

Canals and the Making of the Modern World

When the Erie Canal opened in 1825, it revolutionized American travel and transportation, but its inspiration came from Europe's earlier canal networks. In this course, we will trace the development of French, British, and Irish canals in the 17th and 18th centuries. We will follow the story into the 19th century as we turn to American canals, especially in New York and Pennsylvania. Along the way, we will explore how canals reflect the politics and aspirations of different nations and why they still matter for global shipping today. Whether we are drawn to engineering marvels, the people who built them, or the pleasure of drifting along a canal or hiking a towpath, we will deepen our appreciation of canals' importance and beauty.



[Canals and the Making of the Modern World promo video](#)

YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Bernie Carlson



Bernard (Bernie) Carlson is Vaughan Professor Emeritus of Humanities at the University of Virginia and an expert on invention, entrepreneurship, and technology's role in society. He received the Sally Hacker Prize from the Society for the History of Technology and the William Middleton Prize from the IEEE, and filmed *Understanding the Inventions that Changed the World*. Now based in Ireland, he directs the MS program in AgInnovation at the University of Galway, where he trains adult learners in product development, startups, and sustainable farming.

WEDNESDAYS, JULY 8 THROUGH AUGUST 12

8am PT | 9am MT | 10am CT | 11am ET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Wednesday, July 8
- Wednesday, July 15
- Wednesday, July 22
- Wednesday, July 29
- Wednesday, August 5
- Wednesday, August 12

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.