

# Fall 2024 Humanities Colloquia



## Humanitarian Social Media Yes or No?

Carrie Tomko

HONOR 350001

MWF 9:40 am - 10:30 am

Social media brings instantaneous news, information, and entertainment. Is it accurate in detail? Is it even true? Is it responsible "journalism"? Does it benefit humanity? Does it require accountability? This colloquium looks at the good, bad, and even the "ugly" of social media, studying the impact on culture.

## Forever Young: Looking at Popular Culture Through an Intergenerational Lens

Lisa Rhoades

HONOR 350002

TTh 12:15pm - 4:30pm

The cultural phenomenon that earned the portmanteau, Barbenheimer, resulted in people of all ages flooding theaters in the summer of 23 (and some quickly trending memes). What brought these two seemingly different films together? Was it the confidence of their anticipated independent successes or a well-calculated plan to reflect social struggles of our obviously imperfect world? These films are only one example of the changing face of popular culture and its impact on and reflection of our society. In this course, we will examine many dynamic facets of popular culture, viewing them through an intergenerational lens that asks us to reconsider what it means to be a baby boomer, a Gen-Xer, or a Millennial. How do the recent trends in popular novels, films, and social media transcend these boundaries and ask us to redefine who and what we are? Can both you and your grandparents be Potter fans? Are you reading the same novels you see on your mom's nightstand? Have Disney movies finally embraced a diverse world? Class discussion of these and other compelling questions will lead students to complete short response essays and a final project.

## Are We Our Brains?

Nathanial Blower

HONOR 350003

MWF 10:45 am - 11:35 am

In this class we will discuss a number of topics related to the question: Are we our brains? The central focus of the course will be a dispute between Peter Hacker and Daniel Dennett. Hacker argues against the habit in neuroscience of treating brains as though they were people: assuming that brains think, feel, perceive, intend and do all manner of things that ordinarily we say people do, not their brains. Daniel Dennett defends the neuroscientists, claiming that Hacker pays too much attention to what we ordinarily say. As we discuss this dispute, we will touch on a number of traditionally philosophical questions about free-will, the afterlife, morality, subjectivity and more. On the more scientific side, we will discuss topics in neuroscience, computer science, mathematics, linguistics and more.



