

NEXT WEEK AT QUEST

December 1 – 4, 2025
This Is an A Week

There are three links (given in red below) for all classes for the semester: Auditorium, Classroom 15-17, and Classroom 27. Click on the appropriate link below to join a class no earlier than 15 minutes before its start.

AUDITORIUM

Meeting ID: 899 9142 8608

Passcode: 252525

ROOM 15-17

Meeting ID: 890 4628 0269

Passcode: 252525

ROOM 27

Meeting ID: 874 2995 4279

Passcode: 252525

Also given are meeting IDs and passcodes for the three meeting rooms. If you don't have Zoom installed, you can still enter a class using your browser by clicking on.

<https://zoom.us/join>

and typing in the Meeting ID for the room of your class along with the passcode.

In addition, you can attend classes on your phone by dialing 1-929-205-6099. You will be asked for the Meeting ID and possibly the passcode.

NOTE: All classes are conducted at 25 Broadway and are listed as either Hybrid or In-person only. Hybrid classes are available to members attending at 25 Broadway and to members attending from home via Zoom. In-person only classes are presented solely at 25 Broadway with no Zoom option.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **ACROSS THE UNIVERSE**
Subject: The Rise of Life
Presenter: Michael Hamburg
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Michael Hamburg**, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: **Pete Weis**, Bob Reiss, Tamara Weinberg

This presentation will more or less follow the highlight tour that I offer visitors at the American Museum of Natural History. It traces the rise of life on the only planet where we know for certain that life exists. Beginning with the origin of the Earth, we will examine the very conditions that make our planet habitable. Then in some still unknown way, unicellular life establishes itself in the water and begins a long path of evolution. We will follow this development of life as it diversifies into the myriad species in both the animal and plant kingdoms that have come and gone over millions of years. We will also take a look at some of the largest and oldest organisms that have ever existed.

Next, we will examine the origins of our own species and look at the fates of our ancestors. Why has Homo sapiens become the only survivor of all those other hominids who preceded us? Lastly, we will contemplate the future. Wither humanity? Are we to remain here or is our destiny in the stars? As always, questions are welcome along the way.

The actual tour will be offered Friday, December 5.

Course: **IT AIN'T JUST ROCK 'N' ROLL**
Subject: When Cover Versions Transcend the Original Songs
Presenters: Steve Koenig, Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly
Room: Auditorium
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: **Steve Koenig**, Wayne Cotter, Mary Ann Donnelly
Tech Support: **Victor Brener**, Michael Wellner, Wayne Cotter

The best cover versions can truly reinvent a song – sometimes so much so that the covers become the definitive recordings. In this session, the three coordinators of the course – Steve Koenig, Wayne Cotter and Mary Ann Donnelly – will share some of their favorite cover versions along with the originals. We've selected cover versions that don't just mirror the originals but transform them.

We'll hear and discuss Ike and Tina Turner's classic reworking of Creedence Clearwater's "Proud Mary" and listen to how Nina Simone reworks Dylan's "I Shall be Released." Elvis Costello, Whitney Houston, and Joe Cocker are a few of the other artists we'll look at during this special "covers" session.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1 @ 12:10 – 12:50 PM

Course: **NOONTIME MEDLEY**
Subject: Play — What Is It Good For?
Presenters: Carole Blane, Candy Johnson, Joe Aboulafia
Room: 15-17
Format: In-Person only
Coordinators: **Sheryl Harawitz, Andrea Irvine**

Absolutely everything! Join us for a light-hearted fun lunchtime session where we'll rediscover the fine art of goofing off — we'll explore why play isn't just for kids and why grown-ups need recess too.

Bring your lunch and leave your seriousness at the door as we give you a preview of next semester's interactive class exploring play.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **PROFILES IN COURAGE**
Subject: James Stockdale: Courage and Character Under Fire In The Hanoi Hilton
Presenter: Ellie Shaffer
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Wayne Cotter**, Tracey Lee, Ken Sasmor
Tech Support: **Michael Wellner**, Victor Brener, Wayne Cotter

How does someone survive seven-and-a-half years of deprivation in a North Vietnamese POW camp, including four years of solitary, multiple bouts of torture, and horrendous physical and mental abuse? How does this same person build a principled resistance organization with structure, actionable rules of conduct, and communication networks that helped hundreds of prisoners endure?

Meet Naval Commander James Stockdale. Shot down in 1965, he built a “civilization” that provided fellow prisoners a purpose, a way to maintain self-respect, dignity, and sanity in an inferno of excruciating abuse. John McCain was one of those prisoners who credits Stockdale for helping him survive.

Come learn his story. I hope you will come away with some meaningful life lessons.

Course: **THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV**
Subject: Book 12 and the Epilogue
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Sheryl Harawitz**, Andrea Irvine, Ellie Schaffer, Ellen Shapiro

The story barrels toward its end — a swirl of confusion, confession, and collapse among Dmitri, Ivan, and Alyosha. Who's guilty, who's redeemed, and who's just plain lost? Fortunately, we'll have some expert help: two actors and the director from last year's stage production will join us to help untangle the messiness — and maybe bring a little order (and drama!) to Dostoevsky's chaotic finale.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **ART AND PRACTICE OF ARCHITECTURE**
Subject: Bauhaus
Presenter: Pete Weis
Room: 27
Format: **Hybrid (To Be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Debbi Honorof**, Sharon Katz, Victor Brener
Tech Support: **Victor Brener**, Bob Reiss, Pete Weis

Bauhaus was a school of design, architecture, and applied arts that existed in Germany from 1919 to 1933. The Bauhaus was founded by the architect Walter Gropius, who combined two schools, the Weimar Academy of Arts and the Weimar School of Arts and Crafts, into what he called the Bauhaus, or “house of building,” a name derived by inverting the German word *Hausbau*, “building of a house.”

Gropius's “house of building” included the teaching of various crafts, which he saw as allied to architecture, the matrix of the arts. By training students equally in art and in technically expert craftsmanship, the Bauhaus sought to end the schism between the two. Bauhaus quickly became a significant part in the development of Modernism. Gropius and two other architects, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer, left Germany as the Nazis came into power. They all migrated to the U.S., where their designs came into fruition and are all still occupied.

This presentation includes not only architecture but also furniture, appliances, and art represented in the Bauhaus school. Their buildings exemplify simplicity and practicality. We know this because we lived in one.

Course: SUPREME COURT
Subject: Supreme Court Reform
Presenter: Ann O'Shea
Room: 15-17
Format: Hybrid (To be Recorded)
Coordinators: Michael Wellner, Bob Gottfried
Tech Support: Steve Chicoine, Michael Wellner

What generated the creation of Biden's Commission on Supreme Court Reform, and its increasingly vociferous calls for reforming the Supreme Court? We'll look at a short history of earlier efforts to reform the Court and descriptions of some current reform proposals.

Course: THEATERWORKS
Subject: Scene Presentations
Presenters: Mary Beth Yakoubian, Yona Rogosin, Ruth Ward, Wayne Cotter, Lisa Bu
Room: Auditorium
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: Art Spar, Mary Ann Donnelly, Ruth Ward, Arlynn Greenbaum
Tech Support: Tamara Weinberg, Wayne Cotter, Martha Drezin

End of the semester presentations will take place for scenes including "Death of a Salesman" directed by Yona Rogosin, "A Doll's House" directed by Mary Beth Yakoubian, "The Phantom" an original play by Ruth Ward, and "Plunger" an original play by Lisa Bu. An active discussion will follow each scene presentation. Planning for the spring semester will take place. New members are welcome.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2 @ 12:10 – 12:50 PM

Course: DÉJEUNER FRANÇAIS
Presenter: Paul Adler
Room: 19
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: Ruth Ward, Donna Basile

Le Vol des Joyaux de la Couronne du Louvre!

Nous allons explorer l'histoire de ces bijoux et comment les braqueurs on peut voler ces bijoux en plein jour de la Galerie d'Apollon du Musée du Louvre.

The Theft of the Crown Jewels from the Louvre!

We will explore the history of the jewels and how the thieves were able to steal them in broad daylight from the Apollon Gallery of the Louvre Museum.

Course: **QUEST PRESENTATIONS 101: HOW TO CREATE A PRESENTATION**

Presenters: Wayne Cotter, Tamara Weinberg

Room: 15-17

Format: Hybrid

Coordinator: **Debbi Honorof**

In this informative session, experienced presenters will teach you how to plan, research, and create the content for a presentation, including an outline, blurb, text, video clips, and photographs, as well as how to design and organize your slides.

This session will **not** teach you how to create the actual PowerPoint. For that, we invite you to attend the Quest PowerPoint workshop, offered on Thursday mornings of A Week this semester. It will also be offered next semester.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 2 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITY**

Subject: Andrew Haswell Green

Presenter: Michael Wellner

Room: Auditorium

Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**

Coordinators: **Ilene Winkler**, Susannah Falk-Lewis, Penelope Pi-Sunyer, Michael Wellner

Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg**, Pete Weis, Ilene Winkler

Who is arguably the most important person in the history of NYC, that you have never heard of? Join Michael Wellner as he tells the incredible story of Andrew Haswell Green, without whom there may very well be no New York City as we know it!

Course: **MORAL TALES FOR OUR TIMES**

Subject: To Kill A Mockingbird

Room: 15-17

Format: In-Person Only

Coordinators: **Lynnel Garabedian, Sandy Kessler**

Tech Support: **Bob Reiss**

Before finishing the book, we will return to Chapters 20 and 21, the trial of Tom Robinson and Atticus's defense of him. Who are the jurors and how were they chosen? What do Jem and Scout learn from watching the trial and what are their reactions? How do the Negroes show their gratitude to Atticus? Tom Robinson loses hope after his conviction although Atticus says they have a good chance to win on appeal. What does he do? Why

does Bob Ewell threaten to kill Atticus? Who rescues Jem and Scout when Bob Ewell attacks them as the walk home at night after the school play? Think about some of the people in Maycomb who show reason and kindness, for example, Link Deas. What does Atticus tell his children about how to understand other people?

Course: **CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP**
Subject: Gothic Fiction
Presenter: Judy Hampson
Room: 19
Format: In-Person Only (**Note: This class ends at 3:00 p.m.**)
Coordinators: **Helen Saffran**, Judy Hampson, Donna Ramer
Tech Support: None Assigned

In this class we are going to explore how to create an atmosphere of Mystery and Suspense. This is the darker side of creativity, creating gloom and investigating the supernatural. We will read some passages from some great Gothic authors and respond to appropriate writing prompts.

As always, the class begins with a 10-minute writing response to a prompt, which you can choose to share with the group or not. You may bring in writing you have done at home in any genre, in poetry or prose, and the group will offer constructive responses to it. Writing that is read in class should be under 750 words, but longer pieces can be read over consecutive classes. Please bring in 14 copies of at-home writing to share with the class. At a loss for a topic? Try: *The scariest thing I remember is...*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **SHAKESPEARE: THE COMEDY OF ERRORS**
Guest Speaker: Kate Kohler Amory
Room: 27
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: **Roy Clary**, Jim Brook, Ellie Schaffer
Tech Support: **Bob Reiss**

Theater Director, Kate Kohler Amory, will discuss her 2024 production of *The Comedy of Errors* staged at Shakespeare & Co., in the Berkshires. She set the play's location at Coney Island where the "Coney Island Players" present their version of *The Comedy of Errors*. Her production was great fun and a sheer delight. If you know the play, you will relish her interpretation. If you don't know the play, you will find much to entertain you. Come and enjoy.

Course: **TIME: THE WONDER OF IT**
Subject: A Walk in Time: Walking the Camino de Santiago
Presenter: Carole Blane
Room: Room 15-17
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Andrea Irvine**, David Bartash, Marion Schultheis
Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg**

Join me as I share my experience of walking the Camino, one of the world's most famous pilgrim paths, and how the rhythm of walking transformed my experience of time – slowing it, deepening it, and revealing the wonder in each step.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3 @ 12:10 – 12:55 PM

Course: **Book Club - Fiction**
Book: A Piece of the World
Author: Christina Baker Kline
Presenter: Debbi Honorof
Room: 27
Format: In-Person Only
Coordinators: **Jan Goldstein**, Susannah Falk Lewis, Joan Vreeland

Blending fact and fiction, Kline presents the story of the Christina Olson, the real-life inspiration for *Christina's World*, perhaps Andrew Wyeth's most iconic painting. Living on a remote farm in coastal Maine, and increasingly incapacitated by illness, Christina nevertheless serves as host and muse to one of America's greatest artists.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **CINEMA QUEST: CURRENT & CLASSIC**
Films :
1. Jane Austen Wrecked My Life (Susan Keohane)
2. Argo (Vince Grosso)
3. Lost in America (Wayne Cotter)
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Howard Salik**, Marian Friedmann, Vince Grosso
Tech Support: **Michael Wellner**, Bob Reiss, Tamara Weinberg

Three terrific films with one recent hit, one classic espionage, and one timeless Albert Brooks (nee Albert Einstein) and his quirky humor to close out Cinema Quest's semester.

Jane Austen Wrecked My Life (R/T= 85)

Susan Keohane describes the happenings in *Jane Austen Wrecked My Life* and how Agathe, hopelessly clumsy yet charming, finds herself in desperate singlehood. Her dream is to experience love like in a Jane Austen novel, with the ultimate aspiration to become a writer and a wife.

Argo (R/T= 96)

Vince Grosso reminisces about the Oscar-winning espionage film. Iranian militants seize the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, taking 56 hostages. Six Americans escaped and found refuge in the Canadian embassy. With Canadian and Hollywood connections, Tony Menendez proposes a rescue plan in which the two crews scout a science fiction film called *Argo*, which is code for an escape plan.

Lost In America (R/T= 95)

And Wayne Cotter closes us out with Albert Brooks' *Lost in America*. The eccentric LA yuppie David Howard convinces his wife to quit her job, liquidate their assets, and join him for a cross-country road trip in a Winnebago. But things go south when they lose everything on a roulette wheel bet in Las Vegas.

Course:	TIMELESS WRITINGS: THE ILIAD
Subject:	Read Books 22–24
Room:	27
Format:	In-Person Only
Coordinators:	Sheryl Harawitz , Mary Ann Donnelly, Judy Hampson, Andrea Irvine

The epic reaches its end as Achilles and Hector face one another before the walls of Troy — rage meeting courage, and mortality meeting its mirror. We'll read the closing scenes together and reflect on the poem's final image:

After the mound was built, they went back home,
then came together for a glorious banquet
inside divine King Priam's house. And so
they held the funeral for horse-lord Hector

A moment of peace after so much loss. In the same spirit, we'll end our own journey with Greek treats, a sip of retsina, and a few words from each of us as we celebrate a journey well taken.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3@ 2:45 PM

Course: **SOLE MATES**
Format: In-Person Only
Room: Gather by elevator 7th Floor @ 2:45pm.
Coordinators: **Andrea Irvine, Marian Friedmann**

Join us for our last stroll of the Fall Semester along the Hudson River - we'll end at a "rest" spot for refreshments, food, socialization. Up to you how far you walk and lots of help with transportation options.

All welcome - no signups, no commitments - fresh air and community.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4 @ 10:30 AM – NOON

Course: **CONTEMPORARY POETRY**
Subject: Yehuda Amichai, Groundbreaking Poet
Presenter: Lynn Harmon
Room: 27
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: **Ellen Rittberg**, Frieda Lipp, Karen Millard, Linda Schwartz
Tech Support: **Felix Pina**

Dubbed by some "Israel's national poet," a term he eschewed, Yehuda Amichai is arguably one of top tier poets worldwide in the second half of the twentieth century. Born in Germany in 1924, he emigrated to British Mandate Palestine in 1936 and subsequently fought in World War II and the Israeli War of Independence. After receiving a degree in Hebrew literature and Bible, he became a teacher and poet, gaining wide recognition for his use of colloquial Hebrew, unlike the more formal style prevalent at that time. Raised in an Orthodox home and attending Orthodox schools, he drew upon his knowledge of the Bible and freely used Biblical allusions. His poems explore love, war, memory, faith and the complexities of everyday life and his love poetry is especially captivating. One example: "Love is not the last room/there are others after it/the whole length of the corridor that has no end."

A handout will be emailed prior to class, and hard copies will be distributed in class. No prior reading or knowledge of the poet is required.

Course: **ERAS IN AMERICAN HISTORY**
Subject: The “Everything is War” Era?
Presenter: Babette Ceccotti
Room: Auditorium
Format: **Hybrid (To be Recorded)**
Coordinators: **Joy Sabella, Bob Gottfried**
Tech Support: **Steve Chicoine, Michael Wellner**

How might historians define the current era in the U.S.? Responding to an increasingly interconnected world and newly emerging threats in the decades after the fall of the Soviet Union, the U.S. has expanded the traditional boundaries of waging war and broadened the role of the military. We will bring the Eras up to date by looking at some of the ways in which the U.S. has increased its military presence and how the lines between military and non-military activities have become less distinct.

Course: **YOU CAN DO POWERPOINT**
Room: Computer Lab
Format: In-Person only
Coordinators: **Tamara Weinberg, Tracey Lee**
Tech Support: **Tamara Weinberg, Bob Reiss, Ilene Winkler**

Want to share your passion but don’t know how to create a presentation? Come join our workshop and learn basic PowerPoint — all skill levels welcome! Each session will begin with a short presentation demonstrating how to create a slideshow and add images, text, and videos. Then you can work on your presentation with individual assistance. Bring your own laptop with PowerPoint installed or use a computer in the lab. If using a CCNY computer, bring a thumb drive with a USB-A connector to save your work. Experienced PowerPoint users are encouraged to join in to share their skills and learn more advanced techniques as time permits.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4 @ 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Course: **CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORIES**
Stories: 1. Opening Theory (Anita Hunter)
2. Stanville (Yona Rogoson)
Format: Hybrid
Coordinators: **Nancy Richardson, Mary Buchwald, Frieda Lipp**
Tech Support: **Felix Pina**

Stories to read:

1. “Opening Theory” by Sally Rooney. Presented by Anita Hunter

“Opening Theory,” by celebrated Irish novelist, Sally Rooney, is about Margaret, a very attractive mid-thirties woman, separated from her husband, and the relationship that develops between her and Ivan Koubek, a socially backward 22-year-old chess prodigy. Is the age difference a problem? Would it be a problem if a mid-thirties man was attracted to a 22-year-old woman?

2. “Stanville” by Rachel Kushner Presented by Yona Rogosin

Rachel Kushner is a celebrated writer of award-winning novels, short stories and essays. Her first book, *Telex to Cuba*, was shortlisted for the Booker Prize, and her second, *The Flamethrowers*, was a finalist for The National Book Award. Her books have been translated into 27 languages, and her fiction has been published in *The Paris Review* among other magazines. “Stanville,” adapted from Kushner's novel *The Mars Room*, intrigued me because it focuses on the lives of several inmates at a California women's prison, as well as the experiences and insights of a male teacher hired to teach them to pass the GED exam.

NOTE: Links for the two stories have been sent separately to all Questers via QuestBusiness email. A few printed copies of the stories are in the Quest Office.

Any questions, please email Nancy at nancyrye9@gmail.com

Course:	WORLD OF RELIGIONS
Subject:	The Afterlife
Presenter:	Paul Golomb
Room:	27
Format:	Hybrid (To Be Recorded)
Coordinators:	Ruth Ward, Bob Gottfried
Tech Support:	Bob Reiss, Ruth Ward

What's Next?

Virtually all the world's religions — ancient and current — promote an understanding of one's continued existence after death. These beliefs fall into a set of distinct categories. This class will discuss the ideas of Afterlife within the context of religious belief and modern philosophical coherence.