

# Honors College Seminars

## HONR 200: Ethics and Public Policy

Instructor: Dr. Simon Stacey, The Honors College

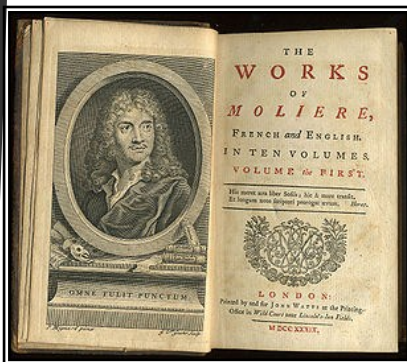
In this course we examine some of the moral issues that arise in public life. The course begins by reviewing frameworks for thinking about ethical issues in public policy, and then deals with questions concerning the means employed to implement public policy, questions concerning the ends policy should serve, and questions concerning the appropriate roles of public officials. Readings include classics of political and moral philosophy, case studies and some contemporary journalism. Issues may include the official use of violence, terrorism, toleration and its limits, deception and politics, multiculturalism, capital punishment, abortion, welfare, health care, affirmative action, and perhaps others. Short presentations will be required, participation will be emphasized, and students will write several short papers.

Spring 2014



## HONR 211: Great Books II

Instructor: Dr. Ellen Handler Spitz, Honors College Professor of Visual Arts



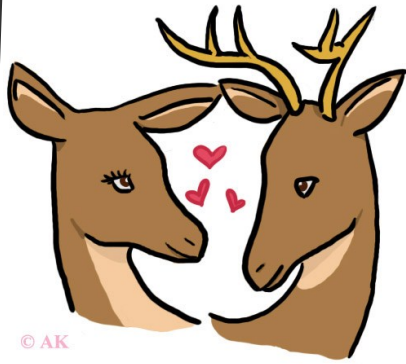
This is a reading, writing, and discussion seminar. Each week we study a major work of literature produced in England, Ireland, France, Norway, Czechoslovakia, the US, among others; these include plays, novels, and short stories, all published between 1650 and 2000. We analyze characterization, plot, dialogue, setting, structure, theme, metaphor, and symbol. We ask the works to become our teachers. As we proceed, the books tend to entwine in a cultural field in which we meander: an inter-text, which they---and we---create together. Writing about literature and discussing it are arts in themselves, critical arts, which we endeavor to learn. Although we take up a large number of works in order to become acquainted with them, we read in as much detail as time permits. Our goal is never to reach consensus but rather to deepen our individual ways of engaging with each text and honing our interpretive skills.

## HONR 300-01: A History of Kermit

Instructor: Colette Searls, Department of Theatre

This seminar will examine puppetry as a surprisingly powerful, ubiquitous craft that is reaching beyond the arts into fields like anthropology and robotics. We will study puppetry both as a vibrant performing art form, and as a means to think creatively about how seemingly unrelated fields connect. While class time will chiefly consist of group discussions in response to readings and assigned film viewings, several class sessions will include time for in-class writing and working with puppets.





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## **HONR 300-02: Animal Reproduction**

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Leupen, Department of Biological Sciences

The birds and the bees: a comparative look at reproductive physiology, ecology and behavior across the animal kingdom. Because the ability to reproduce is a defining characteristic of life, reproduction is of central importance in the study of biology. Here, we survey animal reproduction with an evolutionist's eye; why do females choose while males display, why are dragonfly penises covered in spines, why do most animals have two sexes rather than three, ten, or none at all? What is a sex, anyway? In suggesting possible answers to these questions, we'll explore the meaning, importance, and fantastic variety of reproduction.

## **HONR 300-03: Art as Illustration**

Instructor: Dr. Ellen Handler Spitz, Honors College Professor of Visual Arts

How do the visual arts narrate, elaborate, sharpen, and occasionally traduce verbal texts, both oral and written? With a clear focus on the relations between narration and illustration, we shall read selected literary works and study painting, graphic media, sculpture, and film in order to analyze the means by which one sign system translates into another. Psychological and philosophical perspectives are core to this seminar. Students must have fundamental knowledge of the history of art and be prepared to read lengthy texts. Also listed as ART 329, ART 429 and ART 720.



## **HONR 300-04: Race, Poverty, and Gender in Baltimore**

Instructor: Dr. Jodi Kelber-Kaye, The Honors College

Social categories of race, class and gender provide structure for and organize people's lives. These categories intersect with one another, reinforce one another's effects, and can, at the same time, cut against one another. In this course, we will explore how these main social categories operate in the lives of people living (or who lived) in Baltimore. We will first explore how race, class, poverty and gender are defined and then examine how they operate and interact within the context of Baltimore. As any city with a unique history, Baltimore provides a location through which we can examine social phenomena like block busting (neighborhood segregation), health disparities, food access, proliferation of crime and drugs, the judicial system, and more. We will also partner with some Baltimore-based non-profits throughout the course. Some short papers and a longer final presentation/paper that incorporates the partnership work will be required.