April 7

__The Virginia Company and its Jamestown Adventure: From a Failed Investment to the Creation of the United States of America.\__

**Robert Crooks**, OLLI Member & Study Group Leader

**Talk Description:** The Virginia Company, which conceived, financed and implemented the first permanent settlement of English-speaking people in north America, is the forgotten character in the American creation myth. Its ambitions ended in bankruptcy, forcing the British crown to take over management of the Virginia plantation which became the first colony in what would eventually become the British Empire and the first step in creation of the United States of America. It's a story that deserves wider appreciation.

**Biography:** Rob Crooks is an expatriate Australian, now a US citizen. He graduated as an agricultural plant ecologist from Sydney University in 1972. After graduation, he started working on environmental research and education and spent the next 40 years working as an environmental scientist and policy analyst for governments and the private sector in Australia and 13 different countries in south and south-east Asia. In the 1970s, he worked as a research officer with the Department of the Environment in the Australian state of Tasmania. In the 1980s, he worked as an environmental consultant with one of Australia’s largest engineering consultancies, eventually becoming a director and extending the company’s environmental work out of Australia and into South and Southeast Asia. He joined the World Bank in 1992 and worked with it as a staff environmental specialist until 2003, by which time he had become a Principal Environmental Specialist. He retired early in 2003 due to a family emergency but resumed work as a consultant in 2005 working on environmental projects and studies for the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Australian Aid and Islamic Development Bank amongst others before finally retiring for good in 2011. He lives in Medford with his wife Elisabeth and dogs, Teddy and Bear, and his main retirement interests, other than taking OLLI courses, are cooking and obeying his wife’s instructions.

April 14

__Beyond the Dictionary Meaning of Words: A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Language Education\__

**Gilberte Furstenberg**, Senior Lecturer Emerita, MIT

**Talk Description:** In describing Cultura, a pedagogical project for French and American students at MIT, this talk will explore how the connotations and underlying meanings of words (such as “freedom,” “friend” and “individualism”) can reveal sharp contrasts in cultural attitudes and values.

**Biography:** Gilberte Furstenberg, Senior Lecturer Emerita at MIT, taught English at the University of Paris-Nanterre before moving to the United States. She was a correspondent for L’Express for nearly a decade before joining the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department at MIT where she worked for 30 years and developed innovative multimedia and web-based materials for fostering students' active linguistic and cultural experience.
April 21

*The Future of College Athletics*

Frank Roche, OLLI Study Group Leader & Tufts graduate

**Talk Description:** This Lunch and Learn session will examine the current landscape of college athletics by drawing on the speaker’s personal experiences as a college athlete and observations over the years. Topics such as the challenges a college athlete faces, the recruiting process, and compensation of athletes will be discussed. The talk will conclude by using a future lens on college athletics and trying to predict what its trajectory will be considering the impact of COVID-19 and new legal regulations which are beginning to redefine what it means to be a college athlete.

**Biography:** Frank Roche is from Arlington, MA and currently teaches high school English and Special Education at Revere High School. He attended Tufts University as an undergraduate and returned for his graduate degree earning a Master’s in Middle & High School History Teaching. Last summer, he led his first Osher study group, *Beyond the Game: The Other Sides of Sports* and had a blast. Sports are a passion of his and he has experienced both competing in and studying the sports landscape. He was the MVP of the 2019 Tufts football team and now enjoys playing pickup sports such as basketball, hockey, and softball among others. Before entering the world of education, he worked for a tech startup in Somerville and Club 9 Sports, a sports mergers and acquisitions financial firm. He is fascinated by the complex nature of sports and hopes we can tackle some captivating topics during this lunch.

April 28

*Fighting Time: My Healing Relationship with the Man Wrongfully Convicted of Murdering My Father*

Amy Banks, Psychiatrist and Author

**Talk Description:** On April 12, 1979, Ronald F. Banks, University of Maine professor and author of *Maine Becomes a State: The Movement to Separate Maine from Massachusetts*, was shot and killed outside the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana. Sixteen-year-old Isaac Knapper was arrested, tried as an adult, and wrongly convicted of the murder. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole at the Louisiana State Penitentiary, Angola. In 1992, Isaac’s conviction was overturned and in 2015 he met Dr. Bank’s daughter, Amy. It was an emotional meeting, and in the years since Isaac and Amy have maintained a strong friendship and healing connection and have worked to educate people about the impact that wrongful convictions can have on both the wrongfully convicted and the family of murdered victims. Their book *Fighting Time* will be available in the fall of 2021.

**Biography:** Amy Banks MD is a Harvard trained psychiatrist (and a Tufts University Alum Class of 1984) and a Founding Scholar of the International Center for Growth in Connection (formally the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute) She is the author (with Leigh Ann Hirschman) of *Wired to Connect: The Surprising Link Between Brain Science and Strong, Healthy Relationships*. She is a member of the Clinical Advisory Board for the Renfrew Center for Eating Disorders. Dr. Banks has lectured nationally and internationally on Relational Neuroscience. She maintains a private psychiatric practice in Lexington, MA specializing in the long-term sequelae of chronic disconnections.
May 5

In her Mother’s Footsteps: The Lives of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley

Charlotte Gordon, Distinguished Professor of the Humanities, Endicott College

Talk description: Mary Wollstonecraft, the author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman was the mother of Mary Shelley, the author of Frankenstein. Wollstonecraft’s radical ideas had a profound influence on her daughter’s life and yet many people are unaware of this important legacy.

Biography: Charlotte Gordon is an award-winning author whose work has appeared in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post, among other publications. Her latest book, Romantic Outlaws: The Extraordinary Lives of Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Shelley (Random House) won the National Book Critics Circle award. She has also published Mistress Bradstreet: The Untold Story of America’s First Poet (Little, Brown) and The Woman Who Named God: Abraham’s Dilemma and the Birth of Three Faiths (Little, Brown). Most recently, she has written the introduction to Penguin’s reissue of Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein. A distinguished professor of the Humanities at Endicott College, Gordon speaks frequently at colleges and conferences, and has been interviewed on numerous radio and television programs.

May 12

Tissue Engineering – The Future of Food and Solutions for Disease

David Kaplan, Professor of Biomedical Engineering, Tufts University

Talk description: Growing tissues from scratch, from a set of ingredients akin to making bread, is now a reality. Mixing the right cells, the right support materials and the right ingredients to guide the cells towards a programmed tissue goal is a reality. The tissue engineering approach builds upon advances in stem cell biology, advanced manufacturing approaches, and the use of biochemical factors to train cells. The end result of this process is the ability to generate 3D tissues with relevant structures and functions. Two examples of emerging impact from this approach include: (a) food of the future – where we will cover what we can grow, how we grow it, and why we grow it, and (b) using lab grown tissues to discover insights into diseases in order to find new cures. The approaches used and their short-, mid-, and long-term impact will be discussed.

Biography: David Kaplan is the Stern Family Endowed Professor of Engineering at Tufts University, a Distinguished University Professor, and Professor and Chair of the Department of Biomedical Engineering. His research focus is on biopolymer engineering to understand structure-function relationships for biomaterials, tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. He has published over 900 peer reviewed papers, he is editor-in-chief of the journal ACS Biomaterials Science and Engineering, and he serves on many editorial boards and programs for journals and universities. He has received numerous awards for his research and teaching and was elected to the National Academy of Engineering.
May 19

Who Tells Us Where to Go and Why? Travel Guidance from the Romans Through Marco Polo and Chaucer to TripAdvisor

Tom Brosnahan, Guidebook Author and On-Line Travel Information Pioneer

Talk description: Tom will position himself in a long line of travel advisors, from the Roman “Viaticum” guides through the travelogues of Ibn Battuta, Marco Polo, Chaucer and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to TripAdvisor and the travel “influencers” of today.

Biography: In 1967, Tom Brosnahan left Tufts with a B.A. in History and went to Turkey to teach English in the Peace Corps. Delighted with the little-known destination, he wrote “Turkey on $5 a Day.” Frommer’s published it and asked for more. Tom went on to write 40 guidebooks for Berlitz, Frommer’s and Lonely Planet, covering destinations in North and Central America, Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. He created an award-winning pre-Internet computer bulletin board system, and later developed websites visited annually by ten million travelers from 200+ countries.

May 26

Why the Cuban Revolution Still Matters

Aviva Chomsky, Professor of History and Coordinator of Latin American, Latino and Caribbean Studies, Salem State University

Talk description: This presentation will discuss the Cuban Revolution in global and contemporary context. What was the Revolution’s global impact? Why has it continued to play such an important role in US policy, and in Latin American and global social movements? Why is it important to study it today, in the 21st century?

June 2

*Rainsford Island: A Boston Harbor Case Study in Public Neglect and Private Activism*

Robin Hazard Ray and Bill McEvoy, Authors

**Talk description:** For centuries, Boston Harbor’s Rainsford Island was an offshore repository for Boston's unwanted: "smallpox victims, impoverished immigrants, violent criminals, drunkards, unwed mothers and their infants, mentally ill, and delinquent boys." The brutal living conditions left nearly 1,800 dead in unmarked graves.

Robin Hazard Ray and Bill McEvoy will share their research into the stories of those incarcerated and those who agitated to shut down the island.

**Book:** *Rainsford Island: A Case Study in Public Neglect and Private Activism*

**Biography:**
*Robin Hazard Ray* is an editor, journalist, and crime-fiction writer. She has been a docent at Mount Auburn Cemetery for many years, giving tours on geology, LGBTQ cemetery residents, and the circle of Isabella Stewart Gardner, among others. She lives in Somerville with her husband and two black cats.

*Bill McEvoy* is a US Army Veteran (1968-1971). He earned a BS from Bentley University, MBA from Suffolk University, and MA in Political Science from Boston College. While at BC he had the privilege of participating in a semester-long colloquium with Dr. Thomas H. O’Connor, the Dean of the History Department. Dr. O’Connor was known as "the Dean of Boston's historians" for his authorship of such critically acclaimed books as "Boston Catholics," "Civil War Boston" and "The Boston Irish." In 2009, Bill retired as a Massachusetts District Court Magistrate. He has volunteered for nine years with the “No Veteran Dies Alone” program at the Bedford Veterans Hospital, as well as continuing as a pro-bono Magistrate, one day per week, until October 1, 2019. Since his first month of retirement, he has performed many large-scale cemetery research projects, several as a volunteer at Mount Auburn Cemetery (MAC). In addition to Rainsford Island, he performed a four-year study of the 23,000+ people (primarily Irish immigrants or their first-generation descendants) buried from 1854 to 1920 at the Catholic Mount Auburn Cemetery, Watertown, MA.

Bill’s third book was the biography of Alice North Towne Lincoln who, in 1894, along with Attorney Louis D. Brandeis, caused the City of Boston to cease utilizing Rainsford Island as a dumping ground for the poor and unwanted. She, and her husband Roland Crocker Lincoln, are buried in Cambridge, at Mount Auburn Cemetery.

June 9

*Rebellious Laughter in American Culture*

Joseph Boskin, Emeritus Professor of American Social & Ethnic History at Boston University

**Talk description:** Sigmund Freud knowingly wrote that “Humor is not resigned; it is rebellious.” Essayist E.B. White observed that “Whatever else an American believes or disbelieves about himself, he is absolutely sure he has a sense of humor.” From these springboards is an exploration of people’s humor, their individual and communal responses to the swift and ongoing changes in American life.

Book: *Rebellious Laughter: People’s Humor in American Culture*

June 16

**The Development of Buddhist Modernism**

Alex Grabiner, Doctoral Student, McGill University

**Talk description:** The speaker will give a brief historical overview of Buddhist modernism—how it arose in response to European colonialism in Sri Lanka and Japan, how it developed in China and Taiwan, and what it looks like today under leaders such as Thich Nhat Hanh and Cheng Yen. This will be of interest to those who wish to know more about Buddhism, Asian Religions, and religion in modern societies.

Biography: Alex Grabiner holds a BA in Non-duality from New York University (2006) and an MA in Religion from Yale Divinity School (2018). He studies modern Taiwanese Buddhism, with a focus on the way religious organizations carry out spiritual practices within secular spheres of society.

June 23

**Black Radical: The Life and Times of William Monroe Trotter**

Kerri Greenidge, Assistant Professor of Race, Colonialism, and Diaspora; Director of American Studies, Tufts University

**Talk description:** *Black Radical: The Life and Times of William Monroe Trotter* is a biography of African-American activist, William Monroe Trotter. It explores the history of racial thought and African American political radicalism in New England at the turn of the century.

Biography: Dr. Kerri Greenidge received her Doctorate in American Studies from Boston University, where her specialty included African-American history, American political history, and African-American and African diasporic literature in the post-emancipation and early modern era. Her research explores the role of African-American literature in the creation of radical Black political consciousness, particularly as it relates to local elections and Democratic populism during the Progressive Era. She has taught at Boston University, the University of Massachusetts, and Emerson College. Her work includes historical research for the Wiley-Blackwell Anthology of African-American Literature, the Oxford African American Studies Center, and PBS. For nine years she worked as a historian for Boston African American National Historical Site in Boston, through which she published her first book, *Boston Abolitionists* (2006). She is currently interim Director of American Studies at Tufts University, and co-director of the African American Trail Project at the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy (CSRD).
June 30

The World of Hayao Miyazaki, Master of Japanese Animation, and Why We Need Him Now

Susan Napier, Goldthwaite Professor of Rhetoric and Japanese Studies, Tufts University

Talk description: Many people the world over know Miyazaki for his beautiful and inspiring films, often featuring young people or children in adventurous situations. But Miyazaki’s work also explores apocalyptic or catastrophic events that ordinary human beings must respond to. This talk will examine how his art, balancing both light and darkness is ideal for our current moment.

Biography: Susan Napier was born and raised in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Currently, she is the Goldthwaite Professor of Rhetoric at Tufts University. Previously she held the Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Chair at the University of Texas. She has also taught at the University of London and been a visiting professor at Harvard, University of Pennsylvania, the University of Sydney and a visiting scholar at Keio University in Tokyo. She is the author of five books, the most recent of which is Miyazakiworld: A Life in Art, published in 2018 by Yale University Press, which has been translated into ten languages.