THE HISTORY OF AGING: Examples from 17th Century England
Diane Willen

Sessions I
Monday, 11:00 a.m. (begins on March 2)
Fee: $65

This course examines cultural assumptions and realities about aging in early modern England. We begin with demographics in the seventeenth century and the nature of English society. We then turn to representative texts—biblical, classical, medical, literary and clerical. How was the aging process understood? What was the distinction between natural old age and righteous old age? From the plays of Shakespeare to the sermons of the Puritans, we will find disparate perceptions about the elderly: wise and worthy of veneration but also churlish, in dotage, no better than children. We will see how the elderly, “gray in years,” were advised to act in order to attain a “good old age.” Beginning with Queen Elizabeth, we’ll consider case studies, a handful of actual lives that belie the assumptions of their contemporaries and may contradict our own perceptions of aging in the past. What can we learn from the history of aging? In what sense (if any) does the history of aging transcend particular cultures and societies to speak to us today?

Diane Willen, professor emerita at Georgia State University, earned her Ph.D. from Tufts University and taught for 30 years at Georgia State, where she also chaired the Department of History. She is the author of a biography of John Russell, First Earl of Bedford, one of Henry VIII’s 'new men,' and she has published articles that span the social, political and religious history of early modern England. Her current research examines history of aging. Diane has taught a variety of courses at Osher at TU.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE FANTASTIC BRITISH INDIAN EMPIRE
Edwin Hirschmann

Session I and II
Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. (begins on March 3)
Fee: $130 ($65 for each session)

The British intrusion into the ancient land of India opened a new era in world history, with European dominance of Asia and Africa. India was subdued, piece by piece, and then ruled by a mixed British/Indian regime. But Indian nationalists soon recovered and, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, ousted the British in a surprising and bloody partition. This course will explore topics including the British takeover of India, rule and reform, the Royal Empire and Kipling’s Anglo-India, the rise of nationalism and the Indian National Congress, Mahatma Gandhi and the Muslim Dilemma, and the end of this empire. The consequences of this period are still being felt today on the world stage.

Edwin Hirschmann is professor emeritus of history at Towson University. During his 33-year career at TU, he developed and taught a sequence of courses on the history of India and other courses on European imperialism. He is the author of two books on modern Indian history. In spring 2017, he taught “The Fantasy Empire: Illusions and Realities of the British in India” at Osher at TU.
THE BIRTH OF SOCIAL ACTIVISM IN AMERICA

Robert Baer

Session I and II
Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. (begins on March 3)
Fee: $130 ($65 for each session)

The decades preceding the Civil War witnessed the emergence of an abundance of movements for social change in America, leading to a dramatic rethinking of societal attitudes. The vast transformations occurring in the young American nation encouraged many people to actively seek to address society’s injustices with imaginative approaches. With intense zeal, these reformers created distinctive movements to abolish slavery; to promote women’s rights, peace, and temperance; and to encourage health and education reform. Combining with transcendentalism, revivalism, utopian communities, and the push for universal voting rights, these uniquely American endeavors laid the foundation for many of the nation’s exceptional democratic traditions. The course will examine the reformers, why they got involved in these movements, what they accomplished, and their impact on American history.

Robert Baer holds a B.A. in history from Towson University, an M.L.A. in the history of ideas from the Johns Hopkins University, and a D.Ed. in higher education from Morgan State University. He spent 30 years as a college administrator in Connecticut, New York, and Maryland. He has been an instructor in history at York College-CUNY, Norwalk Community College, Community College of Baltimore, and Howard Community College.

THE CAUSES OF THE GREAT WAR

Robert Moore and Eric Stewart

Session I and II
Monday, 9:30 a.m. (begins on March 2)
Fee: $130 ($65 for each session)

The war that erupted in August 1914 ended a century of relative peace in Europe. The period from 1870 to 1914 witnessed great achievements in the arts, science and technology and general economic advancement. At the same time, it was a period of rising nationalism, imperialism, and militarism which brought nations to the brink of conflict on several occasions. An arms race, based on scientific and technical progress, was to make the coming war unbelievably perilous, while a peace movement attempted to prevent it. During this same period, terrorists were responsible for the murders of prominent political leaders in Europe and the United States. The socialist movement made important strides in improving the lives of workers in gaining political influence. This course presents the events, ideas, and people whose fateful decisions led to the Great War (1914–1918). This is a repeat of the course offered in spring 2015.

Bob Moore is a retired high school teacher of French, Spanish, history, and economics. He was a Peace Corps volunteer in Niger. He holds a B.S. from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and a master’s degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Bob recently taught an Osher course on the life of Jean Jaurès.

Eric Stewart is a retired computer analyst at the Social Security Administration. He is a graduate of Georgetown University. He has taught “Songs of Social Engagement” in 2016 and co-presented the course on the life of Jean Jaurès in spring 2018.
Session I and II
Thursday, 9:30 a.m. (begins on March 5)
Fee: $130 ($65 for each session)

Shortly after the end of World War I, the song, “How Ya Gonna Keep ‘Em Down on the Farm” hit the list of top songs. It was a forecast for the changes that were about to take place. Twenty-one years later, on August 25, 1939 Judy Garland sang “Somewhere over the Rainbow” in the movie, “The Wizard of Oz,” just in time for the beginning of World War II. The period between those two songs included a period of unrivaled prosperity followed by this country’s worst economic decline. The role of government changed from one of doing almost nothing to one trying to do, and expected to do, almost everything. It was one in which there were more changes in much of the way Americans worked, lived, loved, thought, talked, consumed, and were governed than in any other period of American history before, and to a great degree, since. It was a time of change in the rest of the world too. There were 17 new countries and, despite the efforts of the League of Nations, three wars. And Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler, and Hirohito came to power. We will explore these changes as we discuss the “Fantastic Interim,” 1918–1939. This course is a continuation of “Fantastic Interim: 1918–1939, Part One” offered in fall 2019. However, it is not necessary to have taken that course to enjoy this one.

Rex Rehfeld holds a B.S. from the University of California at Berkeley and a J.D. from the University of Maryland Law School. He retired from Morgan Stanley Smith Barney as an investment advisor. Throughout his adult life, his avocation has been the study of history. He has taught several courses at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University.

Session I and II
Monday, 11:00 a.m. (begins on March 2)
Fee: $130 ($65 for each session)

February 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the horrific Battle for Manila, the first urban battle the U.S. fought in the Pacific War (1941–1945) with Japan. Often described as the most devastated city of WWI after Stalingrad, civilian deaths exceeded 100,000, and Manila forever lost its pre-war sobriquet as “Pearl of the Orient.” Julio Esteban’s presentation will review the Philippines prior to 1941 and the migration of his Spanish family to Manila in the early 1900s. He will describe the city and his family’s life before the War, then move to the Japanese occupation and life under its military administration. Following, will be a brief review of America’s 1942 loss of the Philippines. Then the focus will be on his occupation and survival experience between the ages of 11 and 14, and especially during the terrible month of the long final battle. He will close with a reference to the war’s aftermath, a look at the new and different Manila—which he has visited several times—and lessons learned from the experience. This is a repeat of the course offered in 2013.

Julio Esteban, Jr., M.A., was born in Manila, Philippines, to Spanish parents. Surviving the three-year Japanese Occupation and 1945 Battle of Manila, he migrated to Baltimore with his wife and children in 1963. A business communicator most of his working life, he became a Spanish teacher in 1996 until his retirement in 2010. He became an Osher member in 2011 and has presented this course at Osher as a four-week course in 2012 and then as an eight-week course in 2013.
PROPAGANDA, PAST AND PRESENT  
Michael Anft

Session I and II  
Thursday, 11:00 a.m. (begins on March 5)  
Fee: $130 ($65 for each session)

Not so long ago, many Americans believed that propaganda was the province merely of foreign dictatorships, George Orwell novels, and advertising. Not so anymore. With television networks regularly obscuring facts and working to shore up its chosen political party, propaganda has become a central force in American electoral life. Whether it’s the Russians manipulating Facebook, politicians making up their own facts, or public relations spin outfits practicing large-scale cover-ups, propaganda helps shape all that we do and think. In this class, we’ll focus on the history of propaganda, what we can do to blunt its influence, and how to become aware of its presence in the news media we consume every day. The writings of Jacques Ellul, Orwell, Albert Speer, and Tim Wu will lead us in an ongoing and detailed discussion of how propaganda, aided by each succeeding wave of new technologies, has grown to consume more and more of the media space.


HEALTHCARE 2020  
Ann Farrell

Session I and II  
Wednesday, 11:00 a.m. (begins on March 4)  
Fee: $130 ($65 for each session)

This course offers a unique eight-part series of classes providing forward looking healthcare information from the perspectives of Osher members (consumers) as well as healthcare business and clinical leaders. With corporate interests increasingly dictating clinician practices, care for all U.S. citizens will be impacted—potentially dramatically—in the 2020 election, when pundits claim we will “cross the Rubicon.” Session I presents key medical and technological advances, recent setbacks, and potential risks for the 55+ population, with focus on key trends that will shape our future. Content includes a wide range of provocative topics, from hurdles in recent Alzheimer’s research, to impact of corruption on healthcare industry, to current and projected use of technologies such as telemedicine and artificial intelligence in diagnosis and treatment. Session II addresses 55+ year old citizens’ voting patterns and healthcare issues, “current state” of their health and wellbeing, and healthcare positions of leading presidential candidates. Efforts are made to clarify many citizens’ confusion about core terms and concepts, e.g. Medicare for All, Medicare for Some, Medicare for Those Who Want It, that are exacerbated by “Tower of Babble” and gas lighting by congressional leaders and candidates.

Ann Farrell, BSN, RN, has a background that spans a wide range of healthcare-related roles, from bedside RN and hospital administrator, to HealthIT (HIT) vendor executive, to a small business owner. As principal of Farrell Associates, Ann’s U.S. and Canada consulting clients include governments, diverse healthcare provider organizations, and a wide range of startups, mega-corporations, and private equity firms. As a nationally-recognized HIT expert and speaker, Ann bridged clinical, business, and IT communities, advocating for clinicians and patients. She is published in clinical and IT forums, is a frequent commenter on blogs and newspapers, and was a strategic healthcare advisor for a 2018 congressional candidate.
Prior to the DNA era, genetic tests could exonerate falsely accused men or demonstrate probable fatherhood in most paternity disputes, but courts were slow to accept genetic evidence. Nowadays, widespread human relationship testing improves legal decisions about parentage or other kinships. Historically, the need for child support generated laws of bastardy that were later transferred to the common law in England. American colonies copied European laws and many remain in effect. However, after the sexual revolution of the mid-twentieth century, neither the old legal remedies nor the combination of charity and taxes proved sufficient to address the problem of child support. New civil rights laws and paternity testing were necessary to provide a just solution. The instructor will explain how paternity testing is performed and how test results are reported as probabilities. Case results will illustrate how an alleged father’s paternity is excluded or established. Tests other than for parentage will also be described. Unusual cases that demonstrate human biology and behavior will be presented.

Robert Wenk, M.D., M.S., is a retired physician who specialized in laboratory medicine but obtained an M.S. in human genetics as well. Over four decades, he’s written many scientific papers about his experience with genetic testing of alleged blood relatives and written an introductory textbook titled, “Relationship Testing 1.0.” He recently chaired the Accreditation Committee of the AABB, the nonprofit agency that sets standards for U.S. laboratories that evaluate relationships using genetic tests.

Imagine looking at a plant and deciding based on its appearance what disease or illness it could treat. That is exactly what the forbearers of modern physicians and pharmacists did—sometimes accurately and other times inaccurately. In this course we will discover the ancient practice of the doctrine of signatures and how it led to modern pharmacology and the diagnostics we use today. We will debunk the myths, superstitions, and errors of the past while retaining the awe and wonder of the natural world and the human/plant relationships that are still possible today.

Derrick Beggs holds a master’s degree in advanced holistic nursing. He brings his experience in complementary and alternative therapies to his private practice. He is a clinical herbalist, Reiki master, healing practitioner, and integrative nurse coach. His passion is in integrating alternative practices into our modern health care system and creating space for wholeness and empowerment in healthcare.