

Spring 2017

Food, Water, Air, and Climate: Critical Topics in Sustainability

Professor Debra Javeline

January 31st and February 7th

Violence and Peace in the Modern World

Professor Ernesto Verdeja

January 17th and January 25th

Everyone Can Become a Design Thinker

Professors James Schmiedeler, Ann-Marie Conrado, and Wendy Angst

February 10th and February 24th

US Inequality: The Basics and Not-So-Basic

Professor Abigail Wozniak

February 15th and February 22nd

Fall 2017

The Lost Irelands

Professor Brian O'Conchubhair

September 6th and October 3rd

The Caribbean: From Conquest to Freedom

Professor Karen Richman

September 20th and September 27th

American Media and the 'Problem' of Race

Professor Jason Ruiz

October 26th and November 2nd

The Garden of Eden: Myth and Meaning in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

Professor Michael "Tzvi" Novick

November 2nd and November 9th

Food, Water, Air, and Climate: Critical Topics in Sustainability

This course will introduce teachers to critical global environmental problems and, importantly, their potential solutions. Global population is commonly projected to reach 9 or 10 billion people in the coming decades, and we currently have trouble feeding the 7.3+ billion already in existence, so we will first tackle issues of food availability and quality. In many places in the world, we are running out of drinking water or polluting the water that was once drinkable, so we will next tackle issues of water scarcity and contamination. More than 82,000 chemicals are used in industrial processes. Only about 2 percent of these chemicals have been tested for carcinogenicity, neurotoxicity, endocrine disruption, or other harmful effects, no chemicals have been tested in combination with other chemicals, and only five have been outlawed since the 1976 enactment of the Toxic Substances Control Act, so we will discuss this chemical proliferation, the overconsumption that drives it, and the resulting waste that infiltrates the air we breathe. Finally, the world is being transformed by climate change, with dramatic effects on our ecosystems, coastlines, public health, and urban environments. We will review both the science and politics of climate change and its impacts. Studying such topics can be a gloomy pursuit, and we will look for optimism amidst the gloom: What are the best opportunities, scientific and political, for saving

the planet? We will also discuss the school setting, how these issues affect our young students, and what and how to teach students about their changing planet.

About Debra Javeline

Debra Javeline received her BA from Brown University and PhD from Harvard University. She is currently an Associate Professor of Political Science and a fellow at Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, Kellogg Institute for International Studies, and the Environmental Change Initiative. Javeline specializes in the central global challenge of our time, climate change and adapting to its impacts. She is also a scholar of the former Soviet Union with a thematic focus on political conflict, political psychology, and political behavior and a methodological focus on survey research. The linkage between her prior and current work comes in the study of critical world problems and how people cope. Her two current book projects are *After Violence: The Beslan School Massacre* and the *Peace that Followed and Solutions: Science, Politics, and Saving the Planet*. She is also collaborating with Notre Dame engineers on a research project on "Coastal Homeownership in a Changing Climate: A Study of Risk Awareness, Risk Reduction, and Resilience." At Notre Dame, she has taught Sustainability: Principles and Practices (the gateway course to the sustainability minor), Food Politics, The Politics of Adapting to Climate Change, and Solutions: Science, Politics, and Saving the Planet, as well as Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia and Survey Research Methodology. Javeline participates in community outreach on climate change. Given the lack of opportunities to understand climate change and its impacts within standard curricula or community activities, she visits universities, schools, and community groups with the goal of making the complex issue of climate change digestible for a variety of audiences. She is a presenter with the Climate Reality Leadership Corps and a member of the Scholars Strategy Network.

Violence and Peace in the Modern World

This seminar explores political violence and peace in the world today. We will examine the causes of different kinds of violence, including war, genocide, state repression, terrorism, and the systematic marginalization of groups. We also investigate responses to violence and efforts to create a sustained and lasting peace, such as civil society activism, the promotion of human rights, war crimes trials, and truth and reconciliation commissions. The course will look at several case studies, including the genocide in Rwanda and the politics of reconciliation in South Africa. We will ask, how are these various challenges connected to one another, and how can we craft workable solutions?

About Ernesto Verdeja

Ernesto Verdeja is an Associate Professor of Political Science and Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame. His research and teaching focus on the causes of large-scale political violence, mass atrocity prevention, and political reconciliation and justice. He is the Executive Director of the Institute for the Study of Genocide and served on the board of the International Association of Genocide Scholars. His website is at everdeja.weebly.com.

Everyone Can Become a Design Thinker

Design thinking is a formal approach to problem solving that aims to create innovative solutions through direct observation of people's unarticulated (and often unrecognized) needs and wants. The methods have traditionally been associated with novel consumer product development by design firms such as IDEO, famous for its design of the first Apple mouse. Design thinking, however, is more broadly applicable to any problem that can only be solved through real innovation, including design of services and experiences. The approach is heavily human-centered, encourages wildly creative outside-the-box thinking, seeks perspectives from individuals of varied backgrounds, and emphasizes iteration to refine

and combine ideas. As such, design thinkers value empathy, optimism, ability to integrate disparate concepts, experimentation, and collaboration. In the end, design thinking reliably produces better and more novel solutions than many alternative strategies, whether those solutions are the next must-have tech gadgets or real resolutions of a complex social problem. This seminar, itself a collaboration among an industrial designer, a business strategist/entrepreneur, and an engineer, will present the nuts and bolts of the design thinking approach by directly engaging the group in practical design challenges. It will provide sample (fun!) exercises that help to enhance critical skills in creativity, ideation, observation, and rough prototyping. Ultimately, the seminar aims to demonstrate the power of design thinking through hands-on experience of the process.

About James Schmiedeler, Ann-Marie Conrado, and Wendy Angst

Ann-Marie Conrado, Assistant Professor of Industrial Design, conducts research on using design to address social and humanitarian concerns. She is the founder of Hope Initiative, an international nonprofit working in Nepal to utilize design thinking to address humanitarian concerns in developing countries. Wendy Angst, Associate Teaching Professor of Management, is a former entrepreneur in the healthcare space. She teaches courses in innovation, design thinking and consulting. Jim Schmiedeler, Associate Professor of Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering, conducts research on the design of legged robots and technology-aided rehabilitation strategies.

U.S. Inequality: The Basics and Not-So-Basic

Inequality in earnings among US workers has increased dramatically since the 1970s. This has had significant impacts on the distribution of resources across American families and even communities. These shape the environments our children grow up in, and may have consequences for the next generation's workplace readiness. This seminar will present an overview of how economists think wages are determined in the marketplace along with a summary of the foundations and the recent frontiers in economic research on US earnings inequality. We will also discuss what researchers think they know and don't know about the causes and consequences of rising inequality.

About Abigail Wozniak

Abigail Wozniak is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Notre Dame, working primarily in the field of labor economics. Her research has examined migration between states and cities as well as employer compensation and screening policies. Professor Wozniak is currently a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) and a Research Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) in Bonn, Germany. Over 2014-2015, she served as Senior Economist to the White House Council of Economic Advisers, working on labor economics issues. She was a Visiting Fellow at Princeton University in 2008-09. She is a graduate of Harvard University (PhD) and the University of Chicago (AB). She is a Wisconsin native and a former Associate Economist at the Chicago Federal Reserve. Her work has been featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Huffington Post, Businessweek, and other outlets.

The Lost Irelands

Green, ancient, rolling hills flecked with sheep, breaking waves, ancient forts, misty bogs, socially conservative, deeply devout, rebellious: such are some of the dominant images of Ireland and its inhabitants. This seminar explores the reality behind such images and stereotypes that inform our understandings and perceptions of Ireland, the most western island in Europe and America's closest European neighbor. Through a study of some classic literary this class explores issues of cultural politics, gender, identity, linguistic survival, revolution, emancipation, emigration and globalization as they figure in Irish society and the Irish literary imagination. We consider the rich tradition of poetry,

song, short stories and novels through which the Irish interpret (and reinterpret) their contested histories, complicated colonial legacies and uncertain futures on their own terms and in their own languages, Irish and English. This seminar demystifies idyllic images of Ireland, explores iconic texts and sheds light on contemporary cultural and linguistic issues facing one of the most resilient cultures of the Celtic Fringe.

About Brian O'Conchubhair

Brian Ó Conchubhair is Associate Professor of Irish Language and Literature at the University of Notre Dame where he also directs the Center for the Study of Languages & Cultures. From 2011-13, he served as the Executive Director of the Irish Seminar. In 2013 he was elected Vice-President of the American Conference for Irish Studies, and currently serves as the organization's president (2015-17). He has been a Visiting Professor at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle-Paris 3, France and Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic.

His many writings include an award winning monograph on the intellectual history of the Irish Revival entitled *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge: Darwin, An Athbheochan agus Smaointeoireacht na hEorpa*. Other edited publications include: *Gearrscéalta Ár Linne*(2006); *WHY IRISH? Irish Language and Literature in Academia* (2008); *Twisted Truths* (2011); *Dorchadas le Liam Ó Flaithearta*(2011); *Darkness: Liam O'Flaherty's Tragedy*(2013); *Lost in Connemara: Stories from the Irish/Caillte i gConamara: Scéalta Aniar*(2014); *Rogha Scéalta le Pádraic Breathnach 1974-2014* (2014) and *Notre Dame's Happy Returns: Dublin, the Game, the Experience* (with Matt Cashore & Susan Guibert) (2012). Forthcoming publications include chapters in: *The Oxford History of Ireland, The Oxford History of the Irish Book, The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Theatre* and *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish Fiction*.

The Caribbean: From Conquest to Freedom

Romantic, sun-drenched beaches, quaint colonial plantations, and happy-go-lucky natives are our images of the Caribbean. This seminar will explore the reality behind these images that draw us to tour our closest island neighbors. Through our study of the major themes in the Caribbean past and the present, this class will examine discovery and conquest, colonialism and plantation slavery, revolution and emancipation, migration and globalization. We will consider the rich, creative, expressive cultures of music, literature and visual art through which Caribbean peoples have reinterpreted their histories and futures on their own terms and in their own languages of Patois, Creole and Papiamentu. The lessons of five hundred years of Caribbean experience will demystify our idyllic images of the Caribbean and shed new light on pressing issues facing not only the resilient societies of the Caribbean but also ourselves.

About Karen Richman

Karen Richman is a cultural anthropologist. She is the author of *Migration and Vodou* (2005), of numerous articles and book chapters on Haitian and Latino migration, religion, labor, consumption and expressive culture. Richman won the 2009 Heizer award for ethnohistory for "Innocent Imitations? Mimesis and Alterity in Haitian Vodou Art." She co-edited a special volume on Haitian Religion for *Studies in Religion* in 2012. In 2004, Richman expanded her research focus to Mexican transnational migration. She is the principal investigator of an interdisciplinary project funded by the National Endowment for Financial Education exploring Latino retirement, which includes a case study of how Mexicans in Chicago understand retirement and engage with the formal retirement savings system. She is the Director of Undergraduate Studies at the Institute for Latino Studies and of the Creole program in the Romance Languages and Literatures Department, a concurrent faculty in Anthropology and a fellow of the Kellogg Institute for International Studies and the Eck Institute for Global Health at the University of Notre Dame.

American Media and the 'Problem' of Race

W.E.B. Du Bois famously predicted in 1903 that the problem of the twentieth century would be “the problem of the color line.” Anyone paying attention to the news—from police shootings to the most recent Supreme Court decision regarding affirmative action and the debate over whether athletes should stand during the national anthem—will understand that the United States did not leave our racial conflicts behind with the turn of the twenty-first century. Rather, even though we often avoid discussing the topic in our everyday lives, our nation continues to very explicitly grapple with race and its various social meanings. This course has two main aims. First, it will posit that U.S. media and popular culture actively shape Americans’ ideas about race. We will survey a wide variety of cultural texts, including television commercials, a Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, and even stand-up comedy and a recent Beyoncé video, to analyze how our society frames race as a social problem through popular culture. Second, since teachers have great potential to help our society face this problem in the twenty-first century, the course will provide practical strategies for approaching sensitive topics associated with race in a classroom setting.

About Jason Ruiz

Jason Ruiz is Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Notre Dame, where is affiliated faculty with the Program in Gender Studies and the Institute for Latino Studies. He teaches courses in Latino studies, race and representation, border studies, and popular culture. Ruiz’s first book, *Americans in the Treasure House: Travel to Porfirian Mexico and the Cultural Politics of Empire* was published by the University of Texas Press in January 2014. He is a 2016 recipient of the Edmund P. Joyce Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching at Notre Dame.

The Garden of Eden: Myth and Meaning in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

There is no more famous a story in the Western world than that of Adam and Eve in Eden. For Christianity, and to a lesser extent for Judaism, it conveys the most fundamental features of the human condition. The Qur’an, too, the sacred scripture of Islam, knows of this story, and the Islamic commentary tradition dwells on it. Our course will consider the meaning of the Eden story in its original, Ancient Near Eastern context, and sample some of the ways in which the three “Abrahamic” religions have understood it. Our analysis will complicate common conceptions about scriptural interpretation. It is often supposed that interpretation begins only after scripture emerges, and that interpretation marks a divergence from the text’s plain meaning. We will see, on the contrary, that the Eden story, in its original context, is itself an interpretation and revision of mythic motifs that circulated at the time, and that the different religious traditions’ interpretations of the story bring to light and address essential tensions in the story’s plain sense.

About Michael “Tzvi” Novick

Tzvi Novick occupies the Abrams Chair of Jewish Thought and Culture at the University of Notre Dame, where he teaches in the Department of Theology. He has published widely on the Hebrew Bible, the literature of the Second Temple period, rabbinic literature, and late antique liturgical poetry.