

From quotes to questions:

Hannah Arendt: A “decisive flaw in Eichmann’s character was his almost total inability ever to look at anything from the other fellow’s point of view.”

Yet shouldn’t leaders remain focused on their specific purposes once formulated and the specific perspectives that informed them without becoming distracted by taking in alternative points of view? How important is it for leaders to see and assess significant predicaments from others’ points of view?

Immanuel Kant: “One must take [people] as they are . . . and not as uninformed pedants or good-natured dreamers fancy that they ought to be. But ‘as they are’ ought to read ‘as we have made them.”

Does Kant’s statement about “hav[ing] made” people who they are undermine the notion of human nature? When should leaders listen to people (their constituents) as they are and take them where they want to go, and when should leaders lead people (their constituents where they may not want to go (or, in Kant’s sense, remake them)?

Robert Penn Warren: “If you meant to imply that politics . . . is not exactly like Easter Week in a nunnery, you are right. But I will beat you to the metaphorical draw this time. Politics is action, and all action is but a flaw in the perfection of inaction, which is peace.”

Must political action always disrupt peace; if so, is that peace at all desirable?

James Surowiecki: “It’s much safer for a manager to follow a strategy that seems rational rather than the strategy that is rational.”

Under what conditions is this kind of safety smart? How would you change conditions so that managers and leaders would have incentives to adopt the most rational courses of action rather than the most apparently rational or popular paths?

Don Forsyth: “[W]hen individuals derive their identity from their membership in a group, social loafing is replaced by social laboring as members expend extra effort for their groups.”

Hence, the leadership challenge would be to assist such identification, presuming that the leader wants members’ dedication and extra effort, yet how does one avoid the danger of effacing or diminishing members’ individuality?

Dixie Chicks: “[G]row something wild and unruly.”

When, if ever, might the “unruly” be associated with intelligent and conspicuously (institutionally as well as personally) effective leadership strategies?

Robert Frost: “Two Roads diverged in a wood, and I -- I took the one less traveled by. And that has made all the difference.”

When you take the less traveled road, do you risk being marginalized? If so, how might you reduce that risk and be influential as well as eccentric? Do Frost’s lines apply to practices outside the arts and where innovation (striking off on “less traveled” roads) is not always highly prized?

In this section of LDST 101, we’re going to raise these questions as well as others that you’ll find in the schedule portion of the syllabus. We will raise those questions--but not because the answers lay at the foundation of leadership studies. I believe that the asking does. The asking along with the conversation generated by our inquiries should draw our various premises into the open, problematize some answers we might take for granted, prompt intriguing encounters with problems, problem-solvers, and a number of issues we might otherwise have left unexplored. We’ll spend a few sessions contemplating why we’re here (in a class on leadership foundations, at a university, at this university, and on this planet--certainly two weeks should be enough). Then we’ll start thinking skeptically about the necessity, effectiveness, and integrity of leaders and work our way through some Shakespeare, two classic American “political novels,’ one near presidential impeachment, towards an anatomy of evil. Before you strap yourselves into this challenge, though, attend to the next section on . . .

Requirements and Grades

Lively, informed encounters with our questions, obviously, require your lively and informed participation in class discussions. To prepare for them, you’ll occasionally be asked to complete 4 x 6 file cards that record your impressions and interpretations of the assigned reading. They may be collected, but they will not be graded. I sometimes call for volunteer contributions to the conversation but usually summon specific individuals based on a lottery system (the deck of cards is on my desk). Ten percent of the final grade will reflect your readiness to contribute meaningfully, to comment usefully on the reading and on your faculty and student colleagues’ opinions of same. Of course, the grade might also reflect relatively frequent absences and/or conspicuously flawed preparation.

You’ll be asked to submit three short papers (+/-3 double-spaced pages), each drawing on two or more assignments (including the class discussions of same) to answer one of the questions underscored in the syllabus, either those at this document’s start or others inserted alongside assignments in the schedule section. Submit at least one but no more than two before the spring break. The deadline for submitting the third and final paper is April 10th. The grade for each submission will constitute fifteen percent of your final grade.

15 pts-- interesting paper; made me think; strategically organized; grammatical; syntax is solid

12 pts-- headwork is fine, but clumsy footwork (grammar / syntax) distracts; Or exposition without much analysis; Or repeats rather than develops observations and arguments

10 pts-- two of the problems listed above

0-9 pts-- all the problems noted and others identified on the paper

The final examination scheduled by the university will contain questions calling for short answers and prompts for two short essays. The grade on the exam is 45% of your final grade for the course.

Schedule

Jan. 12, Welcome back; what's ahead.

Jan. 14, read Andy Abbott's "Zen of Education" (<http://magazine.uchicago.edu/0310/features/zen.shtml>) and Mark Henrie's "Why Go To College," library e-reserves. "The problem of the steady change of ideas or the perpetual need to imagine new ideas) . . . demolishes the notion that the essence of education consists in mastering certain contents or materials." So says Abbott. What are the implications for an assembly such as ours looking for the foundations of leadership studies? Do any of Henrie's "bad answers" to the question, "why go to college," offer help in answering the previous question about Abbot's statement?

Jan. 19, no class.

Jan. 21, read Graff's **Clueless in Academe**, chapters 2 and 4, e-reserves.

Jan. 26, read Edmundson's "Teaching the Truths," e-reserves.

Jan. 28, read Surowiecki, **The Wisdom of Crowds**, chapters 1-3, 7, 10-11.

Feb. 2, read chapters 9, 10, OR 11 in Donelson Forsyth's **Group Dynamics**, fourth edition, on reserve. Each third of the class will be responsible for each of the three chapters. Does what you've learned from this assignment about teamwork, decision-making, and leadership help you address some of the problems that Surowiecki identifies in his discussion of herds, cascades, and crowds?

Feb. 4, read what Marcus Aurelius says about leaders' qualities and the world's character in books 3-5 of his **Meditations**, on reserve.

Feb. 9, read Machiavelli's **Prince**.

Feb. 11, read the first book of Thomas More's *Utopia*. When you set Hythloday's advice alongside that of Aurelius and Machiavelli, whose seems most compelling and why? How might any two of the three compare peace of mind with peace among peoples?

Feb. 16, no assignment. Continuing conversation about/among Aurelius, Machiavelli, and More.

Feb. 18, read the second book of More's **Utopia**. If you were in authority, which of More's utopian policies or practices would you advocate and which would you ardently oppose implementing?

Feb. 23, read Max Weber's "Sociology of Charismatic Authority," pp. 245-52, on e-reserves. Do you agree that charismatic leaders must "stand outside the ties of this world"? Do you agree that "the existence of charismatic authority is specifically unstable"?

Feb. 25, read Shakespeare's **Coriolanus**.

Mar. 2, read the first three acts of Shakespeare's **Julius Caesar**.

Mar. 4, no assignment. How would you compare the tribunes in **Coriolanus** with Brutus, Cassius, and Antony in **Julius Caesar**? John Wilkes Booth believed that President Lincoln had amassed too much power (as both president and military commander-in-chief) and had become a domestic Julius Caesar. Indeed, Caesar has the reputation of a tyrant. What is the difference between a tyrant and a powerful leader? Caesar's crossing the Rubicon has the reputation of being one of the great decisive actions undertaken by leaders in peril. Effective leadership, however, may have to blend decisive action with other virtues. From what you've read in Shakespeare and elsewhere in this course, what might those other virtues be, and how would blend them?

Spring break--- Time to read Robert Penn Warren's masterwork.

Mar. 16, be ready to discuss **All the King's Men** with philosopher, attorney, and Obama's NC miracle-worker Jimbo Parrott, our guest.

Mar. 18, stay alert and thoughtful: why do you think Penn Warren included the extended flashback on Cass Mastern and his "friends"? Is Jack Burden a ruthless realist, the unwitting accomplice of a ruthless realist, or a frustrated idealist? Evaluate Adam Stanton and his role in the novel; is Jack right thinking Adam is "a romantic"?

Mar. 23, read Surowiecki's **Wisdom of Crowds**, chapter 12. From what you've read in Penn Warren and Surowiecki, can you make a case that "democracy is actually an excellent vehicle for making intelligent decisions"?

Mar. 25, take a break/breath.

Mar. 30, "Primary Colors"-- the film (edited)

April 1, read Joe Klein's "Citizen Clinton" and "His Side of the Story," an interview with Clinton, both published in **Time Magazine**, 2004 and on reserve.

April 6, read Gary McDowell's "High Crimes and Misdemeanors: Recovering the Intentions of the Founders," on reserve. Professor McDowell will be our guest. Did the founders set too high a standard when they made perjury an impeachable offense or did those advocating the impeachment of President Clinton set the bar too high when they applied that standard to lies about personal affairs?

April 8, read Stanley Renshon's article, "Political leadership as Social Capital: Governing in a Divided National Culture." Defend or reject Renshon's contention that "what clearly matters when thinking through leadership capital's depletion or accumulation is not policy conflict, but cultural conflict."

April 13, read Arendt's **Eichmann in Jerusalem**.

April 15, we finish our discussion of Arendt's volume. Evaluate Arendt's most controversial statements about the ordinariness (or banality) of evil and about the culpability of the Jews' leaders. Is it unfair to condemn behavior that seemed normal at the time and only reprehensible afterward?

April 20, read Friedrich Nietzsche's **Genealogy of Morality**. Compare Nietzsche's efforts to show that morality is untenable with what you've learned in this class about other efforts to read morality out of or into politics.

April 22, we finish with Nietzsche and with our enterprise (save for the exam). Compare your estimate of the battle between conscience and ambition ("will to power") with Nietzsche's verdict.