well as excerpts from Thucydides, Xenophon, and other contemporary sources to debate the prospects for Athenian democracy in the wake of the Peloponnesian War.

In Confucianism and the Succession Crisis of the Wanli Emperor, students study the Analects of Confucius and apply Confucian thought to issues of governance during the Ming dynasty. The final semester's final game varies by section. Some sections explore seventeenth-century Massachusetts, drawing on the Bible, Calvin's Institutes, and colonial trial testimony to participate in The Trial of Anne Hutchinson. Other sections draw on texts by Marx, Freud, and Wollstonecraft to explore the contest between women's suffrage advocates and labor activists for the hearts and minds of "Bohemian" Greenwich Village in the spring of 1913.

This program is supervised by the First-Year Experience Committee led by the First-Year Seminar Co-Directors: Pamela Cobrin (Senior Lecturer in English) and Laurie Postlewait (Senior Lecturer in French); Director of First-Year Writing: Wendy Schor-Haim (Senior Lecturer in English); Director of First-Year Writing Workshop: Cecelia Lie-Spahn (Lecturer in English)

Instruction in the First-Year Seminar Program is provided by the following faculty members:

Professors: Taylor Carman (Philosophy), Mark Carnes (History), Lisa Son (Psychology), Najam Haider (Religion), Debra Minkoff (Sociology), Rebecca Wright (Computer Science)

Associate Professors: Orlando Bentancor (Spanish), Severin Fowles (Anthropology), Horn (Spanish), Ellen Morris (Classics)

Assistant Professors: Nicholas Bartlett (Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures), Logan Brenner (Environmental Science), Gregory Bryda (Art History), Michael Campbell (Chemistry), Erica Drennan (Slavic), Gina Jae (Anthropology), Manu Karuka (American Studies), Karen Lewis (Philosophy), Emily Ng (Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures), Eugene Petracca (English), Francey Russell (Philosophy), Nathanael Shelley (Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures), Camilla Sturm (Anthropology), Timothy Vasko (Religion)

Professors of Professional Practice: Sandra Goldmark (Theatre), Alice Reagan (Theatre)

Lecturers, Senior Lecturers and Other Faculty:

Stephanie Beardman (Philosophy), Meredith Benjamin (English), Benjamin Breyer (English), Kristi-Lynn Cassaro (English), Monica Cohen (English), Kristin Carter (English), Pamela Cobrin (English), Patricia Denison (English), Margaret Ellsberg (English), Katie Glasner (Dance), Quincy Jones (English), Daniela Kempf (English), Cecelia Lie-Spahn (English), Andrew Lynn (English), Linn Cary Mehta (English), Shayoni Mitra (Theatre), Francesca Ochoa (English), John Pagano (English), Sonia Pereira (Economics), Alexander Pittman (Center for Engaged Pedagogy), Laurie Postlewait (French), Sedelia Rodriguez (Environmental Science), Jennifer Rosenthal (English), Karen Santos da Silva (French), Wendy Schor-Haim (English), Nina Sharma (English), Timea Szell (English), Duygu Ula (English), Penelope Usher (English), Margaret Vandenburg (English), Jennifer Worth (Reacting to the Past)

Courses of Instruction

Every Barnard first-year student is required to take a First-Year Seminar during their first or second semester at Barnard. Transfer students are not required to take First-Year Seminars.

Special Topics

FYSB BC1105 Language and Power. 3 points.

This course will address the relationship between language and power from a philosophical perspective. We will investigate questions such as: How does language influence the way we think of gender, race, society, and politics? What are the limits, if any, on free speech? In what ways, if any, can language be used to harm people? Some topics we will discuss include hate speech, trigger warnings, slurs, dog whistles, propaganda, and silencing. Readings will include philosophical papers and recent op-eds.

FYSB BC1107 RACE, SCIENCE, AND REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE. 4 points.

This course is about reproduction—a biological and social process that is often the target of deep-seated ideas about nation, culture, conflict, and definitions of life. With an emphasis on the reproductive justice movement in the United States, which centers the experiences and leadership of BIPOC women and LGBTQ people, we will explore a variety of literary works, films, journalism, public health studies, and policy/legal texts, all of which differently narrate, debate, script, and theorize about reproduction. Questions we will explore include: what is reproduction—scientifically, culturally, politically, and rhetorically? What is reproductive justice, and how is it distinct from reproductive rights and health? How have recent innovations in medicine and reproductive technologies both empowered and harmed reproductive experiences? And what kind of world does the reproductive justice movement urge us to imagine and create? Please note that the material for this class discusses obstetric violence; this material is important for understanding the relationships between race, science, and reproductive justice. Throughout the semester, we will discuss as a class how to work through this difficult material in respectful and inclusive ways. NOTE: This 4-credit version of First-Year Seminar (FYS)—FYS “Workshop”—is specially designed for students who believe they would benefit from extra support with their critical reading and academic writing skills. In addition to regular seminar meetings twice per week, students are also required to participate in six Friday “writing labs” over the course of the semester. The writing labs for this section will take place on the following Fridays, 11:40am-12:55pm: 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 3/26. These dates are for the Spring 2021 semester only.

FYSB BC1113 Feminist Futures. 3.00 points.

This course uses feminist and queer anti-racist engagements with science fiction as a starting point for considering speculation as a mode of inquiry and practice more generally. How and why do feminist authors, artists, activists, and theorists invoke the future in order to analyze and contest gendered inequalities and dominations that are experienced in the present? What are the consequences of speculation in the context of platform design and reproductive technologies? What is the role of imagination in dealing with archival documents? By posing these and other questions throughout the semester, we will explore numerous issues about the role of speculation, imagination, and forecasting in the everyday practice of feminist critique. The seminar meetings, readings, and assignments in this class all serve the larger goal of helping students cultivate intersectional approaches to the study of power

FYSB BC1114 Hot Stuff. 3 points.

Long before humans walked the earth; before dinosaurs were wiped out; before any sign of sentient life on earth; volcanoes were a feature of our planet. With the power to help create life, as well as wreak devastation and destruction, volcanoes inspire awe and terror in equal measure. This seminar will explore the science behind volcanoes, their impact on the environment and societies, as well as our enduring fascination with them through the lenses of history, arts, mythology and religion. Where and why do volcanoes erupt? How do they affect nature, climate and society? How has our understanding of these amazing natural phenomena evolved over time? Why do people stay in close proximity to volcanoes, despite the dangers? Can we predict when the next catastrophic eruption will occur? Can we harness the power of volcanic activity as alternative energy source? These are some of the many questions that students will seek to answer and will serve as a starting point for our deeper investigation into the subject throughout the semester. Students will study historical texts, case studies, current data and methods of analysis, as well as depictions of volcanoes in art and film. Group discussion, independent study and individual and group presentations. Students will research case studies and present their finding to the class.

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1114

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1114	001/00572	T Th 1:10pm - 2:25pm 207 Milbank Hall	Sedelia Rodriguez	3	16/16

FYSB BC1189 Enchanted Imagination. 3 points.

A survey of fantasy works that examines the transformative role of the Imagination in aesthetic and creative experience, challenges accepted boundaries between the imagined and the real, and celebrates Otherness and Magicality in a disenchanted world. Readings will be selected from fairy tales, Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest*; Romantic poetry by Blake, Coleridge, Keats, and Dickinson; Romantic art by Friedrich, Waterhouse, and Dore; Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Lewis Carroll's Alice books, Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*; Magical Realist works by Borges, Garcia Marquez, and Allende; Sondheim & Lapine's *Into the Woods*, Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*.

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1189

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1189	001/00723	M W 11:40am - 12:55pm 318 Milbank Hall	John Pagano	3	16/16

FYSB BC1196 Modernism in the City. 3 points.

In this course, we explore Modernism in literature, art, architecture, music and dance. How do these different disciplines express the explosive and jarring experiences of twentieth-century life? Primary sources will include the cubist paintings of Pablo Picasso, the poetry of T. S. Eliot, Gertrude Stein, and Langston Hughes, Bebop and Boogie Woogie jazz, Igor Stravinsky's classical music “The Rite of Spring,” International Style architecture, and Alvin Ailey's dance. Our classwork will be enriched by excursions throughout New York City.

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1196

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1196	001/00724	T Th 6:10pm - 7:25pm 404 Barnard Hall	Jennifer Rosenthal	3	16/16

FYSB BC1199 Losing Yourself: Absorption in Visual Media. 3 points.

How do we pay attention now: too well, or not well enough? This course aims to clarify the ongoing debate about both the value and the meaning of absorption in visual media. We will begin by comparing contemporary polemics on the decline of attention with writings by a generation of cultural critics writing in Germany in the 1920s and 30s, for whom distraction was both a symptom of and a response to an increasingly commodified culture. Next, we'll draw on recent theorists to help us consider how three representative works (a painting, a sequence in a video game, and a chapter from a novel) shape the way we attend to them. When we imagine the way we pay attention now, we tend to think of ourselves as *not* reading, and of the book as a medium in decline. In the second half of the class, we'll therefore turn our attention to the late eighteenth century, when it was widespread reading that seemed strange and new. Together, we'll focus on two mixed forms from the period – the epistolary novel and the ballad collection – that helped make reading itself at once troublingly distracting and dangerously absorbing.

FYSB BC1200 Banned: Dangerous Art. 3 points.

In this course we will engage with various forms of artistic production (literary, cinematic, pictorial, musical) that have been banned or censored by religious authority, governmental institutions, or by public opinion. While discussing these primary texts we will investigate who gets to censor art, to what ends, and according to which criteria. Who is protected from tasteless, subversive, or obscene art? How do these categories change with time, and from culture to culture?

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1200

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1200	001/00573	M W 11:40am - 12:55pm 227 Milbank Hall	Karen Santos da Silva	3	16/16

FYSB BC1286 Culture, Ethics and Economics. 3 points.

What if humans were only capable of caring for their own interests? What kind of economic world could we expect to find? One in which the common good would be attained by market forces, or one in which many would be left behind? This course uses a diversity of sources to examine the interplay of culture, ethics and economics. The starting point is Adam Smith's work. Economists and policy makers have focused on one side of Adam Smith's work represented by self-regarding behavior and the supremacy of the invisible hand in market functioning. However, Adam Smith also pointed out that one of humans' central emotions is "sympathy", a natural tendency to care about the well-being of others. In light of the recent events as well as research this other side of Adam Smith's work appears now more relevant. We analyze evidence of cooperative versus self-regarding behaviors and its relationship with the economy, human evolution and cultural values in a variety of settings. Readings include works from Adam Smith, Milton Freedman, Charles Dickens, David Rockefeller and Chris Gardner.

FYSB BC1294 Art, Sex and American Culture. 3 points.

Sex is the ultimate forbidden public topic and yet from the New England Puritans' sermons to Bill Clinton's (in)famous affair, sex has often been publicly staged in dramatic, literary, religious, political, legal and social forums. In this seminar, we will explore how issues of sex and sexuality have insinuated themselves into the formation of American identity. We will examine texts from the seventeenth century to the present with a particular emphasis on the arts, politics and sex. Texts include Puritan sermons, Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Tennessee Williams's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Suzan-Lori Parks's *Venus*, photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe, literature from Margaret Sanger's birth control movement, and theoretical works by Michel Foucault, Laura Mulvey and Judith Butler.

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1294

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1294	001/00725	M W 10:10am - 11:25am 119 Milstein Center	Pamela Cobrin	3	15/16

FYSB BC1296 The Hudson: America's River. 3 points.

Called "America's River," the Hudson not only runs right behind our campus, but right through American history. Throughout American history the Hudson River has been a complex social and cultural entity, simultaneously a commercial conduit, a historic place at the center of the American Revolution, an industrial resource, and a privileged site for aesthetic experiences and the as birthplace of modern environmentalism. In this course you will explore the Hudson in relationship to the varied historical communities which have made meaning with it, identifying its contributions to discourses of nation and nature, but also race, gender, art and science. Readings will include literary works by Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper as well as essays and poems on subjects from fairies to trees to architecture to railroad travel. Close analysis of works of architecture, landscape design, and the iconic paintings of the Hudson River School will be accompanied by an exploration of the various methods for "reading" these objects and paintings. Visits to Museum collections and to sites along the river will be an important part of the curriculum.

FYSB BC1336 Witches. 3 points.

From ancient Greece to "Wicked," the figure of the witch has fascinated and frightened, compelled and repulsed. In this seminar, we'll analyze written and visual texts from Homer to The Brothers Grimm and beyond to develop a deeper understanding of the witch and the anxieties about gender and power that she represents.

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1336

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1336	001/00574	T Th 1:10pm - 2:25pm 406 Barnard Hall	Wendy Schor- Haim	3	15/16

FYSB BC1337 Feminism & Politics of Anger. 3 points.

Of late, much attention has been given to the political role of feminist anger. However, not all feminist anger is received or interpreted in the same way; not all women have had the same freedom to express or represent anger. This course asks us to think critically about expressions and perceptions of anger. How do race, sexuality, gender identity, class, and ethnicity shape who is perceived as "angry" and whose anger is taken seriously? What other affects circulate and interact with anger: from rage and irritation to wonder and joy? We'll begin with the figure of the "feminist killjoy," as theorized by Sara Ahmed and will consider texts by authors including Audre Lorde, Adrienne Rich, June Jordan, Susan Stryker, and Nella Larsen, alongside manifestos, comics, film, visual art, and zines.

FYSB BC1400 Walking and Looking. 3 points.

Walking and looking are among the most "natural" of human activities. But what really goes on—physiologically, culturally, socially—when we engage in them? And what can we learn if we examine the two practices together, as fundamental parts of how humans explore their world? This course will study how the interacting behaviors of walking and looking have been represented in word and image, from the Bible to Impressionist painters to Hollywood films. Our base texts will be *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* by Rebecca Solnit (2000) and *On Looking: A Walker's Guide to the Art of Observation* by Alexandra Horowitz (2013).

FYSB BC1421 Crossing Borders: Americas. 3 points.

This course cuts across the borders between North, South and Central America and the Caribbean, in a search for the ways in which literature illuminates different aspects of American identity. We see the Americas as active historical and aesthetic agents, acting and interacting with each other. We might even say that modernity, in the sense of freedom from tradition, first developed in the Americas; as a result, the literatures of the Americas are characterized by diversity and innovation from their beginning. We will devote particular attention to the roots of Modernism in North and South America at the end of the 19th century, and the development of modernism, post-modernism and post-colonialism in the 20th and early 21st centuries

FYSB BC1422 Art, AIDS, Activism. 3 points.

This seminar explores the varied ways artists responded to the AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s. As government indifference persisted and deaths soared, artists became radicalized and contemporary art became a vehicle for activism. We will follow different tactics in artwork responding to AIDS including the use of gay desire as a weapon and emblem of the fight for visibility. The work we will view, think about, discuss, and write about is political, often angry, and always tinged with loss. Because AIDS affected marginalized communities, whose histories are still being told, we will examine a range of artists and materials that includes but also moves beyond the gay white male perspective. We will spend time with videos by Juanita Mohammad, visual art by Kia LaBeija, Feliz Gonzalez-Torres, and David Wojnarowicz, plays by Reza Abdoh and Tony Kushner, and the writings of Audre Lorde, Essex Hemphill, and Sarah Schulman. The final project will be an academic/creative hybrid: students will develop and pitch their own activist artwork.

FYSB BC1460 Memory. 3 points.

Memory is arguably the most important faculty that we possess. Not surprisingly, memory has been a ubiquitous topic in poetry, science, fiction, and in the media. Ironically, memory's value is perhaps best understood when it ceases to exist. Indeed, it isn't hard to imagine the devastation that comes with memory loss. In this course, we will survey various components of memory, including its role in writing and history, and its existence in various non-human populations. In addition, we will explore the fragility of memory, including distortions, unusual memories, and basic forgetting. Readings will include poems, theoretical essays, scientific articles, and fiction. Assignments will consist of essays, opinion pieces, and creative stories. Students will also participate in a final in-class debate. Readings will include works from William Blake, James Joyce, Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, Emily Dickinson, Ben Jonson, Mary Carruthers, Francis Yates, Aristotle, William James, Elizabeth Loftus, Spinoza, Luria, J.L. Borges, S. Freud, Oliver Sacks, Truman Capote

FYSB BC1465 On Dreams and Nightmares. 3 points.

In the dead of night it is not uncommon for even the most socially staid of individuals to fly, to ride an elephant at breakneck speed, to visit with the dead, or to expose themselves in public. Ancient Egyptians struggled to understand how and why we dream, as have countless individuals in other times and cultures. Some thinkers, ancient and modern, have dismissed dreams as essentially meaningless byproducts of natural processes. Others have taken dreams seriously as a primary means of access to an ordinarily imperceptible world in which one can commune with spirits and deities and receive from them valuable information about future events or even one's own health. The implications of this belief have led to vigorous theological debates as to whose dreams may be trusted (and, alternatively, whose need to be actively suppressed). From Freud onward, many have felt that dreams offer the key not to other worlds but to the complicated realm of the psyche. Over the course of our semester we'll look at how scientists, philosophers, hypochondriacs, pious pagans and monotheists, opium addicts, psychologists, playwrights, novelists, artists, and film directors have understood dreams and been inspired by them. Authors whose works we'll read include Aristotle, Cicero, Chung Tzu, Freud, Carl Jung, Andre Breton, H.P. Lovecraft, Jorge Borges, Ursula Le Guin, Neil Gaiman, and many others. Special attention will likewise be paid to the phenomenon of lucid dreaming and to the immense influence this practice has had on the creative output of both writers and filmmakers.

FYSB BC1466 Sustainability. 3 points.

Sustainability is being hailed as the solution that is going to link activists, citizens, and corporations to solve the world's environmental problems. However, there are many ways to define the term and assess the long-term effects of so-called sustainable measures. In this course, we will examine current and historical writings about human interactions with the environment in order to understand and identify our most profound environmental challenges and the most appropriate responses. Responding critically to the ideas of the past, we will also ask how our views have changed over time and what it might take to tackle the current large-scale.

FYSB BC1469 Liberation. 3 points.

Liberation can be defined as freedom from limits on thought or behavior. More specifically, it can be defined as setting someone (or oneself) free from imprisonment, slavery, or oppression. This seminar examines political, philosophical, aesthetic, and theological traditions and movements for liberation, with an emphasis on collective liberation.

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1469

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1469	001/00726	T Th 6:10pm - 7:25pm 403 Barnard Hall	Manu Karuka	3	15/16

FYSB BC1474 Think Like A Scientist: From Plato to Hawking. 3 points.

This course will examine the "scientific worldview" throughout the history of the Western world. Key questions will include: how do science and philosophy intersect to influence our views of nature?; how does science help us to understand our place in the world and in the universe?; what happens when objective scientific inquiry clashes with political and societal interests?; how does popular opinion affect the way that science is conducted? In attempting to answer these questions, we will reflect on what it means to use what we have learned (from both science and history) to synthesize new viewpoints that can have a positive impact on our future.

FYSB BC1583 CARIBBEAN DIASPORA LITERATURE IN NEW YORK. 3 points.

Historically, Caribbean cultures have been profoundly affected and shaped by the massive displacement and migration of their populations. In this course, we will examine how this condition of displacement is articulated in the writings of the Caribbean diaspora and how these literary representations of mobility, migration, and intercultural contact reflect current globalizing processes and discourses. Texts will be drawn from the Francophone, Anglophone, and Hispanic Caribbean diaspora. These include the novel *The Mimic Men* by the recent Nobel-Prize-winning Trinidadian writer V.S. Naipaul; the novel *Lucy* by the Antiguan writer Jamaica Kincaid; and short stories by Junot Díaz and Edwidge Danticat, writers of Dominican and Haitian descent respectively, the latter a Barnard graduate. These readings will be complemented by essays from critics such as Édouard Glissant, Stuart Hall, and James Clifford.

FYSB BC1597 Taboo and Transgression. 3 points.

This seminar explores taboo and transgression within a range of mythic, scientific, anthropological, psychoanalytical, feminist, and literary work. Topics include the treatment of the corpse during the Paleolithic, the centrality of the incest taboo in kinship studies, and the equation of secular modernity with the successive breaking of taboos.

FYSB BC1598 Building Utopia. 3 points.

Building Utopia examines the rich tradition of utopian thinking in literature, social philosophy, architecture, and the visual arts. Here, utopia is explored in its modern form: as a call to transform the world through human planning and ingenuity. Aside from an important excursus on Thomas More's pivotal novel *Utopia* (1516), the course centers on nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers whose often wild and idealistic imaginings profoundly affected the shape of the real world. We'll read and explore the works of Charles Fourier, Edward Bellamy, the Italian Futurists, and Le Corbusier, among many others. The purpose of the course is to better understand the role that the utopian imagination has played in the construction of power.

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1598

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1598	001/00727	T Th 10:10am - 11:25am LI018 Milstein Center	Ralph Ghoche	3	16/16

FYSB BC1599 Tipping Points. 3 points.

The printing press helped pave the way for the scientific revolution and the invention of human rights. What will transpire in the digital age of artificial intelligence and globalization? This seminar questions whether intellectual, economic, technological, and ethical tipping points transform what it means to be human. Authors include Locke, Jefferson, Shelley, Freud, Rushdie, Ishiguro, McLuhan, Lyotard, and Offill.

FYSB BC1707 Confession. 3 points.

Not offered during 2022-23 academic year.

This seminar explores the notion of "confession" in many manifestations (autobiography, memoir, sacrament/ritual, political/judicial performance, public spectacle/confessional culture) and from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (history, literature, psychoanalysis, theology, cultural studies). Readings include: Augustine, *Confessions*; Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1; Ginzberg, *The Cheese and the Worms*; Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*; *Miranda v. Arizona*; Gillian Slovo, *Red Dust*; Jackson, *The Politics of Storytelling*; Bauer, *The Art of the Public Grovel*; Cole, *The Torture Memos*; Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*; "The Lives of Others" (film; 2006, Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck).

FYSB BC1709 DRAMA, THEATRE, AND ART. 3.00 points.

Drama, Theatre, and Art will consider the ways in which the performing arts and the visual arts help change the ways we see art and life. Beginning with reimagined classics and Shakespeare's plays, we will move to the 18th-21st centuries and note how views of individual agency, social justice, and collective responsibility have changed over time. We will also ask what the performing arts and visual arts of the past have to say about issues confronted in the arts of the present. This will help us to understand how evolving aesthetic movements such as realism, impressionism, and modernism promote and critique our cultural perspectives and our social values. Plays include Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Timberlake Wertenbaker's *Our Country's Good*, Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* and *Les Blancs*, and Yasmina Rez's *Art*; novels include Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*; musicals include Stephen Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George* and Rachel Chavkin's *Hadestown*. Art from The Metropolitan Museum, The Museum of Modern Art, and other sites will promote student engagement with visual and verbal interactions and cross disciplinary conversations

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1709

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1709	001/00731	T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm 404 Barnard Hall	Patricia Denison	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1713 Things and Stuff. 3 points.

How do our material choices shape our cultural and individual narratives? How do the things we make, buy, use, keep, and discard tell stories, impact our environment, and help define who we are? Americans create over 125 million tons of landfill every year, and up to 60%-80% of global greenhouse gas emissions have been traced to household consumption (food, stuff, and transport). With this contemporary reality as our reference point, we will examine how designed and built objects contribute to the human story over time, and how our decisions about "things and stuff" might change our stories moving forward.

FYSB BC1715 ARTS OF ADAPTATION. 3.00 points.

Can a ballet tell the same story as a Shakespeare tragedy? Do the violent fantasies of a fairytale shape romantic comedy? What does Bollywood have to do with Victorian England? Can ancient mythology animate slave narrative? Using as textual anchors Grimm's *Snow White*, Ovid's *Medea*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, this course will explore poems, paintings, films, musicals, dance, illustration, advertisement and song to consider the accretion of meaning that results when stories cross, historical, cultural, and generic borders

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1715

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1715	001/00732	T Th 4:10pm - 5:25pm 406 Barnard Hall	Monica Cohen	3.00	16/16

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1715

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1715	001/00576	T Th 4:10pm - 5:25pm 406 Barnard Hall	Monica Cohen	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1722 Writing American Lives. 3 points.

This interdisciplinary course explores the problem of representing American experience, one's own or someone else's, in the context of a nation-state's fraught history of self-fashioning. What motivates a person to tell his or her life story, or to investigate someone else's, and how are these stories bound by both authors and readers to narratives of citizenship, belonging, and/or exclusion? What motivates a writer to share what she shares, and what motivates an audience to demand what it demands from her? What claims about the exemplary or excessive qualities of the life story are made, or are emulated, by the life story's readers? In addition to critical consideration of biography and memoir in traditional media, your work in this class will include examinations of the fake memoir and the digital overshare; you will also be invited to curate a branded footprint of your own, using tools of new media.

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1722

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1722	001/00733	M W 1:10pm - 2:25pm 202 Milbank Hall	Kristin Carter	3	16/16

FYSB BC1724 Postcolonial Comics. 3 points.

In postcolonial studies, we look at the history, politics, and culture of countries that were once colonized. In literature, this work is done through careful close-reading and paying attention to how the struggle for independence is represented in literary texts, both on an individual and collective level. In this course, we will push the boundaries of the discipline of postcolonial studies and use its methodologies to read about locations and peoples that weren't formerly (or formally) colonized (for example, Ancient Greece, New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina, 20th century Iran, and female Jewish immigrants in New York city circa 1910). We'll also investigate why graphic novels present an appropriate medium for studying postcolonialisms.

FYSB BC1725 Mystics: Medieval and Modern. 3 points.

This course will compare and contrast medieval and modern mysticism, or aspirations toward the sublime. Through careful examination of literature, art, and music, we will explore how peoples from distinct cultures and time periods engaged in various rhetorical strategies to express their union with God. We will discuss how mystics of all stripes, from Hildegard of Bingen, a twelfth-century German nun, and Rebecca Cox Jackson, a formerly enslaved person in antebellum Philadelphia, to Kazimir Malevich, the founder of Soviet Suprematism, enlisted the written word, bodily gesture, vocalized song, and painted form in their attempts to convey the transcendent. Museum visits are required.

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1725

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1725	001/00734	M W 10:10am - 11:25am 214 Milbank Hall	Gregory Bryda	3	15/16

FYSB BC1727 Periodic Tales of the Elements. 3 points.

What is the "cosmic history" of the atoms that compose our bodies and the world around us? How do these elements come together to make us during life's fleeting journey? What becomes of our atoms after we die? In happy coincidence, 2019 is the 150th anniversary of Dimitri Mendeleev's publication of an organized chart of the chemical elements, as well as the year of Walt Whitman's 200th birthday. We will celebrate the Periodic Table with Mendeleev as one of humanity's great intellectual achievements and sing elemental songs with Whitman on scales minute and enormous, instantaneous and eternal. Readings to include Whitman's "Song of Myself," Primo Levi's The Periodic Table, Oliver Sacks's Uncle Tungsten, and a selection of Shakespeare's Sonnets.

FYSB BC1729 AMERICA'S SOCIAL DIVIDES. 3.00 points.

This first year seminar explores some of the central cleavages dividing American society today, along such lines as social class, region, race, and political ideology. We will focus how social divisions are constituted, experienced, questioned, and bridged. Most of the assigned material will be based on primary research in the social sciences, along with a small number of documentaries, novels, and/or memoirs. Assigned books may include Arlie Hochschild, Strangers in their Own Land; Eric Klinenberg, Palaces for the People; Barbara Ransby, Making All Black Lives Matter; Rachel Sherman, Uneasy Street: The Anxieties of Affluence; and Jeffrey M. Berry and Sarah Sobieraj, The Outrage Industry: Political Opinion Media and the New Incivility

FYSB BC1730 THINKING THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS: A LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE. 3 points.

What is the origin of the notion of "natural resource"? What is the connection between past and present colonialism and the current ecological crisis in Latin America? And, what is the relation between cultural diversity and a sustainable economy? In this seminar, we will explore these questions (and more) by looking at the history of Latin America through primary and secondary texts, including Latin American Literary, philosophical, aesthetic, legal, political, and economic texts. We will read both canonical and non-canonical writings from the colonial and modern periods as well as indigenous literature. The course will place this tradition in dialogue with the most recent developments of eco-feminism, materialist ontologies, discussions of environmental justice, "deep ecology," and the rights of non-human nature. Readings will be selected from Domingo Sarmiento, Jose de Acosta, Andres Bello, Domitila Barrios, Ivonne Guevara, Enrique Leff, Luis Sepulveda, Donna Haraway, Jason Moore, McKenzie Wark, Timothy Morton, Naomi Klein, and John Clark. Throughout the course, we will consider how indigenous ideals of solidarity, reciprocity, and emancipation offer an alternative to strategies of domination.

FYSB BC1731 FROM EPIC HERO TO SUPER HERO. 3.00 points.

The enormous box office success of recent moves like Avengers: Endgame, Wonder Woman and the Batman franchise attests to our present societal fascination with heroes. Yet this fascination is a millennia-old phenomena. Gilgamesh, one of the oldest surviving literary works in the world, tells the story of a great hero and his accomplishments. What accounts for the enduring appeal of heroes throughout history, across cultures and in different forms of media? What connects ancient epic heroes like Gilgamesh to modern superheroes like Batman? This seminar will seek answers to these questions by comparatively studying a range of artistic texts depicting heroes. Course readings will include Gilgamesh, Beowulf, Watchmen, The Dark Knight Returns, as well as studies by Marco Arnaudo, Joseph Campbell and Grant Morrison, among others. Students in this seminar will have the option of taking part in a class excursion to see Marvel's upcoming Black Widow movie

FYSB BC1732 FEMINISM # POLITICS OF ANGER (WKSHOP). 4.00 points.

Of late, much attention has been given to the political role of feminist anger. However, not all feminist anger is received or interpreted in the same way; not all women have had the same freedom to express or represent anger. This course asks us to think critically about expressions and perceptions of anger. How do race, sexuality, gender identity, class, and ethnicity shape who is perceived as “angry” and whose anger is taken seriously? What other affects circulate and interact with anger: from rage and irritation to wonder and joy? We’ll begin with the figure of the “feminist killjoy,” as theorized by Sara Ahmed and will consider texts by authors including Audre Lorde, Adrienne Rich, June Jordan, Susan Stryker, and Nella Larsen, alongside manifestos, comics, film, visual art, and zines. NOTE: This 4-credit version of First-Year Seminar (FYS)—FYS “Workshop”—is specially designed for students who believe they would benefit from extra support with their critical reading and academic writing skills. In addition to regular seminar meetings twice per week, students are also required to participate in six ‘writing labs’ over the course of the semester. The writing labs for this section will take place on the following Fridays, 11:40 am-12:55 pm: 1/31, 2/14, 2/28, 3/6, 3/27, and 4/3

FYSB BC1733 Women # Comedy. 3.00 points.

“What a language it is, the laughter of women, high-flying and subversive. Long before law and scripture we heard the laughter, we understood freedom.” -Lisel Mueller “I’m not funny, what I am is brave.” - Lucille Ball This course focuses on the intersection between comedy and gender, race, class and sexuality. We will explore laughter as a subversive act and how the identity of a “funny woman” can be both dangerous and liberating. As Margo Jefferson writes, “Given the history of social restriction and sexual regulation, how many women have been in a position to – or been willing to – take these risks?” We will explore how the tools of comedy can be used to make mischief, to transgress the bounds of genre and form and to contest popular ideas about difference and power. How can humor be illuminating? How can humor be feminist? How can humor be intersectional? How can humor help us tell the hard truths? Can we laugh at oppression without laughing it off? At every step, we will put our inquiry into action – trying our hand at satire, sketch and storytelling to explore our own intersections. Readings may include Audre Lorde’s *Sister Outsider*, Samantha Chanse’s *Lydia’s Funeral Video* and Patricia Lockwood’s *Motherland Fatherland Homelandsexuals*

FYSB BC1734 CULTURE, IDENTITY, & THE SELF. 3 points.

In this First Year Seminar, we explore how people discover themselves and others in the frameworks of different cultures and times. Our focus is on the idea of the self (who are you?) and the other (who are you not?), and we investigate these concepts as they appear in six great books from Western and Non-Western sources. The texts include: *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, *The Aeneid*, *The Golden Legend*, *Austin’s Emma*, *Satrap’s Persepolis*, and *Woolf’s A Room of One’s Own*. Additionally, we will contrast these with their movie versions and a visit to a museum. Students in this class will develop key fundamental skills, such as active reading and analysis, how to write in different rhetorical modes, and how to verbalize and present ideas effectively.

FYSB BC1735 IS GOD DEAD?. 3 points.

Friedrich Nietzsche’s 1882 pronouncement that “God is dead” is one of the most notorious and widely-referenced criticisms of the relationship between Theology and Modernity in contemporary thought. But what does it mean to say “God is dead,” in fact? What was Nietzsche talking about? How might this statement be “true”? How might it be inaccurate? In this class, we will use Nietzsche’s statement as a jumping-off point to begin thinking about how modern ideas about the continuities and distinctions between religion and politics developed between the 16th to the 20th centuries in such a way that to say “God is dead” became a meaningful summation of Modernity. In addition to Nietzsche, we will read classical and critical works of political theology from a diverse array of authors such as Jean Bodin, Thomas Hobbes, Benedict de Spinoza, Beatriz Kampa Vita, Carl Schmitt, Max Weber, Zora Neale Hurston, W.E.B. DuBois, and Simone Weil to answer for questions: What does it mean to talk about God? Is God dead? If so, when and how did God die? And if God is not dead, how has God been kept alive – and where can this figure be found today?

FYSB BC1736 TECH & SOCIETY: GOOD, BAD & OTHER. 3 points.

Computing and information technology has improved our lives in many ways, contributing to significant advances in science and medicine; making it easy and efficient to communicate with people across the world; and enabling online business and recreational activities; and more. However, the same technologies can also have negative impacts, such as the move to a surveillance society and surveillance capitalism; major disruptions in the workforce of the future as automation becomes more widespread; and social media contributing to depression in young people and the weaponization of disinformation. This seminar will explore technical, cultural, legal, and economic factors that can impact how computing technology is used, while raising the question of how to encourage and ensure that these technologies are used for good, while eliminating or mitigating the potential negative impacts.

FYSB BC1737 SURVEILLANCE, CONTAGION, AND CARE. 3 points.

Very recent events have forced local, regional, and international communities to once again confront contagion as a globally shared event. This seminar examines some of the historical and contemporary expressions of contagion as moral and ethical experience. We will interrogate the surveillance systems that are utilized by modern governments and economies not only as public health goods and private sector assets, but also legacies of conquest, colonialism, and capitalism. Finally, we explore the role of care within these systems, its inherent power dynamics, and the politics of vulnerability. Texts include (and are not limited to) Katherine Anne Porter’s *Pale Horse, Pale Fire*; excerpts from Camus, Galeano, Sontag, Foucault; historical and sociological accounts of tuberculosis; anthropological and ethnographic accounts of the global HIV epidemic; feminist philosophers on the politics of care and the sciences (e.g., Sandra Laugier, Annemarie Mol); and written and audio journalism topical to these accounts.

FYSB BC1738 PERFORMING PUBLICS # POLITICAL ACTIVISM. 3.00 points.

This seminar examines how different publics engage in the political process through performance. We start our exploration with the notion of "the publics" as introduced by the twentieth-century German philosopher Jürgen Habermas and then expand our view of this concept to the contemporary political setting. We will look at both how elected representatives use theatrical tropes to shape their public personas, and equally at how popular protests stage large scale public interventions. How might performance as a series of citational strategies allow us to think about the political process? We will draw heavily on the works of feminist performance scholars like Judith Butler, Shannon Jackson and Peggy Phelan, who discuss the different ways in which gendered bodies navigate public space. In this seminar students will be required to draw on their personal experiences of public performances. This may be in the shape of their own activism, politics in their hometowns, their favorite public figures, or memorable live shows they have watched. Writing ethnographically, students will engage with the theorists we read to investigate how performance has shaped their lives. For Fall 2020 we will be focusing on public responses to the COVID-19 crisis. Different populations reacted differently to the global pandemic. From local politicians, medical professionals, frontline workers to everyday citizens, everyone reflected, in different measure, on the loss of the public sphere. We assembled in the digital commons instead. How did we deal with our own isolation from public life while at the same time thinking of keeping the collective body safe from contagion? What are the ways in which we engaged with our community to reaffirm a common humanity?

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1738

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1738	001/00735	T Th 2:40pm - 3:55pm LI016 Milstein Center	Shayoni Mitra	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1739 Dead and Undead (Wkshop). 4.00 points.

What does it mean to be dead? Why the fascination—across time and culture—with conceiving of ways in which the dead can become undead? And how is being undead different than being alive? To investigate and trouble the boundaries between life and death (and un-death), we will analyze works across genres—among them horror, comedy, myth, folklore, and medicine—discussing near-death experiences, beating-heart cadavers, and a range of figures including zombies, ghosts, and other revenants. Readings will include texts and excerpts from Montaigne, Shakespeare, Zora Neale Hurston, Ovid, Toni Morrison, Carmen Maria Machado, Edgar Allan Poe, Nalo Hopkinson, and Mary Shelley, along with Japanese death poems, the Netflix series *Russian Doll*, and Tim Burton's *Frankenweenie*. NOTE: Several of the readings for this class involve references to or representations of violence, sometimes explicit. NOTE: This 4-credit version of First-Year Seminar (FYS)—FYS "Workshop"—is specially designed for students who believe they would benefit from extra support with their critical reading and academic writing skills. In addition to regular seminar meetings twice per week, students are also required to participate in six Friday "writing labs" over the course of the semester. The writing labs for this section will take place on the following Fridays, 2:40-3:55pm: 1/21, 1/28, 2/4, 2/11, 2/18, and 2/25. APP REQUIRED BY 11/5 @ 5PM – please fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/aPxYrdD3drP8SNv9>

FYSB BC1740 Approaching Trauma. 3.00 points.

Trauma today is evoked in a variety of contexts. But what precisely are we referring to when we use this term? Drawing on psychoanalytic and anthropological approaches, our seminar will interrogate the politics of diagnosing, treating and healing from disturbing past events. We will watch films and read case histories of hysteria, studies of infants, and attempts to integrate mind, brain and body. The course will also examine the rise of PTSD, attend to questions of intergenerational transmission, and learn about responses to national and racial trauma. Featured authors include Sigmund Freud, Beatrice Beebe, Allan Young, Marilyn Ivy and Resmaa Menakem

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1740

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1740	001/00577	M W 1:10pm - 2:25pm 407 Barnard Hall	Nicholas Bartlett	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1741 Science and Society on Screen. 3 points.

When we turn on TV and go to the movies we are typically looking to be entertained. When it comes to science on screen is the purpose for entertainment or education? How do science-related movies and TV reflect but also impact society? Can movies and TV be used to discuss the complex intersection between science and society and how are they received by the public? To discuss these questions and more, we will analyze texts, including *Silent Spring* and *Demon Haunted World* and visual media such as *Hidden Figures*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Erin Brokovich*.

FYSB BC1742 Journeys. 3 points.

The journey is a central motif in narrative writing dating back many thousands of years. The classical example of the journey comes from the experiences of Odysseus in Homer's *The Odyssey* but journeys also feature in the narratives of the Hebrew Bible as well as the Buddha. The idea of the journey as a transformative experience has remained relevant and, indeed, become so prevalent that it is arguably the foundation of modern popular culture. This class examines the idea of the journey (and travel in a wider sense) through five primary analytic frameworks. The course begins (framework #1) with the interplay between travel and wonder as epitomized in the classical Islamic literary tradition through the travel accounts of Battuta and the famous story of Sinbad. It then turns to Jonathan Swift's use of travel as a means for social satire in *Gulliver's Travels* (framework #2) before drawing on William James' psychological framework to consider the journey as a metaphor for conversion (framework #3) through the example of Malcolm X. The course then considers travel writing in the modern period as a performative or confessional act through representative examples from Kerouac, Didion, Krakauer, and Gilbert. This is followed by an engagement with Joseph Campbell's notion of the monomyth as embodied by the films *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) and *Spirited Away* (1991). The final reading in the course centers on Octavia Butler's *Kindred* which depicts a series of voyages through time that demand a reckoning or confrontation with the past.

FYSB BC1743 Existentialism in Lit # Film. 3.00 points.

This seminar explores literary and cinematic depictions of themes in existential thought. The term "existentialism" was first coined to refer to German and French philosophy from (roughly) 1920 to 1950, but it also applies to writers of the previous century, especially Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, and Nietzsche. Moreover, its central subjects – perennial matters of human concern such as freedom, anxiety, alienation, faith, the meaning of life – can be found in fiction and cinema, from Kafka to Martin Scorsese. Authors will also include Camus, Sartre, and Beauvoir, and we will watch and discuss films directed by Carol Reed, Alain Resnais, Jean-Luc Godard, and Michelangelo Antonioni

FYSB BC1744 Here/There: Migrant Narratives. 3.00 points.

This first-year seminar brings together fiction and nonfiction texts, films and contemporary art that focus on migrant, immigrant, refugee, expat and exile experiences. We will explore how migrant subjects negotiate dominant discourses of nationality and citizenship, and how their identities as migrants intersect with their other positionalities, with a particular emphasis on race and queerness. Some questions we will consider: How are immigrant, migrant and refugees marginalized, racialized and queered by dominant discourses? How do Black and/or queer subjects negotiate belonging when they travel across cultural, national, linguistic and religious borders? How do these authors, filmmakers resist erasure and complicate our understanding of home, belonging and identity? Readings are subject to change, but will likely include the following: poetry by Safia Elhillo, Fatimah Asghar, C.F. Cavafy; essays by Hannah Arendt and Edward Said; op-eds and news stories on immigration, USCIS documents; fiction by James Baldwin and Jamaica Kincaid; contemporary art # films by (im)migrant artists and filmmakers

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1744

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1744	001/00578	T Th 1:10pm - 2:25pm 119 Milstein Center	Duygu Ula	3.00	16/16
FYSB 1744	002/00700	T Th 10:10am - 11:25am 119 Milstein Center	Duygu Ula	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1745 The Soul of the Nation?. 3.00 points.

One will hear from across the political spectrum references to an entity called the “soul of the nation.” But how to think about this mystified idea? This seminar explores the literary history of the idea of the soul in connection with the question of American identity. By way of interdisciplinary readings from theology, philosophy, and science in accord with readings in American prose and poetry, we come to see how the concept of the soul changes over time as scientific innovation leads culture to reassess what counts as reality. We learn to navigate the arc and contour of this literary history and sharpen our sensitivity to what’s at stake in contemporary uses of the soul’s idea, insofar as they inflect how we think about important questions as what should be valued about the nation and within our lives. Readings will include James Baldwin, St. Augustine, René Descartes, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Charles Darwin, Audre Lorde, and Antonio Damasio

FYSB BC1746 WOMEN OF COLOR IN SPECULATIVE LITERATURE. 3.00 points.

“The Future is Female” except in science fiction, where it still looks pretty white and male. What happens when women of color take on such tropes as space exploration, cybernetics, superpowers, and the end of the world? How can women of color change the way we not only think of the future, but think of the present as well? In this first-year seminar, we’ll look at how speculative literature approaches the intersections of race, gender, class, sexuality, technology, and environmental concerns. Readings will include work from such authors as Octavia Butler, Franny Choi, Sam Chanse, G Willow Wilson, and Tananarive Due with potential critical readings from Lisa Yaszek, Charlotte E Howell, and bell hooks

FYSB BC1747 Writing Caribbean Feminisms. 3.00 points.

This course offers an in-depth engagement with the Critical Caribbean Feminisms series, organized at Barnard College since 2015. These in-person conversations with contemporary Caribbean and Caribbean diaspora women authors and the accompanying podcast series center their experience with race, gender, diaspora, and writing. In this course we consider how the authors’ thoughts on the Caribbean, feminism, and their experience in the U.S. are represented and expanded upon in their writings through close readings of their novels, short stories, essays, and poems. The course culminates with each student proposing a Caribbean woman writer to add to the podcast series and suggesting how this writer’s voice resonates with and expands on the authors and themes studied throughout the course. Some of the authors we will read and discuss are Jamaica Kincaid, Audre Lorde, Claudia Rankine, Edwidge Danticat, and Roxane Gay, among many others

FYSB BC1748 Immortality, Death, # Meaning in Life. 3.00 points.

How are conceptions of the self tied to notions of temporality and mortality, life and the end of life? This seminar will take us on an exploration of various attitudes one can have towards the prospect of death, and what such attitudes might reflect about the meaning of life. We will address the coherence and desirability of immortality in both its literal and metaphorical senses. In what manner might one ‘live on’ through one’s creations? Does death render life meaningless, or does it give meaning to life? Works include readings by Tolstoy, Albert Camus, Virginia Woolf, as well as poetry, artwork, and plays

FYSB BC1749 Psychopolitics. 3.00 points.

What shapes our psychic lives today? How are histories of pain and possibility transmitted, ruptured, and transformed across generations? This class draws on anthropology, psychoanalysis, critical theories, literature, and poetry to explore the politics of the psyche. We will read writings by bell hooks, Frantz Fanon, Natalie Diaz, Ocean Vuong, Sigmund Freud, Michel Foucault, Gananath Obeyesekere, David Eng, Shinhee Han, and others. We begin with common encounters that inform and disrupt our lives, move to concepts of self and culture, explore how these are inflected by violent histories and extractive economies, and end with questions of what lives on

FYSB BC1750 Literature on Trial. 3 points.

Why are novels so interested in trials? What is the relationship between literary and legal interpretation, and between the role of a reader and that of a juror? How do we interpret “facts” in a literary text versus a legal context? What does justice look like in a literary work? In this course, we will read works that feature trials in order to explore the relationship between the literary and the legal, two very different ways of making sense of the world that collide in literature about trials. We will put literary characters on trial in order to explore how guilt, judgment, and redemption operate in the works we read, and to consider our own role and responsibility as readers. Readings will include works by James Baldwin, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Vladimir Nabokov, Claudia Rankine, and Marjane Satrapi.

FYSB BC1751 Creativity and Inspiration. 3 points.

Where do creative ideas come from? The Muses, according to Plato. The unconscious, according to some later thinkers. One thing both answers share is the thought that creative ideas come from something “other than” or “not controlled by” the creator – or, as we’ll put it, that creativity requires inspiration. In this class, we will explore this and related ideas in Western thinking about creativity. In doing so, we’ll examine how creative people themselves, from painters to mathematicians, have described their own creative process and experiences. We’ll examine approaches to creativity from the Taoist tradition, comparing them with the Western approaches that will be our main focus. At the end of the class, we’ll think about whether computer programs can be creative, and what it might mean for claims about inspiration if they can be. Readings will include selections from James Baldwin, Margaret Boden, Chung-yuan Chang, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, bell hooks, Immanuel Kant, Henri Poincaré, Flannery O’Connor, Elizabeth Robinson, and others.

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1751

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1751	001/00579	M W 1:10pm - 2:25pm 111 Milstein Center	Christopher Prodoehl	3	16/16

FYSB BC1752 Dreamstories. 3.00 points.

The complex relationship between dreaming and narrative storytelling is as contemporary as it is ancient. In this first-year seminar, we will examine Greco-Roman, medieval, modern, and postmodern representations of dreaming in literature, philosophy and film - texts that range from classical epic (Homer, Virgil) through medieval allegory (Dante, Machaut) to psychoanalysis (Freud and his contemporaries), queer metafiction (Winterson, Sarduy, Lynch), and beyond. We will consider among other topics how dreams raise fundamental questions about being, memory, desire, interpretation, and Utopian politics. Students will practice critical writing and discussion, and also have the opportunity to engage their own dreams and fantasies both analytically and creatively

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1752

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1752	001/00736	T Th 10:10am - 11:25am 501 Diana Center	Eugene Petracca	3.00	16/16

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1752

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1752	001/00580	T Th 10:10am - 11:25am 406 Barnard Hall	Eugene Petracca	3.00	13/16

FYSB BC1753 Illusion. 3.00 points.

How do you know that what you see or sense is real? What if what you thought you knew about the world, other people, and yourself, was wrong? In this course we will look at the idea of illusion through several different discourses including philosophical, religious, scientific, political, and artistic. We will consider skeptical positions on the external world, consciousness and free will; we will look at debates about self-deception and political ideology. We will discuss fantasies and dreams, and consider whether being in love or being a child have illusory dimensions. And throughout we will consider works of art (especially film and photography), and will ask whether art itself is a kind of illusion. We will also consider normative and ethical questions: is it always bad to be under some illusion? Are individuals blameworthy when they are taken in by an illusion? Can illusions ever be helpful? Historical authors include: Plato, Vasubandhu, Sextus Empiricus, Descartes, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Baldwin, Butler. Films to be screened include: *Imitation of Life* and *The Last Unicorn*

FYSB BC1754 Border Stories (Wkshop). 4.00 points.

The U.S.- Mexico border delimits more than nations; it is both a political and a social geography, marked by bodies of water, mountains, walls, ideologies, repression, and resistance. The crisis currently taking place at the border is an unfolding story with many narrators. This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to thinking about, and traversing, the constructs of the border. We will study literary texts: fiction, poetry, and memoir written by those who know the border, and borderlands, intimately. We will also engage histories, social movement doctrine, and media coverage to mine the stories they tell. Throughout the semester, participants in this course will track reports from the border from a range of sources, and create an interactive story map. NOTE: This 4-credit version of First-Year Seminar (FYS)—FYS “Workshop”—is specially designed for students who believe they would benefit from extra support with their critical reading and academic writing skills. In addition to regular seminar meetings twice per week, students are also required to participate in six Friday “writing labs” over the course of the semester. The writing labs for this section will take place on the following Fridays, 10:10-11:25am (yes, this is the correct time!): 1/28, 2/11, 2/25, 3/25, 4/8, and 4/22. APP REQUIRED BY 11/5 @ 5PM -- please fill out this form: <https://forms.gle/aPxYrdD3drP8SNoV9>

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1754

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1754	001/00697	T Th 4:10pm - 5:25pm 405 Barnard Hall	Francesca Austin Ochoa	4.00	9/14

FYSB BC1755 Race, Science, # Reproductive Justice. 3.00 points.

This course is about reproduction—a biological and social process that is often the target of deep-seated ideas about identity, nation, culture, and definitions of life. With an emphasis on intersectional approaches to reproductive justice, we’ll read a variety of literary works, journalism, films and television shows, public health studies, and policy/legal texts, all of which differently narrate, debate, script, and theorize about reproduction. Questions we will explore include: what stories do we tell about reproduction? What role have innovations in reproductive technologies played in this process, from contraceptive uses of medicinal plants, to in-vitro fertilization and so-called “DIY” abortions, to population and development projects all over the world? How do long histories of obstetric violence inform modern definitions of reproductive health, rights, and justice? What kind of world does an intersectional and inclusive reproductive justice movement urge us to create? Please note that some of the material for this course includes references to or descriptions of obstetric violence

FYSB BC1756 Reading Dance. 3.00 points.

Dance as action takes place in a variety of places and by organisms, and is represented in literature, film, the proscenium stage in just as many ways as there are forms of dance. Reading Dance will explore how authors employ movement to enrich narrative, reflect the human condition, view class and gender, experience how choreographers use text to support a silent form of communication and consider choreography itself text. Primary sources will include Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Ntozake Shange, T.S. Eliot, Zadie Smith, Martha Graham, Michael Jackson, and Brian Friel

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1756

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1756	001/00737	M W 2:40pm - 3:55pm 403 Barnard Hall	Kate Glasner	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1757 Change and Climate Change. 3.00 points.

Change and Climate Change explores how we spark, facilitate, and accelerate change - or block, impede, and slow it - on the individual, social, and planetary levels. In the context of the climate emergency and the vast global social and environmental changes it both brings and demands, this course asks: what is change, and how do we do it? Students will identify and characterize different change processes, and analyze strategies for adapting to, mitigating, accelerating, or shaping change. Readings and projects will explore activism, education, research, storytelling, and performances by scientists, artists, indigenous leaders, and activists including Paul Hawken, Ruth DeFries, Janine Benyus, Cynthia Li, Atul Gawande, Octavia Butler, Adrienne Maree Brown, Rosi Braidotti, Ian Hodder, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Elizabeth Kolbert, Naomi Klein, and Suzan-Lori Parks. Student projects will explore how natural and human systems shape and experience change and apply those lessons to the current climate challenge

FYSB BC1758 The Secret Life of Stuff. 3.00 points.

"It has a mind of its own," we shriek as the TV channels change without our input or the garage door opens when no one is home. Things can spark joy, grant authority, lead to our demise, and reveal our deepest secrets. They mediate social relationships, define political alliances, and provide economic opportunities. Sometimes it is not the presence of things but their absence – a misplaced phone, an expired passport, a childhood home – that more keenly shapes our reality. While people make objects, objects also make people. This class will investigate the secret life of stuff, from maps to cups and buildings to body parts, to explore how inanimate objects can be seen to have an agency and power of their own. Our discussions will draw on a wide array of authors from a variety of fields, including Bill Brown, Martin Heidigger, Anni Albers, Neel Ahuja, Katherine Ott, Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway, and Anna Tsing. To accompany these texts, we will also turn to other, less traditional sources of information, from podcasts to museum exhibits and our own personal histories with things

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1758

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1758	001/00789	T Th 2:40pm - 3:55pm 501 Diana Center	Camilla Sturm	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1759 Political Fare: Food # Freedom - Philosophies and Fictions of Food and Freedom. 3.00 points.

In *Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Franz Fanon famously writes that to "hunger with dignity is preferable to bread eaten in slavery." Taking this provocation as our starting point, this course will chart the function of food and hunger in philosophical and political conceptions of freedom. From Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" (1729) to the political-promise-turned-fiction of 40 acres and a mule following the U.S. Civil War, we will also examine the legal, historical, and literary representations of food at the heart (and belly) of the human story. Core texts will include Hannah Arendt's *On Revolution* (1963), Andrea Stuart's *Sugar in the Blood: A Family's Story of Slavery and Empire* (2016), Paul Beatty's *The Sellout* (2015), Vandana Shiva's *Manifestoes on the Future of Food and Seed* (2007), Bong Joon-ho's *Okja* (2017), and Andreas Johnsen's *Bugs* (2016). Along the way, we will investigate how the shifting conception of the human as a political and ecological concept is defined in relation to hunger, farming, and animal rights

FYSB BC1760 Storytelling. 3.00 points.

Why do we tell stories? Why do we feel a need to relate the things that happen to us? Why do writers and artists make things up? In this section of First-Year Seminar, we will explore these questions as well as others connected to the fundamental practice of storytelling. We will read and discuss short stories, novels, and memoirs that reflect on or call into question the narrator's reasons for telling the story. We will also consider essays by literary critics, psychologists, and scientists on the human impulse to narrate. Literary texts may include works by Henry James, Franz Kafka, Jorge Luis Borges, Lydia Davis, Alice Munro, Haruki Murakami, and Carmen Maria Machado. Critical and theoretical texts may include works by Sigmund Freud, James Baldwin, and Joan Didion

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1760

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1760	001/00768	T Th 5:40pm - 6:55pm 406 Barnard Hall	Michael Shelichach	3.00	16/16

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1760

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1760	001/00584	M W 4:10pm - 5:25pm 405 Barnard Hall	Michael Shelichach	3.00	17/16
FYSB 1760	002/00585	M W 5:40pm - 6:55pm 405 Barnard Hall	Michael Shelichach	3.00	13/16

FYSB BC1761 American Utopias. 3.00 points.

Can the idea of an imaginary island think us out of the world we know? To what degree are all attempts at world-building doomed to repetition? Can Utopia be separated from its colonial roots? Beatriz Pastor Bodmer has defined utopia as "movement, transformation, incessant change" against the grain of history. We will read and rethink Utopia about and from the Americas. Authors include Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Edward Bellamy, Luisa Capetillo, W. E. B. Du Bois, Magda Portal, Octavia Butler, and Emily St. John Mandel

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1761

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1761	001/00769	M W 8:40am - 9:55am 403 Barnard Hall	Ronald Briggs	3.00	13/16

FYSB BC1762 Poetry, Identity, Word Sorcery. 3.00 points.

Poetry is a very complicated series of words found in perpetually dust-covered books written by white men who died a half of century before you were born. Or is it? Poetry is archaic. Poetry is academic. Poetry is hard. Or in the words of Ntosake Shange, it's "razzamatazz hocus pocus zippity-do-dah." The magic of poetry is not in its mystery, but in its ability to connect with people, and to connect people with people, even across space and time. In this class we will explore how poetry speaks to identity, speaks to history, and speaks intersections of race, gender, sexuality, tragedy, triumph, and trauma. We will read poetry – mostly contemporary poets, mostly female-identified poets, mostly poets of color, and mostly poets from the margins – read theories on poetry, and maybe try our hand at a little poetry writing. Readings will include such authors as Tina Chang, Yolanda Wisher, Jillian Weise, Vanessa Angélica Villarreal, Tracie Morris, Audre Lorde, Laylia Long Soldier, and the word sorceress herself Sonia Sanchez

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1762

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1762	001/00771	T Th 2:40pm - 3:55pm LJ018 Milstein Center	Quincy Jones	3.00	16/16
FYSB 1762	002/00770	T Th 4:10pm - 5:25pm LJ018 Milstein Center	Quincy Jones	3.00	15/16

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1762

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1762	001/00581	M W 4:10pm - 5:25pm LJ018 Milstein Center	Quincy Jones	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1763 Writing and the Environment. 3.00 points.

Beginning with the Popol Vuh, the Mayan myth of creation, which records the first moment of contact with the Spanish conquistadors about 1555, we will explore American nature writing up to the present. Description and interpretation of nature has shaped artistic representation from the very beginning of human history. We will look at indigenous narratives, at activist texts, and at writing and images from the Americas in relation to selected European works, moving from Crèvecoeur's "Letters from an American Farmer" (1765) to excerpts from Wordsworth's "Prelude" in England (1798), which in turn influenced Emerson's essay "Nature" (1836) and Thoreau's writing in Walden and "Civil Disobedience" (1851). Twentieth century works include selections from John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939); Rachel Carson's *"Silent Spring"* (1962); and John McPhee's *"Encounters with the Archdruid"* (1971). Painting, photography and films will be included, with images from the Hudson River School, photographs of National Parks, and contemporary environmental films. An essential element is the study of activist organizations alongside international collaborations (COP27), the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and issues of environmental justice. Finally, we will both write and analyze contemporary environmental journalism, including Bill McKibben's *"The End of Nature"* and Liz Kolbert's *The Sixth Extinction*

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1763

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1763	001/00772	M W 5:40pm - 6:55pm LJ018 Milstein Center	Linn Mehta	3.00	10/16

FYSB BC1764 On Friendships Between Women. 3.00 points.

How do we reflect on the intimacies of friendship, and what might be particular to such intimacies between women? What makes a friendship good or bad? What tensions or correspondences might we trace between friendship and adjacent categories of relationality – 'frenemies,' sisterhood, lovers? In this course, we will apply close analytical examinations of literary and cultural texts in order to theorize the various shapes friendship may take. Throughout the semester, we will question how the friendships we encounter are situated within and/or against a variety of cultural and socioeconomic contexts. In doing so, we will explore friendship's conceptual role in narratives of emotional development, education and intellectual life, work, community, and domesticity. Literary and theoretical texts may include works by Jane Austen, Toni Morrison, Maggie Doherty, Zadie Smith, bell hooks, Virginia Woolf, Audre Lorde, and Adrienne Rich. Selections from film and television may include the tv dramatization of Elena Ferrante's *My Brilliant Friend* and Keira Knightley's portrayal of Georgiana Cavendish in *The Duchess*, among others. In discussions and writing assignments both formal and creative, we will consider how the (un)friendly relationships represented in these texts shift, break, and thrive given the conditions under which they are conducted

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1764

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1764	001/00773	T Th 1:10pm - 2:25pm LJ016 Milstein Center	Elizabeth Weybright	3.00	16/16
FYSB 1764	002/00774	T Th 5:40pm - 6:55pm 111 Milstein Center	Elizabeth Weybright	3.00	16/16

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1764

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1764	001/00582	T Th 4:10pm - 5:25pm 407 Barnard Hall	Elizabeth Weybright	3.00	16/16

FYSB BC1765 The Ethics of Identity. 3.00 points.

This course will explore evolving understandings of three central aspects of identity - gender, race, and disability - by focusing on their impact on contemporary ethical issues. Should pregnant people be categorized as a 'vulnerable' population in medical research, for instance, and how can race and/or disability status be factored into these discussions in ways that support rather than erase marginalized groups? Is transphobia the reason people were so dismissive of Rachel Dolezal's claim to be Black, or is there a difference between gender and race that makes someone's claim to be transgendered quite different from Dolezal's claim to be transracial? If we could eliminate disabilities in the womb, should we, or is that just another form of objectionable eugenics? To address these sorts of questions, we'll need to talk about different views of what gender, race, and disability are, as well as what people's experiences of how these identities intersect tells us about power, prejudice, and pride. Readings will include selections from Simone deBeauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Cathy Park Hong's *Minor Feelings: an Asian-American Reckoning*, Kwame Anthony Appiah's *Color Conscious: The Political Morality of Race*, the edited collection *What is Race?: Four Philosophical Views*, Elizabeth Barnes's *The Minority Body: A Theory of Disability*, and Eva Kittay's *Learning from My Daughter: The Value and Care of Disabled Minds*

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1765

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1765	001/00775	T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm LI001 Milstein Center	Christina Van Dyke	3.00	16/16

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1765

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1765	001/00583	T Th 8:40am - 9:55am 403 Barnard Hall	Christina Van Dyke	3.00	16/16

Reacting to the Past

In these seminars, students play complex historical role-playing games informed by classic texts. After an initial set-up phase, class sessions are run by students. These seminars are speaking- and writing-intensive, as students pursue their assigned roles' objectives by convincing classmates of their views. Examples of games played in First-Year Seminar Reacting classes include: 1) *The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C.* explores a pivotal moment following the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War, when democrats sought to restore democracy while critics, including the supporters of Socrates, proposed alternatives. The key text is Plato's *Republic*. 2) *Confucianism and the Succession Crisis of the Wanli Emperor* examines a dispute between Confucian purists and pragmatists within the Hanlin Academy, the highest echelon of the Ming bureaucracy, taking *Analects* of Confucius as the central text. 3) *The Trial of Anne Hutchinson* revisits a conflict that pitted Puritan dissenter Anne Hutchinson and her supporters against Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop and the orthodox ministers of New England. Students work with testimony from Hutchinson's trial as well as the Bible and other texts. 4) *Greenwich Village, 1913: Suffrage, Labor and the New Woman* investigates the struggle between radical labor activists and woman suffragists for the hearts and minds of "Bohemians," drawing on foundational works by Marx, Freud, Mary Wollstonecraft, and others.

FYSB BC1601 Reacting to the Past. 3 points.

In these seminars, students play complex historical role-playing games informed by classic texts. After an initial set-up phase, class sessions are run by students. These seminars are speaking- and writing-intensive, as students pursue their assigned roles' objectives by convincing classmates of their views. Examples of games played in First-Year Seminar Reacting class include: 1) *The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C.* explores a pivotal moment following the defeat of Athens in the Peloponnesian War, when democrats sought to restore democracy while critics, including the supporters of Socrates, proposed alternatives. The key text is Plato's *Republic*. 2) *Confucianism and the Succession Crisis of the Wanli Emperor* examines a dispute between Confucian purists and pragmatists within the Hanlin Academy, the highest echelon of the Ming bureaucracy, taking *Analects* of Confucius as the central text. 3) *The Trial of Anne Hutchinson* revisits a conflict that pitted Puritan dissenter Anne Hutchinson and her supporters against Massachusetts Governor John Winthrop and the orthodox ministers of New England. Students work with testimony from Hutchinson's trial as well as the Bible and other texts. 4) *Greenwich Village, 1913: Suffrage, Labor and the New Woman* investigates the struggle between radical labor activists and woman suffragists for the hearts and minds of "Bohemians," drawing on foundational works by Marx, Freud, Mary Wollstonecraft, and others.

Fall 2022: FYSB BC1601

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1601	001/00728	M W 2:40pm - 3:55pm LI016 Milstein Center	Mark Carnes	3	19/19
FYSB 1601	002/00729	T Th 8:40am - 9:55am LI018 Milstein Center	Kristina Milnor	3	17/17
FYSB 1601	003/00730	T Th 4:10pm - 5:25pm 501 Diana Center	Jennifer Worth	3	18/18

Spring 2023: FYSB BC1601

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
FYSB 1601	001/00701	T Th 8:40am - 9:55am 406 Barnard Hall	Kristina Milnor	3	11/16
FYSB 1601	002/00575	M W 2:40pm - 3:55pm 407 Barnard Hall	Kate Glasner	3	14/16