

PACS2 Spring 2020

Andreas Agocs: Global California

This course aims at making students aware how local processes and identities are shaped by processes of globalization and how global processes are modified by local conditions (often referred to as “glocalization”). In the first half of the semester we will read and discuss some recent and classical approaches to globalization, touching on issues such as global economic processes, migration, technology, cultural diffusion, and environmental problems. Examples include marketing techniques to make international products appealing to local markets; the global spread of sports such as soccer; and influences of globalization on local food, culture, and lifestyles. For their research projects, students will focus on and investigate one of these issues as it plays out in the Stockton and Central Valley region.

Ken Albala: Arts & Culture of Europe

An intensive chronological exploration of the art, architecture, music, literature, food, fashion and everything else between the late middle ages and the 20th century. Students will look, listen and use all their senses to understand the great efflorescence of the arts in Europe during the past five centuries. Each week of class meeting will focus on a different period to gain a full appreciation of how aesthetic values informed taste and perception among various different media and how historical events and ideas shaped the production of material culture. We will examine not only the fine arts, but household wares, folk music and pottery, garden design, and everyday objects to understand what they can tell us about the past. This course is explicitly designed to address the question of what constitutes a good society: one in which the arts flourish and are well supported by the general populace. The examples drawn from this course provide only one set of possible solutions to this question, obviously the arts have flourished in many cultures around the globe.

John Allen: Social Reality: Text & Self

“You’re hired!” That is all the president of a company has to say, and it becomes reality. In *Social Reality: Text and Self* we will examine the way we *do* things with words. We often think of *text* as written or printed words, static, lifeless, and existing independently of who we are and the decisions we make. In this course, however, we will consider the written word as just one part of the larger text that we co-create as language users and that exists as the living fabric of the social realities we inhabit. We will develop an understanding of the subtle ways that language structures the *self*—the identities and roles we form through reading, writing, speaking, texting, etc. Returning to many of the themes introduced in Pacific Seminar 1, on knowledge, gender, race, citizenship, and media, our discussions and research will reveal the often invisible way that language shapes society—for better or for worse. Questions include: How do texts and technologies change us? How does language signify who you are, where you are from, and what you believe? How does context or situation change the way we think and talk? How do we understand utterances we have never heard before? And, how do our brains process the meaning of a statement?

Andreea Boboc: Vikings, Sagas, and the Law

Founded between 870 and 930, medieval Iceland was, according to William Pencak, “the closest approximation of an anarchist or libertarian republic.” With only five courts and one paid official, the Law-Speaker, the Icelandic republic was the epitome of expediency. The courts and the sagas gave a sense of cohesion to Icelanders, who refused to bow to the more coercive Norwegian monarchy. What

can a modern reader gain by studying the Icelandic Sagas? Apart from the joy of reading adventures about formidable women, wise sages, unlikely heroes, unjustly persecuted outlaws, and politically astute manipulators, a modern reader is given the opportunity to think creatively about the main question that is also at the heart of American legal and social order: How can courts ensure justice while preserving the peace and the republic at the same time? We shall further our understanding of what constitutes a good society through an array of readings and reacting-to-the-past games. The games will breathe life into the sagas' most complex characters and help us think our way through conflicting legal codes – pagan v. Christian, vengeance v. compromise, republican (Iceland) v. monarchical (Norway) and formal v. informal. Mainly, we'll have fun.

Kyle Bruckmann: Music's Influence on Society

Music's influence on our society is immeasurable. Individuals have fallen in love, found themselves, fought, protested, exposed societal issues and discrimination, established memories, acted violently, grieved, celebrated, migrated and even birthed children to the sound of music. In this course we will analyze and assess the impact of music on society and how it helps to build the parameters for "A Good Society". Some themes that will be presented and explored are: Music and the Body, Music as Therapy, Music and Gender Roles; Music and Life Goals; Music and Relationships; Music and Immigration; Musicians as Idols; Music and Visual Media; Music and Civil Rights; Music and Violence; Music and Politics, Music and Rites of Passage. With the help of readings, presentations, songs, albums, documentaries, personal accounts, and biographical accounts of musicians, singers, songwriters, and producers we will be able to explore the methods and processes of music's ability to captivate and inspire a person, society, community, race, and family. Important Note: You do not need to be a Music major or artist to be successful in this course; but rather appreciate music's contribution to your life and to society at large.

Kurt Burmeister: Surviving the Anthropocene

Human activities have such a significant impact on the Earth's ancient global systems that many scientists now refer to the current period of geological time as the Anthropocene. We live in an age of growing technology and consumption combined with increasingly fewer resources. The decisions we collectively make can have a significant positive or negative impact on Earth's increasingly stressed environment. *How did we come to be in this situation? Are human impacts on the natural world truly a new phenomenon? What does the future hold for society? ...for our species?* Every one of us has the potential to make a difference. Within the broad context of the Earth System (deep time, Earth history & cycles, natural hazards & disasters, climate change, mass extinction, etc.), we will explore the concept of the Anthropocene by examining the social and environmental issues (e.g., urbanism, food, natural & energy resources, waste) associated with our day-to-day lives. From this perspective, we will evaluate the environmental impacts of our modern lifestyles and discuss solutions that might lead to a sustainable future. Understanding the issues, challenges, and potential solutions is the first step towards creating a better future the planet Earth and helping humans survive the Anthropocene.

Michael Collins: Ethical Eating Across Cultures

This PACS 2 course invites students to research important questions concerning the implications of human eating habits across different cultures and to understand how choices of cuisine involve impactful ethical decisions. We address critical responses to industrial farming, scientific nutrition, and globalization on the part of food activists and consumers, as well as the persistence of folkways on regionalized culinary habits. Students will employ a host of written media to respond to questions

concerning the roles of food in the creation of good societies: Has its cultivation remained sustainable and humane? Has the processing of ingredients been mindful of the ecosystem? Has meal preparation aligned with or transgressed the value systems in which they are prepared? Students will compose a focused research paper investigating why cultures of consumption in the United States and abroad diverge over ethical controversies concerning food. In what ways do they succeed or fail to maintain a balance between nourishing their individuals and sustaining their communities?

John Fortuna: What Should We Put Up With?

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to what many consider to be a central concept for a good society. Specifically, we will be considering the concept of toleration. Among other issues, we will be concerned with the following questions: What is toleration? What role can/should it play within a good society? Is such a concept coherent? Is toleration valuable, and if so, why? How can toleration be justified? What are its limits? On what basis should things not be tolerated? We will approach these issues through a close examination of both primary and secondary academic literature within the fields of philosophy, political science, history, law, and religion. We will also draw upon film, news articles, and blog posts which grapple with these issues—both in order to help deepen our understanding of the theoretical aspects of this concept, as well as bring to life the ways in which we still struggle with the question of toleration today.

Arturo Giraldez: Dinosaurs to Climate Change

This course covers from the Big Bang, the formation of the solar system, the geological configuration of the planet, the origin of life on Earth, to the evolution of humans, and the ever-unfolding story of humans on Earth, from hunter and gatherer bands to a global society connected by electronic means. The course attempts to integrate in a single narrative diverse fields of scientific knowledge to provide a map of what is known, through the interlocking of casual explanations across disciplines. The class' overarching topic is energy, its flows and its relation to complexity in nature and in human societies. The second category is what David Christian calls the "communicative efficiency" that has allowed our species to become the first in the history of the planet in which learned information can accumulate within the collective memory.

Rex Hamilton: Continuity and Change

Human cultures are in constant change; sometimes the changes are severe, sometimes almost unnoticeable; sometimes the changes are deliberate, sometimes unexpected; sometimes the changes are welcomed, sometimes opposed. This section of Pacific Seminar II will engage the question of continuity and change. We will spend time examining the language and logic of these ideas. Drawing on philosophy, sociology, anthropology, psychology, history, literature, ritual studies, and religion, we will examine how cultures think about what is "normal," what is "deviant," what "we must continue," and what "we must change." Students will research and report on continuity and change in some specific arena of cultural life: public policy, moral or ethical dynamics, perceptions of race or gender, structures in business or marketing, public aesthetics (like what constitutes "beauty," or what constitutes "delicious"), perceptions of the environment, athletics, religion, education—almost any topic will be fair game, especially those engaged in Pacific Seminar I.

Peter Hilsenrath: American Health Care

This course will study the American health sector using a historical approach. How did we get to where we are? Structure and performance will be assessed using economic perspectives.

Questions of efficiency and equity will feature prominently. How can we improve cost structure? What is not worth paying for? Who is entitled to what? These are important questions and enduring questions. Related health policy issues include the future of the Affordable Care Act, single payer health care, antitrust and regulation, occupational control, tax policy, information, consumer driven health care, technical change, managed care and culture. The course will also consider the relationship between the health sector and the broader economy. How does it influence growth and income distribution? Finally, the course will provide an international perspective to help assess U.S. health care and how it contributes to a good society.

Karen Lara: Psychology of the Growing Mind

To help create a good society, humans need to understand and appreciate that people can have different perspectives. Having a “theory of mind” (i.e., the ability to understand our own and others’ desires, intentions, beliefs, and emotions) is fundamental to every relationship. Why don’t people always get along? In part, it is because we too often think about the world from our own perspective. This pertains to our relationships with family and friends, but also on a more global level, such as the ability for governments to interact with one another. In this class we will focus on when the ability to understand diverse perspectives comes online, as well as connections to biology, age-related changes, emotions, and individual differences (e.g., executive control, language, family environment, culture). Students will read, watch video clips, and discuss theory of mind as well as develop ideas for future research based on readings. Many readings and conversations will focus on the 2014 book, *Making Minds*, by Henry M. Wellman, to provide students an overview of research on theory of mind.

Jonathan Lund: Social Science in Daily Life

If left out in a public area, people are more likely to steal soda than money. People judge a picture of a person wearing red as more attractive than a picture of the exact same person wearing another color. Why do humans act and interact in the most peculiar of ways? This class will examine the fascinating and sometimes irrational nature of human behavior. Academically popular and authoritative texts by Professors Dan Ariely and Robert Cialdini will act as the gateway to our review of social science literature. The “informal participation” portion of our class will consist of analyzing popular science studies dealing with human behavior. That analysis will bolster our “formal participation” - student generated qualitative research projects.

Jonathan Lund: I Take the 5th . . . and the 4th

This course examines the 4th and 5th Amendments to the Constitution. Because the Bill of Rights describes what government cannot do, our study of the amendments will explore the limits of governmental authority. Specifically, our study of the 4th amendment will analyze the validity of various government intrusions into *Life, Liberty, and Property*. Our study of the 5th amendment will analyze rights of the criminally accused. The 5th amendment also prompts a critique of governmental property seizure.

John Mayberry: Punk, Metal, & Meaning of Life

During the mid-1970s, two new aggressive styles of music arose jointly in the British and American undergrounds as reactions to mainstream commercialization of rock. The initial impetus for these movements came from predominantly poor, young, and discouraged men who felt that their personal views of “what constitutes a good society?” were not being heard. Nevertheless, the influences of these early movements have persisted and woven their way into mainstream music over the past 40

years, influencing society for better or for worse. In this course, we would like to investigate both the positive and negative influences of the two broad genres, drawing upon our own experiences and the experiences of our students to investigate societal impacts of the movements. We will discuss questions such as “What role has gender played in the formation of punk/metal?”, “What are the politics of punk/metal?”, “What are the economic and cultural backdrops and implications of punk/metal?”, and, ultimately, “Have punk/metal had a positive or negative affect on our society?” Students will also be encouraged to investigate what punk/metal means to them on a personal level through the contextual exploration of songs and/or bands that have impacted their lives.

Peter Meyer: Economics and Social Welfare

We address the theme “What Is a Good Society?” by looking at economic problems and solutions. We will look at policy on markets. Do we get the best results if we let markets run without regulation? When should the government regulate markets? What can it do when there are problems of pollution? Scarce resources? Dangerous conditions? Collusion? We will look at problems of workers and entire countries. What can a country do to develop? Should it protect its own industries or join the WTO and engage in international competition? We can look at what is the best macro-economy. Should policy fight inflation, unemployment, or stagnation? Our objectives include having students understand the economic causes of many problems and consider the various solutions, and evaluate them, often from the perspective of who is served and who is hurt by a policy proposal. Readings will include modern texts written from the “economic issues” perspective. We will also examine primary sources, from Adam Smith to Karl Marx to John Maynard Keynes. Finally, you will learn to distinguish scholarly sources (e.g. Journal of Economic Perspectives) from popular sources (e.g. The New York Times or the Wall Street Journal.) You will have the freedom to choose paper topics and read according to your interests.

Joshua Salyers: Novel History

Students will explore literary works, individually and collaboratively, from the perspective of a historian, answering the question “What do some novels say about past societies and does this help us understand how we define a good society?” Exploring the historical context in which novels were written and researching the literary references to practices and norms of societies, students will analyze and discuss ways that novels can reflect significant sentiments for change or reinforce practices and norms in past societies. We will read popular novels in this course from different societies and historical periods and explore the social, political, and economic atmosphere of the time in which they were written. You will have the opportunity to provide an annotated commentary on digital versions of these novels and help future readers understand references and historical contexts necessary to appreciate novels at the intersection of literary art and history.

Joshua Salyers: Community Experience in VR

This project-based course explores the question of “What is a good society?” by using the community as a central unit of analysis. Community-based research allows us to understand societal issues related to social justice, inequality, race, class, and gender among groups of people with collective identities. Exploring these issues in the histories of communities as a sub-section of larger societies helps us define a “good” society. Students in this course will create a curated virtual reality exhibit and add it to a digital community museum that focuses on how a local community experienced important social, political, or economic issues. No experience with virtual reality or exhibit design is necessary.

Elke Schmeling: Meeting in the Melting Pot

How does your cultural background influence and shape your values? What is it like to immigrate to a new country? What challenges does immigration pose and how should a good society master this challenge? We will find answers to these questions by: 1. Learning about cross-cultural research, focusing especially on the concept of Individualism/Collectivism. Knowing about these concepts will help us both “see” our own cultural lens and understand the values of others better. 2. Experiencing what is it like to live as an immigrant in America by reading about immigrant lives – both imagined (fictional) and real (autobiographical narratives and research studies; perhaps a field trip). We will also interview immigrants about their life experience and inhabit the character of a Chinese immigrant to California in the early 20th century. 3. Exploring what challenges immigrants face worldwide, focusing in particular on undocumented immigrants and refugees. 4. Writing your own personal cultural narrative. About half of the projects in this class are team based; some of them require an openness to play with different applications and technologies.

Elena Savelieva-Thompson: Society in Fiction & Film

Can a person be good in modern society, and if so, how? The goal of this course is to explore this question in greater depth. In doing so, we will read 2 novels, five short stories and watch five feature films. Each of these works encompasses the question of the individual within modern society. Also, each work touches upon the quest for identity and meaning. The course will require two formal essays and informal writing, such as film reviews, reading responses and research mini-steps assignments. These papers will form the basis for an original research paper.

Amy Smith: Arts and Community

Do the arts matter? In this difficult economy, should school districts use resources to teach children music, theater, and other ‘non-academic’ arts subjects? How can arts be used for social good by non-profit organizations? This course will give you the opportunity to consider the role of different types of arts in education and in the community at large. Can a ‘good society’ exist without arts—and arts education available to all a society’s members? **Since this is a Community Based Learning section, you’ll choose a local non-profit organization** whose mission interests you and, as a member of a group, you’ll work on a service project that in some way involves drama, dance, visual arts, literature, or music.

Eric Sonstroem: Utopian Futures

Science-fictional utopias are one way to imagine and define “the Good Society.” The word “utopia” was originally coined from two Greek terms, “eutopia” which means “the good place” and “outopia” which means “nowhere.” Authors who write utopian fictions are often caught between both meanings of this word. They optimistically imagine “the good place”--a society with just the right economics, politics, culture and technology to ensure a good life all--while pessimistically realizing that such a perfect world may only be possible in the imagination, that it’s literally “nowhere” in the real world. Lewis Mumford thus calls utopias “the ultimate in human folly or human hope.” This course will explore the way both historical authors and modern-day science fiction authors have tried to imagine what’s possible for the Good Society by creating fictional futures. We will be reading texts, as well as analyzing other media like films, TV series, and video games. We will critically explore why utopias get written the way they do, analyzing the way individual utopias reflect the cultural context from which

they emerged. Finally, you will apply this in your own research, where you will research the cultural contexts of a fictional future of your choice.

Tanya Storch: Buddhist Societies

“Buddhist Societies” continues the examination of the “good society” by working with the following themes: Education; Cultural Diversity and Tolerance; Individual Moral Perfection; and Environmental and Social Non-violence. These themes are abundantly spoken about and practiced in all Buddhist societies, including lay Buddhist organizations, monastic communities, Buddhist Universities, and whole countries such as Thailand, Japan, Sri Lanka, and Taiwan, where the primal governing principles are that of Buddhism. In the first part of our class, we will work toward developing an understanding of moral, philosophical and social principles created during the classic age of Buddhism (6-3 cc. B.C.E.). We will discuss Non-attachment, End of Suffering, Non-violence, and Universal Compassion. We will also conduct practical exercises helping students understand these fundamental principles of Buddhism at the level of personal consciousness. In the second part, we will look at some specific social organizations that adopted these principles. These include: lay organizations, such as the Soka Gakkai International; monastic communities, such as the Sangha of Thailand; and Buddhist Universities, such as the Naropa University. We will examine the effectiveness of Buddhist social moral education by measuring the success in terms of environmental protection, social equality, and human psychological wellbeing.

Larry Thiel: Divided by Faith

When Alexis de Tocqueville toured the United States in 1830 he described the unique American tension of religion and democracy as a “harmonization of heaven and earth.” One might suspect that if Tocqueville returned today and witnessed the searing inferno of rhetoric regarding church and state he might invoke a different metaphor. This course relates to the overarching theme, “What is a Good Society?” Although the US Constitution keeps church and state separate, religion and politics are often connected in a number of ways and mutually influence each other. A glance at the major news stories of the past year (Supreme Court actions, mixed gender bathrooms, stem cell research etc.) reveals that the American society continues to live in the tension of the first amendment.

Veronica Wells: Yoga and Transformation

According to a 2016 report, 28% of all Americans have participated in a yoga class at some point in their lives. Yoga is a multibillion-dollar industry and has become ubiquitous in mainstream American culture. In addition, the benefits of yoga are espoused by the latest scientific research and includes reduction in stress, weight loss, better sleep, and improved focus. But what does it mean to be a yoga practitioner in the 21st century? And does a yoga practice transform us into better citizens and therefore into a better society? This course will explore this question by examining the history of yoga, yoga philosophy, yoga practice, as well as social, economic, and political issues surrounding modern-day yoga. Students will regularly practice yoga philosophy and techniques together to see for themselves whether or not yoga is truly transformational. No previous experience with yoga is required and students of all abilities are welcome to take this course.

Qinliang Zhao: Evolution of Medicine

In the course, we will research, present, and discuss the history, present and future of medicine development and related areas. Skills in literature reading, analysis and critical thinking will be emphasized. Students will use the discussion platform to gain an understanding of the roles of science

in medicine evolution, the impact of medicine in society, and critical positions of ethical consideration. Grading will be based on writing assignments, discussion, class presentation, peer review and a final paper.

Dylan Zorea: And Justice For All

What obligations do citizens owe each other? What obligations does society owe its citizens? "*And Justice for All*" will explore the complex relationship between the rule of law and the good society. This course is designed to explain the law through the same case-briefing method used in all major law schools. By learning how to "think like a lawyer," students will develop an understanding of how the law is organized, applied, and the particular moral and philosophical issues that are raised in the context of legal dispute. During each class students will converse with their colleagues to figure out readings, delve into the intricacies of complex legal problems, create and refine arguments, objections and refutations. In order to really learn about the law and its relation to a good society we have to apply the legal method of thinking in real world situations. Class time will be spent analyzing relevant legal cases, applying jurisprudential theories, and practicing arguments. You should have ample opportunity to develop and demonstrate strong listening, thinking and speaking skills. The course will be divided into an introductory overview and three sections. The first section will concern obligations that arise under civil law. The second section will cover obligations that arise under criminal law. The final section of the course will concern the obligations that society owes its citizens- constitutional law.