

THE  
BEDSIDE  
BACCALAUREATE

A HANDY DAILY CEREBRAL PRIMER  
TO FILL IN THE GAPS, REFRESH YOUR  
KNOWLEDGE & IMPRESS YOURSELF  
& OTHER INTELLECTUALS



THE SECOND SEMESTER

EDITED BY DAVID RUBEL

THE  
BEDSIDE  
BACCALAUREATE



THE  
BEDSIDE  
BACCALAUREATE



THE SECOND SEMESTER

EDITED BY DAVID RUBEL

AN AGINCOURT PRESS BOOK



STERLING  
New York / London

[WWW.sterlingpublishing.com](http://WWW.sterlingpublishing.com)

STERLING and the distinctive Sterling logo are registered trademarks of Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

AN AGINCOURT PRESS BOOK

Published by Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.  
387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016  
© 2009 by Agincourt Press

For acknowledgments, see page 384.

Distributed in Canada by Sterling Publishing  
c/o Canadian Manda Group, 165 Dufferin Street  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6K 3H6  
Distributed in the United Kingdom by GMC Distribution Services  
Castle Place, 166 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, England BN7 1XU  
Distributed in Australia by Capricorn Link (Australia) Pty. Ltd.  
P.O. Box 704, Windsor, NSW 2756, Australia

Book design and layout: Jon Glick/mouse+tiger

*Printed in Singapore*  
*All rights reserved*

Sterling ISBN 978-1-4027-5633-7

For information about custom editions, special sales, premium and corporate purchases, please contact Sterling Special Sales Department at 800-805-5489 or [specialsales@sterlingpublishing.com](mailto:specialsales@sterlingpublishing.com).

## PREFACE

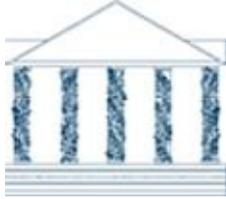
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS BOOK and a miscellany is the difference between knowledge and trivia. The appeal of a miscellany lies in its variety; but in achieving breadth, miscellanies often lack depth and fail to promote understanding. *The Bedside Baccalaureate* is more than a miscellany because it presents detailed, focused overviews of subjects with which any well-educated person would want to be familiar.

The goal of *The Bedside Baccalaureate* is not the simple accumulation of facts (some of which you may already know), but the placement of those facts within a framework of knowledge. The twenty courses that make up the book have been created by experts in their respective fields with the intention of making the subjects accessible to nonexpert readers. The interplay among these subjects is intended not merely to inform (and entertain!) but also to encourage the cross-pollination of ideas and to broaden the mind.

No doubt there will be occasions when you have questions that the text, given its brevity, doesn't answer. For this reason, the contributors have provided suggestions for further reading (beginning on page 382), which you can consult. That you'll want to read more should be expected, because learning is contagious; and once you get started, it can be difficult to stop.

### HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

- The twenty courses are grouped, five at a time, into four sections, or “syllabi.” These sections are easily viewed in the table of contents that follows.
- Each course consists of eighteen single-page lectures that maximize clarity without comprising the integrity of the ideas. The lectures are rotated, rather than clumped together, to add some variety to the reading experience and also to mimic the heady mix of subjects that one encounters in the world of the intellect.
- You can dip into an assortment of subjects by reading just a page at a time; or, if a course really grabs you, you can skip ahead. You'll find the lectures for each course on every fifth page, and roman numerals next to the lecture titles keep track of the sequence for you.



## SYLLABUS

# I

### **American History**

## **Revolutionary Boston**

**DAVID RUBEL**

During the years leading up to the American Revolution, Boston was a hotbed of American radicalism—the scene of the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, and Paul Revere’s Ride. In describing these and other events, this course examines the factors that caused the colonists of Massachusetts to take up arms against their mother country.

### **Math and Engineering**

## **The Anatomy of the Internet**

**DAVID W. KRUMME**

What makes the Internet work? This course dissects the technology behind websites, WiFi, email, and ISPs, describing the hardware and software that make the World Wide Web function. You’ll become familiar with domain names, IP addresses, error-checking codes, and public-key encryption, as you learn what `<a>`, `<B>`, and `<I>` mean in HTML.

### **Art History**

## **The Armory Show**

**KIRSTEN JENSEN**

The 1913 Armory Show presented paintings and sculptures by such leading members of the European avant-garde as Marcel Duchamp, Paul Gauguin, Henri Matisse, and Pablo Picasso. The nonrepresentational styles in which these artists worked—notably

cubism and fauvism—shocked critics and the public alike. The lectures in this course describe in detail the circumstances of the Armory Show, how it came about, and why it caused such a lasting sensation.

### Social Sciences

## Sigmund Freud

MARTHA HADLEY

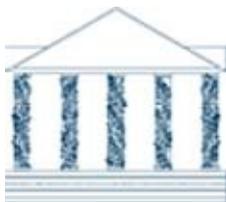
Trained as a doctor, Sigmund Freud devoted his medical practice to the treatment of patients suffering from illnesses for which there was no discernible physical cause. In treating these patients, he made a profound leap, recognizing that a large part of the human mind is unconscious, or largely inaccessible to awareness. This course describes how Freud came to make this breakthrough and how his theories developed over the course of his career into the discipline of psychoanalysis.

### English and Comparative Literature

## Shakespeare's Tragedies

JESSE M. LANDER

This course examines Shakespeare's experiments with the genre of tragedy. Attention is paid to classical and medieval precedents, but the emphasis is on the developmental arc of Shakespeare's creative life—especially his move from an early preoccupation with social fatalism (in such plays as *Romeo and Juliet* and *Julius Caesar*) to the interest in human psychology shown in the major tragedies *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*.



SYLLABUS

II

### World History

## The Renaissance in Florence

CAROLINE FISHER

It is generally accepted that the Renaissance began in Italy and that the Italian Renaissance began in Florence. This course examines the question *Why Florence?* What was it about Florence during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that induced Niccolò Machiavelli to write that he loved the city “more than my very soul”? The answer can be found in two traditions, republicanism and humanism, that existed in

other Italian city-states but nowhere else in the same remarkable combination.

## **Economics**

### **The Stock Market**

**WILLIAM KAVALER**

This course offers a primer in the workings of the modern stock market. It looks at the different ways that businesses utilize the stock market, the various players involved, and how these parties interact to raise the capital necessary to fund corporate operations and expansion. Topics include the differences between fundamental and technical stock analysis, short-selling, arbitrage, stock options and indexes, mutual and hedge funds, and bubbles and crashes.

## **English and Comparative Literature**

### **Literature of the Jazz Age**

**DELANO GREENIDGE-COPPRUE**

The generation of American writers that emerged during the 1920s was deeply affected by World War I and expressed its reaction to the calamity of war in two profoundly different ways. This course describes both the Lost Generation, whose white members produced highly cynical works while leading notoriously hedonistic lives, and the Harlem Renaissance, whose black participants rejected the blue devils of modernism and instead created a new life-affirming culture based on the rhythms of jazz.

## **Physical Sciences**

### **Electricity and Magnetism**

**RAMON E. LOPEZ**

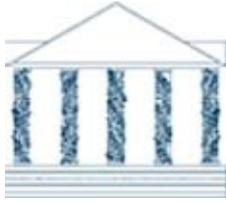
Beginning with the basic concepts of electric charge, electric force, and electric fields, the first half of this course explains the principles that allow utilities to generate the electric current that powers modern industrial society. The second half of the course presents corresponding concepts related to magnetism and then links the two phenomena together, as James Clerk Maxwell did with his famous electromagnetic wave equations.

## **Classics**

### **The Epics of the Trojan War**

**DANIEL GREMLER**

At the foundation of the Western literary canon are the epic poems of ancient Greece and Rome—specifically, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid*. These and other epic poems, now lost, tell the story of the legendary war between Greece and Troy for the return of the incomparably beautiful Helen, wife of the Greek king Menelaus. This course retells that story, paying particularly close attention to what it reveals about the worldview of the ancient Greeks and Romans.



## SYLLABUS

### III

#### Religion

### The Protestant Reformation

**CHARLES H. PARKER**

By 1517, when Martin Luther composed his *Ninety-five Theses*, the problems of the Catholic Church—corruption, an overemphasis on ritual, a lack of ecclesiastical training—were already well known. Since the late twelfth century, numerous reformers had attempted to correct them, but all had failed. In this course, we learn why Luther succeeded and how his reforms changed the course of Western religious and political history.

#### Social Sciences

### Issues in Feminism

**A. REZ PULLEN**

The fundamental premise of this course, and indeed of all feminist theory, is that a distinction exists between sex and gender, the former referring to one's biology and the latter to the social expectations that arise from sexual differences. After briefly reviewing the history of women's activism, this course describe such cutting-edge topics in feminist research as the Third Wave, intersectionality, womanism, intersex studies, and queer theory.

#### American History

### The Roots of the Cold War

**DAVID RUBEL**

The roots of the Cold War reach all the way back to the Russian Revolution, but they are most firmly planted in the World War II alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union. This marriage of convenience succeeded in defeating Nazi Germany; but, as the lectures in this course make clear, disagreements over the conduct of the war in Europe and the withholding of information about the US atomic bomb project created a legacy of mistrust that pervaded postwar politics.

#### Math and Engineering

### Game Theory

**THEODORE TUROCY**

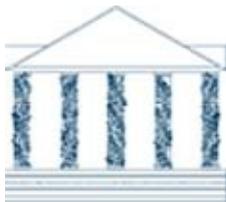
This course introduces students to the basic principles of game theory, a branch of mathematics that uses modeling to help “players” think systematically about real-life situations. Essentially the science of strategy, game theory provides analytical tools that can be used to assess situations as though they were parlor games. When used properly, these tools provide best responses and dominant strategies that can help decision makers navigate the possibilities for conflict and cooperation in everyday life.

## **Environmental Science**

### **Meteorology and Climate**

**ART DEGAETANO AND MARGARET M. DEGAETANO**

Want to understand what makes the wind blow and the rain fall? This course tells you everything that the television weatherman leaves out, from the convective lifting that creates clouds to the various factors responsible for climate change. You’ll learn how hurricanes and tornadoes form, the differences between warm fronts and cold fronts, and even the science of rainbows as you come to understand the interactions among temperature, pressure, and humidity that determine the weather outside your window.



**SYLLABUS**

**IV**

## **World History**

### **The History of Modern China**

**WALTER E. GRUNDEN**

This course focuses on the three main stages of modern Chinese history: the failed effort at “self-strengthening” that characterized the late nineteenth century, the turmoil that followed the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, and the vicissitudes of the People’s Republic that Mao Zedong established after the Communists defeated Chiang’s Nationalists in 1949. An important theme throughout the course is China’s relationship with the West and its ambivalent attitude toward technological modernization.

## **Philosophy**

### **Plato and Aristotle**

**IAKOVOS VASILIOU**

The intellectual activity known as philosophy began in ancient Greece during the sixth century BCE, reaching its height two centuries later with the work of Plato and his

student Aristotle. This course examines the major components of Platonic and Aristotelian thought, including Plato's theory of forms, Aristotle's ideas about the most basic substance, and the different ways that each man conceived of the human soul.

### **Art History**

## **Italian Renaissance Art**

**DENISE BUDD AND LYNN CATTERSON**

This course makes sense of the transformation in style that produced the great artistic works of the Italian Renaissance. It begins with Giotto's resurrection of classical skills lost during the Dark Ages, continues with Brunelleschi's development of a system of linear perspective, and—moving from Florence to Milan and Rome—concludes with the masterpieces of Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael.

### **Physical Sciences**

## **Darwinian Evolution**

**ROB J. KULATHINAL**

During the mid-nineteenth century, Charles Darwin developed the theory of evolution to explain the evidence of species change that he observed during his five years as a naturalist aboard the HMS *Beagle*. Darwin's theory proved to be highly controversial because it refuted nearly a millennium of Christian thought. This course discusses not only Darwin's ideas but also later developments in evolutionary theory such as heredity, population genetics, and the modern evolutionary synthesis.

### **Religion**

## **The Origins of Judaism**

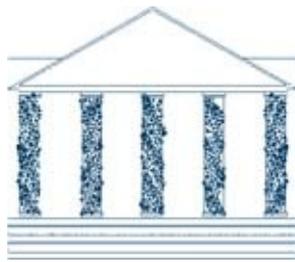
**MICHAEL PREGILL**

This course answers the question *Who are the Jews?* by looking into the early history of the Jewish people. Although Judaism is most often associated with the belief in a single, sovereign God, an even more important concept predated Jewish monotheism—that is, God's covenant with Abraham. The lectures in this course describe the ways in which the idea of covenant subsequently shaped the history of the Jews, especially after the destruction of the Second Temple and the start of the Diaspora.

### **Further Reading**

#### **About the Contributors**

#### **Index**



# **SYLLABUS**

I

## REVOLUTIONARY BOSTON

### I. SALUTARY NEGLECT

DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD IN AMERICA, the dominant economic philosophy in the Western world was mercantilism. Under the mercantile system, the goal of each nation-state was to accumulate as much capital (in the form of bullion) as possible.

In general, this was done by maintaining a favorable balance of trade. When the value of a country's exports exceeded the value of its imports, the difference was made up in gold and silver, which the country hoarded in its national treasury.



An early coin minted in Massachusetts.

Because mercantilism held that nations could grow rich only at the expense of other nations, colonies were considered valuable assets. On the one hand, they could supply the mother country with raw materials; on the other, they were exclusive markets for the mother country's manufactured goods.

What the English Crown wanted from its colonies in North America was simple: economic obedience. But as time passed, many colonists became uncomfortable with this one-sided relationship, especially its presumption that colonies existed for no other purpose than to benefit the mother country.

Following the death of Oliver Cromwell and the restoration of Charles II in 1660, relations between the imperial government in London and the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony went from bad to worse. A Catholic sympathizer, Charles despised the extreme Protestantism of the Puritans and was offended by their attitude that they deserved to be free of English rule. Finally, in 1684, after having the colony's charter revoked, he imposed direct royal control.

The new royal governor, Edmund Andros, moved quickly to end representative government in Massachusetts and also began enforcing the Navigation Act of 1660, which the Puritans had largely ignored. This act had closed the colonies to all trade except that carried by English ships and required colonial exports of tobacco, sugar, cotton, and other commodities to pass through English ports so they could be taxed.

The hugely unpopular Andros found to his dismay, however, that consistent enforcement of the Navigation Act wasn't really possible. There were simply too

many ships and too many ports for the small number of customs inspectors to cover. Meanwhile, a series of European wars distracted London's attention from the less-than-pressing problem of American smuggling. Finally, during the 1720s, British prime minister Robert Walpole settled on a policy of lax enforcement known as salutary neglect. Trade with America was flourishing, Walpole thought; so if the relationship wasn't broken, why fix it?

**British law reflected the mercantilist view** *that colonies should exist for the benefit of the mother country, but such laws were often easier to pass than to enforce.*

## THE ANATOMY OF THE INTERNET

### I. A NEW INFORMATION REVOLUTION

LET'S SAY THAT you need to research an obscure topic, such as the role of the turnip in English history. If you don't have Internet access, you'll have to travel to a research library, look up *turnip* in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, and hope that one of the articles you find relates to English history. Of course, that's what everyone had to do before access to the Internet became widespread during the late 1980s and early 1990s. If you have Internet access, however, all you need to do is type the terms *turnip* and *English history* into a search engine and wait a few seconds for hundreds of results to come pouring in from libraries, publications, databases, and blogs all over the world.

This change in research methodology exemplifies a much broader and much more profound transformation that has taken place. We're in the middle of an information revolution; and like those of previous eras—involving the inventions of written language and the development of moveable-type printing—the current revolution has changed, and continues to change, our lives.

The term *Internet* refers generally to the mechanism that allows your computer to communicate with other computers elsewhere for a multiplicity of purposes—including sending and receiving email, browsing the World Wide Web, transferring files, and so on. The World Wide Web is, by contrast, much more limited. It refers only to the set of interlinked public documents commonly known as web pages. The relationship between the World Wide Web (or simply the web) and the Internet is that the web uses the Internet as its transport mechanism.

What follows in this course is a “peek under the hood,” designed to identify the Internet's major components and explain how they work and interact. Before beginning, however, it's worth noting how the innovations of previous information revolutions have accumulated to make the current revolution possible. Johannes Gutenberg's invention of moveable type around 1450 made affordable the printing of scholarly journals, which in turn fostered the development of modern science and the scientific method. Scientists trained in this method made the theoretical and engineering breakthroughs that produced the Industrial Revolution, which encouraged the development of efficient methods of production. These methods are used today to produce the cheap, powerful computers that permit Internet access and manipulate all the information now available to us at our fingertips—as long as those fingertips are resting on a keyboard.

**Access to the Internet** has produced a new information revolution in the tradition of written language and moveable-type printing.

## THE ARMORY SHOW

### I. THE NATIONAL ACADEMY



The National Academy of Design at its nineteenth-century location.

By 1913, the National Academy of Design in New York City had dominated the US art world for nearly a century. Founded in 1825, the National Academy was governed by established artists who fostered the development of American art by offering instruction based on European models. Like the French Académie des Beaux-Arts, the National Academy prescribed the study of nudes, copying from antique casts, and so on—while emphasizing the American preference for nature and landscape painting over figure painting.

The National Academy also served as a venue for annual exhibitions by members, faculty, and students. These exhibitions, like the Paris Salons, enhanced the institution's clout and helped shape the national taste, which for the second half of the nineteenth century favored landscapes. The trend began during the 1850s and 1860s with the Hudson River School, continued through the 1870s and 1880s with Barbizon-influenced paintings, and culminated with the impressionist and tonalist landscapes that remained popular through the first decade of the twentieth century. However, as more young artists returned from study in France, deeply impressed by what they had seen, figure painting began to rise in popularity.

Like its European counterparts, the National Academy celebrated tradition and viewed progress primarily as an extension of the past. Its exhibition juries reinforced this view with the selections they made. Overly progressive or modern ideas were generally discouraged, and artists whose work demonstrated tendencies that were deemed “subversive” (that is, overly modern) frequently found their canvases rejected—which meant that most of the public would never see them.

Shut out by the Academy, artists with different ideas about the direction American art should take sought out new ways to reach the critics and collectors who frequented the annual Academy shows. Around the turn of the twentieth century, they began to challenge the status quo by founding new organizations and holding separate exhibitions. Thus, by 1910, the American art world was primed for a revolt, and in 1913 it came. It was called the International Exhibition of Modern Art (more familiarly the Armory Show), and it brought modern styles to the forefront,

transforming the American art establishment by presenting a direct and successful challenge to the hegemony of the National Academy of Design.

**American art** during the first decade of the twentieth century was dominated, as it had been since 1825, by the National Academy of Design, which set the prevailing taste.

## SIGMUND FREUD

### I. THE PSYCHOANALYTIC VISION

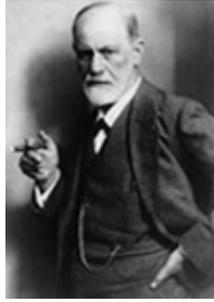
AS THE FOUNDER OF PSYCHOANALYSIS, Sigmund Freud developed a theory of mind and a method of therapeutic practice that he used to treat some very human troubles that medical science couldn't yet explain or even comprehend. He spent his entire professional life over more than five decades creating, revising, and exploring new ways to resolve problems that had no discernible physical cause—problems such as hysteria, depression, obsession, anxiety, narcissism, and perversion.

Freud's ideas were based on his medical training, his clinical experience, and his extensive reading in other fields, from archaeology to philosophy. The theory of mind that he first proposed around 1900 had at its center the idea that a large part of the human mind is unconscious, or largely inaccessible to awareness. The maplike drawings that he used to illustrate this "topographic theory" suggest that the conscious mind is like the tip of an iceberg. Beneath the metaphorical waterline is a vast unconscious realm of drive energies, repressed emotions, conflicts, and forbidden wishes. Consequently, the sources of many of our responses and behaviors lie outside our conscious control. In fact, according to Freud, we are largely invisible to ourselves.

What Freud was saying defied deeply held Victorian beliefs in restraint, emotional control, reason, and the repression of sexuality; thus, his ideas about the unconscious generated controversy, skepticism, and a good deal of interest. Some people were eager to be analyzed by him so that they could understand the unconscious dynamics shaping their lives; others simply rejected his psychoanalytic ideas.

Rather than allowing himself to be buffeted by this admixture of admiration and scorn, Freud remained steady, writing and lecturing with increasingly clarity about the human condition, a wide range of human troubles, and his method for treating them. Out of this work, the psychoanalytic movement emerged.

More than a century later, Freud's ideas have become thoroughly ingrained in Western culture. His notion that people are moved to act by unconscious wishes and conflicts about which they are often unaware is now part of our daily discourse. Meanwhile, his theories and methods have produced not one but many different schools of psychotherapy, each of which takes a somewhat different approach to helping people suffering from psychological distress. Underlying all of these schools, however, is the insight that Freud had and the way in which he used his experience working with troubled patients to see humanity's unexplained struggles in a brand-new light.



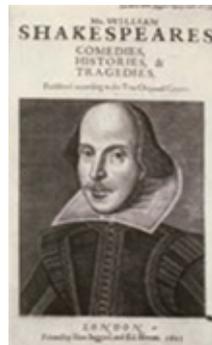
Freud in 1922.

**Freud's theory and method** of psychoanalysis followed from his realization that a large part of the mind is unconscious, or largely inaccessible to awareness.

## SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDIES

### I. WHAT IS SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY?

SHAKESPEARE'S MODERN REPUTATION rests most securely on his ten tragedies: *Titus Andronicus*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, and *Timon of Athens*. These plays are widely regarded as works of profound imaginative scope and unparalleled poetic power. Yet scholars remain troubled by the question of what precisely makes Shakespearean tragedy special. Is there a distinctive set of traits that defines Shakespearean tragedy; and, if so, what are they?



The title page of the First Folio (1623).

In large measure, the difficulty one has in answering this question stems from the slipperiness of the term *tragedy*. In its colloquial sense, *tragedy* refers to a painful event or inexplicable loss, but this usage has become so vague as to seem almost banal. When philosophers use the term *tragedy*, they generally mean the idea, originating with the German romantics, that existence itself may be essentially tragic—that individuals, thrust into a world not of their own making, experience a profound sense of homelessness, incapacity, and loss.

Even within the field of literary criticism—in which *tragedy* refers to a dramatic genre, defined by formal regularities—a stable definition is hard to come by, and critics dispute endlessly the constituent elements of a true or proper tragedy. In the words of critic Stephen Booth, “The search for a definition of tragedy has been the most persistent and widespread of all nonreligious quests for definition.”

Searching Shakespeare's ten tragic plays for commonalities yields a few obvious features: All of the plays depict the death of the central character(s). All dwell on the theme of error (poor judgment) or the theme of mistaking (misperception). All depict excessive suffering. Taken together, these features may seem to provide a minimal definition of Shakespearean tragedy, but they are quickly overwhelmed by the significant differences among the plays that emerge upon closer examination. As one Shakespearean scholar has declared, “There is no such thing as Shakespearean tragedy,