Georgetown University Learning Community, Spring 2013 program

Preregistration is required. Class-size will be limited. Parking ($3/hour) in the South Parking Garage, entered from Canal Road.

Registration fees are $30 for one course, $50 for two or more courses.

Dues-paid members (and their spouses) of The Association of Main-Campus Retired Faculty, The DC Alumni Club, The GU Library Associates, and present or past GU Learning Community faculty are exempt from fees.

Jewish Mysticism: A Historical Perspective
Thursdays: February 14, 21, 28. The Murray Room: 10:45-12:00 noon.
Rabbi Harold White, Senior Advisor in the Program for Jewish Civilization and retired senior Jewish chaplain.

The discussions will explore the origins in Jewish mystical thought in the eighth century through its popularity today with magical quality of the word "Kabbalah." Subjects that will be covered will be Messiahs, Andogyni, Biblical re-interpretation, Sigmund Freud, and Jew Buds as well as Madonna. Recommended texts are David Cooper: God Is a Verb and Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and Its Symbolism.

William Trevor, Ireland's Internationally Renowned Writer
Thursdays: March 14, 21, 28. The Murray Room. 10:00-11:30 a.m.
Paul Lilly, Professor of English, Emeritus, SUNY, Oneonta.

We will look at two of Trevor's many works, Cheating at Canasta (2007), a short story collection, and the novel The Story of Lucy Gault (2002). For the first class we will discuss the short stories, and for the next two the novel. A helpful introduction to both Trevor and Cheating at Canasta is the online NY Times review by W. Boyd (October 21, 2007) entitled "Show and Tell."

Remembering Hiroshima: Was It Just?
Thursdays: March 14, 21, 28, afternoons. Murray Room. 3:15-4:45 p.m.
Francis X. Winters, Professor of Ethics and International Affairs, Emeritus.

This course will study the question of justice for the detonation of the first atomic bomb over Hiroshima and its pertinent historical context. Was Truman's choice morally justifiable? We will explore this challenging question by inquiring whether some other, equally fundamental, moral principle, often neglected in traditional "just war" analyses, namely, the principle of independence, might provide a fruitful way to consider these urgent questions.

Introduction to Arabic Language & Culture
Tuesdays: March 19 (Murray Room*), 26 (WALSH 499*):10:00-11:30 a.m.
Karin Ryding, Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Emerita.

The class will be an overview of Arabic language and culture consisting of readings, discussion, and language practice. One book is required: Understanding Arabs by Margaret Nydell (4th or 5th ed.). It's a paperback and costs about $15

The Euro Crisis Revisited
Tues.: April 2, 16. (Murray Room): April 23, (Walsh 499). 10:00-11:30 a.m.
Karl Cerny, Professor of Government, Emeritus.

Despite repeated claims by European leaders of important breakthroughs in summit-meeting decisions, the Euro crisis continues to dominate the European agenda. Analysis will focus on three areas: the changes in the domestic political scenes of the Euro zone members; shifts in the roles of national political leaders in Euro decision-making; and the roles of the European Central Bank and other European Union institutions.

Theology and Astrobiology
Thursday: April 25. The Murray Room. 1:30-3:00 p.m.
John Haught, Senior Fellow, The Woodstock Center and Distinguished Research Professor of Theology, Emeritus.

In contemporary discussions of science and theology two big issues stand out. First, is nature all there is? And second, is there any purpose to the universe? The objective in this lecture will be to ask whether the discovery of life elsewhere in the universe, including intelligent life, can make any difference as to how we would address these two questions.