

# 2018 Teachers as Scholars Seminars

---

## Spring 2018

### Structural Violence: Understanding Invisible Forms of Suffering

Professor Catherine Bolten  
February 28th & March 28th

### Robot Ethics

Professor Don Howard  
February 1st & February 20th

### Unequal Childhoods: The Experience of Gender, Class, and Race in the Lives of Young People

Professor Jessica Collett  
February 7th (CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER-TBD) & February 21st

### The Political Psychology of Racial Prejudice

Professor Darren Davis  
March 8th & March 29th

## Fall 2018

### Cosmopoiesis: Literature and World-Making

Professor Sabrina Ferri  
September 10th and September 24th

### Writers at Work (and Play)

Professor Kerry Temple  
October 3rd and October 17th

### The Philosophy of Maria Montessori: Wisdom for the 21st Century

Professor Maria McKenna  
October 25th and November 15th

### The Perilous Beauty of *The Lord of the Rings*

Professor David O'Connor  
October 31st and November 13<sup>th</sup>

## Structural Violence: Understanding Invisible Forms of Suffering

---

### *Presented by Catherine Bolten*

Violence is everywhere around us, but the most widespread, pervasive, and damaging forms of violence are rarely on the news, and this makes them much more difficult to define and address. Structural violence involves anything that damages a person's life chances and potential, which includes events such as eviction and environmental contamination, to long-standing hurdles such as an impenetrable bureaucracy that makes it impossible to obtain social services. Structural violence is difficult to address because no one person is to blame, and therefore it is easy to deflect and defer responsibility, which leads to more suffering. In this seminar, we will work on case studies including inner-city evictions and foreclosures, the Flint water crisis, and the depopulation of East St. Louis to examine how the most pervasive and damaging forms of inequality often escape notice, and almost always escape redress.

### *About Catherine Bolten*

Catherine Bolten is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Peace Studies. Her work examines the intersection between structural and hot violence in Sierra Leone, and her first book, "I Did It To Save My Life: Love and Survival in Sierra Leone" was published with the University of California Press in 2012. Her current research examines the possibilities for new outbreaks of infectious disease due to rural overpopulation and deforestation in Sierra Leone.

## Robot Ethics

---

### *Presented by Don Howard*

The robot revolution is upon us, and it brings with it a wide array of ethical challenges. Should we permit the development of autonomous weapons? Is the replacement of human workers by robots a serious future problem and, and if so, what are we to do about it? What happens to human privacy as we share our world with more and more robots? Should we be trying to program ethics into robots and, if so, how can that be? In this seminar, we will consider these and several other such questions and learn some basic ethical concepts and theories that will help us in that work.

### *About Don Howard*

Don Howard is the former Director and a Fellow of the University of Notre Dame's Reilly Center for Science, Technology, and Values, where he now functions as co-director of the center's Ethics of Emerging Technologies focus area. A Fellow the American Physical Society, Past Chair of APS's Forum on the History of Physics, and current Chair of its Committee on International Freedom of Scientists, Howard is an internationally recognized expert on the history and philosophy of modern physics, especially of Einstein and Bohr.

## Unequal Childhoods: The Experience of Gender, Class, and Race in the Lives of Young People

---

### *Presented by Jessica Collett*

Boys and girls play different sports on the field and instruments in band. Upper-class children have full schedules of structured activities, while poor and working class children are offered the freedom to explore their neighborhoods. Black children are warned about racism and discrimination, while White children are inundated with examples of people like them in media, politics, and power. In this class, we will discuss the varied ways that our experiences as children are shaped by our social location, while also considering the importance of childhood as a period of time where dimensions of difference are learned, cultivated, and reinforced.

### *About Jessica Collett*

Jessica L. Collett is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Notre Dame. As a social psychologist, she is particularly interested in the relationship between small groups and identity and how our interactions with others not only shape our behaviors, but also how we see ourselves. Most recently, she explores these processes in fathers, asking what men think it means to be a good father, where these standards came from, and how these expectations influence men's involvement in family life and their self-perceptions. She is co-author of *Social Psychology* (with John DeLamater and Dan Myers), a prominent textbook in her field, and a number of book chapter and journal articles.

---

# The Political Psychology of Racial Prejudice

---

## *Presented by Darren Davis*

This course explores the hard-wiring of racial prejudice in individuals and the various ways racial prejudice is used in politics. Relying on major themes from social psychology and political psychology, this course focuses on the social and political implications of social identity, stereotyping, implicit racial bias, and racial resentment. Because we are now living in an age of intense racial polarization in which mostly everyone considers themselves a racial expert, the research literature will be heavily emphasized.

## *About Darren Davis*

Darren Davis is a professor of Political Science. His areas of research interest include political behavior, public opinion, political psychology, survey methodology, and racial politics. Professor Davis' scholarly research has appeared in the most prestigious journals in Political Science. His most recent book explores the consequences of racial prejudice among African American Catholics.

# Cosmopoiesis: Literature and World-Making

---

## *Presented by Sabrina Ferri*

"There is no frigate like a book/ to take us lands away," wrote Emily Dickinson. Such is the power of fiction. The best stories in literature have always had the power to transport readers to faraway worlds and uncharted imaginary lands. But why do fictional worlds seem so real? How do writers invent their worlds? These are some of the questions that we will address while exploring cosmopoiesis, or world-creation, in fiction. We will discuss the strategies and reasons behind the construction of imaginary worlds and we will look at writers who have tried to reshape and reimagine the world through fiction. We will consider their works from two interdependent perspectives: 1) as world-shaping constructs, which can change reality and our understanding of it; and 2) as self-contained worlds in their own right. World-making, we will see, is a powerful act of the imagination but also a bold challenge to common beliefs and assumptions about reality.

## *About Sabrina Ferri*

Sabrina Ferri is Associate Professor of Italian at the University of Notre Dame. Her research focuses on modern Italy and the making of the modern world and encompasses literature, philosophy, science, and visual arts. She teaches courses about Italian culture, the Enlightenment, theory and literature, adventure fiction, and imaginary worlds. Ferri's first book, *Ruins Past: Modernity in Italy, 1744-1836*, was published in 2015 in the Voltaire Foundation's series Oxford University Studies in the Enlightenment. She is currently working on utopian cities and the urban imagination and on a long-term project on anachronism and historical thought during the long eighteenth century.

# Writers at Work (and Play)

---

## *Presented by Kerry Temple*

Writing is a chore, a trial, a torment and an exacting task. It is also fun, freeing, creative and uplifting. The workshop will explore the reasons we write, the value of self-expression, the elements of good writing and ways to foster the art and skills of written communication. The day will include some talks and some talking as well as a few writing exercises to bring out the writer in all of us, whether laboring to find the right word or going with the flow.

## *About Kerry Temple*

Kerry Temple, who graduated from Notre Dame in 1974 with a degree in English Literature, has been on staff at Notre Dame Magazine for more than 35 years and its editor since 1995. He has a master's degree in journalism from Louisiana State University and has taught writing since 1984 at USB, Saint

Mary's College and Notre Dame. He is the author of *Back to Earth: A Backpacker's Journey into Self and Soul* as well as numerous magazine articles and essays, having been cited in *Best American Essays* almost a dozen times.

## The Philosophy of Maria Montessori: Wisdom for the 21st Century

---

### *Presented by Maria McKenna*

Come spend time immersed in the work of an engaging and forward thinking 20th century female philosopher, Maria Montessori. A prolific writer and activist for children and peace making world-wide, Maria Montessori left behind a treasure trove of writing for future generations to explore. Nominated not once, but three times, for a Nobel Peace Prize for her commitment to children's rights of peacemaking, Montessori has a great deal to teach the modern world. Her work is instructive and hopeful against the backdrop of our current global geopolitical climate. In this seminar, we will explore her theories and philosophies on human and child development, sustainability, peace-making, and the role of education in the larger political world.

### *About Maria McKenna*

Maria McKenna is an Associate Professor of the Practice in the Department of Africana Studies and the Education, Schooling, & Society Program at the University of Notre Dame. Her research and teaching focus on the social and philosophical contexts of American education, educational care, and children's voices in educational research and practice. Her writing and research have been featured in a number of monographs and journals, including the *Urban Review*, *Urban Education*, and *The School Community Journal*. Professor McKenna is the 2017 recipient of the Reinhold Niebuhr Award, given annually to a faculty member or administrator whose body of academic research and life exemplify social justice in modern life. She is also a 2015 recipient of the Edmund P. Joyce Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching.

## The Perilous Beauty of The Lord of the Rings

---

### *Presented by David O'Connor*

J.R.R. Tolkien's famous novel returns over and over to the question of whether human beings can be exhilarated by the beauty of the Elves without being corrupted or destroyed by it. Tolkien inherited this theme, of the fascination and peril of entering the realm of faery, from a long tradition of European storytelling, going back to Odysseus's fantastic travels in Homer's *Odyssey*. Tolkien made a particularly rich inheritance of movements and issues in nineteenth century Romanticism, from religion, literature and painting. We enjoy the gripping story of *The Lord of the Rings* more when we can place Tolkien in the larger history of these artistic themes, and some of his finest inventions--Tom Bombadil, Galadriel, Treebeard, even Shelob--come alive with new poignancy when illuminated in this light. We will also see that Peter Jackson's movie versions draw on the same inheritance for some of their best scenes.

### *About David O'Connor*

David K. O'Connor is a faculty member in the department of Philosophy and of Classics at the University of Notre Dame. His teaching and writing focus on ancient philosophy, aesthetics, ethics and politics, and philosophy of religion. Dr. O'Connor is an acclaimed teacher and lecturer. His online lectures on love and sexuality have reached a wide international audience, and are the basis of his two recent books, *Love is Barefoot Philosophy* (in Chinese translation, 2014) and *Plato's Bedroom: Ancient Wisdom and Modern Love* (2015). He has also published extensively on the relation between philosophy, art, and literature, in both the ancient and the modern world.