How do we get what we think we deserve in the political sphere? This seminar (part of the Arts One “Know Your Rights” cluster) aims at honing your reading, writing and speaking skills in the context of examining a variety of political issues. After learning about collective identity against the background of liberalism and conservatism, we will examine a variety of political issues. We will look at collective memory and national trauma (Holocaust narratives), how individuals and groups relate to each other (internet culture and social media; Israeli-Palestinian conflict), how tradition and politics interact (the “new atheism,” abortion, and same-sex marriage), and how we engage with the planet (food politics, urban design, and climate change). We will discuss what kind of discourse helps us to understand, and what kind is polarizing, and how ideas and identity inform collective action. We will aim to master the “op-ed” writing form, and we will look at how unconventional literary works like graphic novels can provide a new way of looking at serious subjects.

Course Requirements - Fall Term Only (Winter term course requirements to come)

I. Participation (30%)
You are expected to attend all discussion sessions and contribute to the conversation. (Attendance is worth half of participation; orally contributing is worth the other half. To reiterate: if you don’t speak up at all or contribute very little, expect in the C or D range for participation.).
NOTE: On the first day of class, we will set up a “peer pods” system for “checking in” via email on readings and assignments, etc. More info TBA

II. Essay Skeleton assignment (15%)
You will construct an essay “skeleton.” An opening and closing paragraph, and the skeleton of the body – to an imaginary research paper. More info TBA.
Due: Sept. 30

III. Mental Filing Cabinet Essay (25%)
A 1000-word essay on your mental “filing cabinets” - emphasis on Michael Pollan’s book. More info TBA. I will explain what I mean by “mental filing cabinets” in class. It’s a metaphor I thought up for organizing my own intellectual life.
Due: Oct. 28

IV. Op-Ed (30%)
You will write an op-ed.
Due: Nov. 25
Length: 800 words, plus an additional 1-2 pages of footnotes where you will discuss your points more fully, as well as cite your sources.

***All assignments should be handed in electronically, via Web CT.***
Late policy: one percentage point will be deducted per each day late.

Course Materials

There are three books for purchase. (Please order them from your favourite online retailer).

Michael Pollan, The Omnivore’s Dilemma
Art Spiegelman, Maus I: A Survivor’s Tale: My Father Bleeds History (1986)
Art Spiegelman, Maus II: A Survivor’s Tale: And Here My Troubles Began (1992)

In addition, we will be using various online articles. I have indicated the relevant web addresses, where applicable.
NOTE: The NYT allows 20 free articles / month before they ask you to buy a digital subscription. I suggest you download the handful of NYT articles we’ll be using this semester early -- i.e., at the beginning of term, so you don’t max out for the given month.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

Week 1 (Sept. 9): Introduction

Week 2 (Sept. 14): University Seminar Skills & Getting Used to Being an Undergraduate
(Sept. 16): Arts One cluster event. Room TBA

Week 3 (Sept. 21): How to (Really) Read

http://www.mondofacto.com/study-skills/study/how-to-read-at-university/index.html

http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learning/reading-skills/texts.html
“Is Google Making Us Stupid?” The Atlantic (July/August 2008)
http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/6868/

For Class Discussion: Tell us about a book that has shaped you (how?) and another you hope to read within the next year. What do you hope to learn about yourself (and/or about the world) from that two books?

(Sept. 23): Writing Skills Workshop

Week 4 (Sept. 28): Who Are We? What’s At Stake in Political Debates?

No Readings today. Prepare some thoughts on what collective groups you see yourself as belonging to, what you are passionate about in society, and why you think those issues are important. (And if you’re apathetic, state why as well.) Do you tend to take predictable (or against-the-grain) positions within your various groups? Why or Why Not?

(Sept. 30): Joint Arts One film (“Class Dismissed: How TV Frames the Working Class”). Room TBA

Week 5 (Oct. 5 and 7) How We Talk: The Argument Culture

Listen to this 45-minute podcast (starting at 4 minutes in, if you want), about Deborah Tannen’s book The Argument Culture:


and read

Larissa MacFarquhar, “Thank You for Not Fighting.”:
http://www.nytimes.com/books/98/04/05/reviews/980405.05macfart.html (review of Tannen’s book)

Note that the word “argument” is not simply meant to refer to verbal fighting, but also the way we tend to “make a case” for something in contemporary political and social discourse. Sometimes the latter ends up blending into the former, though, which is partly what we will talk about.

Here is a short discussion of what an “academic argument” is:
http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/handouts/thesisandargument/FAQarguments.htm

Mira Sucharov, “Talking Politics,” The Ottawa Citizen (2 February 2009)
Week 6 (Oct. 12 & 14): How We Think: Liberalism & Conservatism

David Mamet, “Why I am No Longer a ‘Brain-Dead Liberal,’”

Wayne Besen, “In Defense of Liberalism.”

Take this online quiz and see where you score:
http://www.politicalcompass.org/index

For Class Discussion: What parts of either liberalism or conservatism (or both or neither) do you relate to? Discuss the online quiz either in terms of your personal outlook or some other measure (if you prefer not to get personal).

Week 7: (Oct. 19 & 21): Food Politics

Michael Pollan’s Omnivore’s Dilemma

For Class Discussion: What are the value trade-offs Pollan suggests, and what kinds of values (taste, aesthetics, ethics, cost, humaneness, healthfulness, ecology) guide you when making your food choices?

Week 8: (Oct. 26): How to Write (Well): The Op-Ed Form I

Patricia A. Turner, “Dangerous White Stereotypes”

Mira Sucharov, “The Dilemma of a Diaspora Jew at an Israeli Peace Rally”

Mira Sucharov, “Parental Involvement,”
http://www.canada.com/story_print.html?id=5b5f9455-9aa6-4f4b-81fc-97f735724ac0&sponsor=

David Brooks, History for Dollars (why the humanities)
For Class Discussion: Read all of the op-eds above. Write a one-sentence summary of the main point of each piece. Which points do you agree with? Which ones helped you think about the issues differently? How do the authors use language (and its rhythms) to convey their points?

(Oct. 28): How to Write (Well): The Op-ed Form II

Thomas Friedman, Tea Party with a Difference

Margaret Wente, The Immigration Debate We Don’t Want to Have

Christie Blatchford, “Testing the Limits of Civil Discourse,”

and Blatchford’s original column that provoked the reaction she refers to:
“Layton’s Death Turns into a Thoroughly Public Spectacle,”

Week 9 (Nov. 2 & 4) Historical Memory & Identity I

Art Spiegelman, Maus I

here's a reaction to Maus when it first came out:

Week 10 (Nov. 9) Historical Memory & Identity II

Art Spiegelman, Maus II


**To find this article, go to the library website.

http://catalogue.library.carleton.ca/ Type in the name of the journal (Melus) in the title field. Then scroll down to find the relevant issue (Fall 1995). All journal articles are available in full online through the library website. You may have to enter your barcode and pin if connecting from off campus. This is good practice for finding articles for research purposes.**
**For Class Discussion:** Identify a few themes in *Maus*. Does the graphic novel format “work” in delivering these themes? How does Staub help us understand the meaning(s) of *Maus*?

(Nov. 11): Joint Arts One event. Room TBA

Week 11: (Nov. 16): Prof. Wohl & I swap classes

(Nov. 18): Op-Ed assignment practice workshop (in class)

Week 12: (Nov. 23 & 25) The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Nov. 23 Readings:

http://anacreon.clas.uconn.edu/~pressman/history.pdf


Mira Sucharov, “I am a Zionist. And I am a Palestinian Nationalist.” *Haaretz*

Nov. 25 Readings:

Thomas Friedman, *Hobby or Necessity?* (Is-Pal)

http://www.bitterlemons.org/previous/bl130709ed27.html

Bitter Lemons, “A one, two or three state solution? (18 August 2008).
http://www.bitterlemons.org/previous/bl180808ed32.html


**For Class Discussion:** If you could get Israelis and Palestinians to agree on one thing that they currently disagree on, what would it be? (And how would that help lead to a potential resolution of the conflict?)

Week 13 (Nov. 30 & Dec. 2): Israeli-Palestinian politics on campus
Nov. 30: Film (in class): *Discordia*
Dec. 2: Wrap-Up
(Discordia discussion and term wrap-up)

FYSM 1602 Collective Identity & Collective Action:
Prof. Sucharov
Winter Term 2012
Office Hours (same as fall): Weds 1-3; Friday 10-11:25

**There are two books to buy this term (for week 7 and 8).**

**Week One (Jan 4 & 6): Collective Identity**


**Week Two (Jan 11 & 13): Collective Action**

Dan Ariely, “Can Beggars Be Choosers?”


**Week Three (Jan. 18 & 20): Occupy Movement**

http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136404/rory-mcveigh/how-occupy-wall-street-works?page=show


**Week Four (Jan. 25 & 27): First Nations**

II. [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/charlie-angus/attawapiskat-emergency_b_1104370.html#s487209](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/charlie-angus/attawapiskat-emergency_b_1104370.html#s487209)


**Week Five (Feb. 1 & 3): Deaf Culture**

III. Documentary Film (*Sound and Fury*) - Feb. 1 joint class with Prof. Wohl’s psychology seminar. *Meet in 608 Robertson Hall.*

B. Harlan Lane, “Do Deaf People Have a Disability?” *Sign Language Studies* (July 2002), 2 (4), pg. 356-379

**Week Six (Feb. 8 & 10): GLBTQ Identity (speaker Feb. 10 GLBTQ)**


V. (Feb. 10): GLBTQ speaker. Location TBA.

**Week Seven (Feb. 15 & 17): Social Media**

Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody* [http://www.amazon.ca/Here-Comes-Everybody-Clay-Shirky/dp/0143114948/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1321971579&s=books&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.ca/Here-Comes-Everybody-Clay-Shirky/dp/0143114948/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1321971579&s=books&sr=1-1)

**Reading Week** (week of Feb. 20)

**Week Eight (Feb. 29 & March 2): Arab North Americans**
Book: Arab in America: [http://www.amazon.ca/Arab-America-Toufic-El-Rassi/dp/0867196734/ref=sr_1_fkmr2_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1321971351&sr=8-3-fkmr2](http://www.amazon.ca/Arab-America-Toufic-El-Rassi/dp/0867196734/ref=sr_1_fkmr2_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1321971351&sr=8-3-fkmr2)

Listen to: “This American Life” (podcast). [http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/322/shouting-across-the-divide?act=1 ("Act One"), 33 minutes]

Remind me to show a couple of spoof TV ads in class to discuss.

**Week Nine (March 7 & 9): War I**
TBA

**Week Ten (March 14 & 16): War II**

**and planning for War Museum Field Trip**

B. War Museum Field Trip (Joint Cluster event), March 16

**Week Eleven (March 21 & 23): “The Life Report” Writing Workshop**
Read David Brooks’ blog (including various “Life Reports” he has assembled from readers):
Bring your “Life Report” drafts to class for workshopping.

**Week Twelve (March 28 & 30): “The Life Report” Writing Workshop**
Bring your “Life Report” drafts to class for workshopping.
Life Report essay due (at the end of the day, as usual).

*April 4: class cancelled due to professor’s annual academic conference*

**Assignments**

1. **Ongoing Participation Questions**
Each week (on Weds) you will hand in a paragraph or two reflecting on the readings and topic for that week. What do the authors argue, and what further questions does it raise? You may choose to answer the question, or you may choose to leave it unanswered: but either way, I want to see a well thought-out discussion leading up to a substantial question. Oral participation will form part of the participation grade as well.

**Due: every Weds. Hard copies please.**
**Participation: 25%**

2. **Social Media Project**
For this assignment, you may work either individually or in pairs. Choose a social issue (may be one of the ones we’ve studied this term) about which you’re passionate. Create either a twitter handle or a Facebook “like” page to promote dialogue and debate on the given issue. You will be required to either tweet about it, or post on your Facebook “like” page about it, including both your own commentary and links to other writings/debates on the given topic. Some marks will be given to trying to generate followers by connecting and interacting with others “out there” on the given topic. Primarily I will be looking for intelligent, witty, articulate and thoughtful engagement and commentary on the given topic.
Suggested “length”: 25 tweets or 25 FB page postings, at least half of which should be your comments on others’ links/articles.
Worth 25%
Due: Feb. 1
Please email me the assignment from your Carleton email account.
My email is mira_sucharov@carleton.ca

3. Another filing cabinet essay!
Choose one of the following books: Maus I & II, Here Comes Everybody, or Arab in America to write another “filing cabinet” essay. Recall that by “filing cabinets” I mean topics abstracted from the main argument of the book about which you desire to gain more information, and about which further research projects could be developed.

Length: 2000-2500 words (suggest three “filing cabinets”); including 10-12 sources.
Due: March 2
Worth 25%
Please email me the assignment from your Carleton email account.
My email is mira_sucharov@carleton.ca

Modeled on NYT op-ed writer David Brooks’ The Life Report series (on his blog; see link above), this essay will give you an opportunity to reflect on your life thus far (your experiences and observations and what you’ve learned from them), as well as on your hopes and dreams for the future (how do you want to make your public mark? What do you want your private life to be like? Is there a natural relationship between the two?) This assignment will give you a chance to practice accessible yet reflective and analytical writing. We will workshop drafts together in class.

Length: 1500 words.
Due: March 30
Worth 25%
Please email me the assignment from your Carleton email account.
My email is mira_sucharov@carleton.ca
**Academic Accommodations**

**For students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs **at least two weeks before the first assignment is due** or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **(November 11, 2011 for fall term examinations and March 7, 2012 for winter term examinations)**.

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance ([www.carleton.ca/equity](http://www.carleton.ca/equity)).

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

**Plagiarism:** The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;

· using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;

· using another’s data or research findings;

· failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;

· handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

**Oral Examination:** At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

**Submission and Return of Term Work:** Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at 4 p.m., stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

**Grading:** The following is the Carleton University grading system.
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**Grades:** Final grades are derived from the completion of course assignments. Failure to write the final exam will result in the grade ABS. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

**Approval of final grades:** Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

**Connect Email Accounts:** All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student’s responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

**Carleton Political Science Society:** The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which
will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email carletonpss@gmail.com, visit our website at poliscisociety.com, or come to our office in Loeb D688.

**Official Course Outline:** The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.