

## Part Two: Program One:

This is the main syllabus for this program, but our partners in Part One convinced us that there is great variety in the nation's Lifelong Learning Institutes—regional differences, different expectations about work assigned outside class, different levels of taste, sophistication, and numbers of films already seen. We have therefore developed two other syllabi. (See Appendix B.) We will work with partners to help them determine which list is most appropriate for their particular audience.

Substitutions are also permissible, although we would like films substituted to come from the same week's assignment in one of the other versions. We are alternating men and women in classes two through seven in Program One, and each of the films in both programs has been chosen so that a broad spectrum of gender and aging related themes will be covered.

Class One:     ***An Introduction to Gender and Aging***  
(Common to all versions and introduced to facilitators in the long distance training). We will begin with an examination of gender and aging related themes as they are presented in **New Yorker** cartoons from 1986 to the present—the first 20 years of the longevity revolution.<sup>1</sup>

After that we will show and discuss clips from the films to be watched in the course as well as some from the other syllabi. We will conclude with the handouts to be discussed next time, and a reminder that there will be one novel (or a group of short stories) assigned for discussion in the final class.

These cartoons will be distributed to all partners in a Power Point presentation, and the film clips will be contained on DVDs we will produce and distribute to partners.

Class Two       ***Wrestling Ernest Hemingway*** (*Masterful, serio-comic introduction to male aging issues in one macho man and another very shy and retiring one. Together they help to correct each other's deficiencies and become more whole.*)

Class Three     ***The Winter Guest*** (*Features five pairs from all stages of life each holding the winter guest, death, at bay. Main focus is the conflict between an aging grandmother and her daughter—a mother whose husband has recently died—over issues of mutual dependency and the need for separation and new identities as they age.*)



Class Four       ***About Schmidt*** (*A blackly comic introduction to male issues of retirement, loss of purpose and lack of connection*)

Class Five       ***All Passion Spent*** (*feminist classic by Vita Sackville-West dramatizes 85 year old Lady Slane's disengagement from her children and her whole previous life after the death of her husband, and her emergence as a whole and joyous person for the first time*).

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C

- Class Six      **Spring Forward** (*An intergenerational and mentoring relationship helps an older man to prepare for retirement and a younger to overcome his background of failure. It also dramatizes both the rarity and the value of intimate connection between men, both in old age and in youth.*)
- Class Seven      **Since Otter Left** (*Older woman, thought vulnerable and frail by her daughter and granddaughter, proves more resourceful, courageous, and caring than either of them—inspirational*).
- Class Eight      Conclusion and discussion of the novel **The Stone Angel** (*A country woman's long and successful struggle for freedom and transformation in late life*)

*Note:* In addition to the novel ***The Stone Angel*** to be discussed in the last class, students will be assigned photocopied versions of selected short stories throughout the course.