From quotes to questions:

Patti Smith: “In art may you proceed with abandon; in life, may you proceed with balance and stealth.”

**Stealth?** Is that appropriate counsel for leaders? Shouldn’t we expect transparency from our leaders? Is balance always preferable to abandon, when one is obliged to refashion or reform social practices?

Reinhold Niebuhr: “In political and moral theory ‘realism’ denotes a disposition to take into account all factors in a social and political situation, which offer resistance to established norms, particularly factors of self-interest and power. In the words of one notorious ‘realist,’ Machiavelli, the purpose of the realist is ‘to follow the truth of the matter rather than the imagination of it; for many have pictures of republics and principalities which have never been seen.’ This definition of ‘realism’ implies idealists are subject to illusions about social realities, which indeed they are.”

Are idealists ill-equipped to be effective leaders or change agents because they underestimate resistances? Given their sense of the formidable character of “resistances” and of the pervasiveness of self-interest, might realists be tempted to accept “established norms” that need changing or to grow deaf to legitimate calls for change?

George Bernard Shaw: “Some people see things as they are and say why. I dream things that never were and ask why not?”

Do Shaw’s apparent advocacy of abandon and fondness for “things that never were” disqualify him to lead? To shape public opinion?

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, “as we have made them,” seem too controlling? Does it undermine the notion of human nature? When should leaders listen to people, taking them “as they are” as well as where they want to go? And when should leaders lead people—their constituents—where they may not want to go—or, as Kant might have said, remake them?

Robert Penn Warren: “You don’t ever have to frame anybody, because the truth is always sufficient.”

Is corruption inevitable? Has Penn Warren given his protagonist, political leader and “boss,” Willie Stark, an idea about the sordid character of public service that resembles Niebuhr’s “realism” but is, in truth, unrealistic as well as cynical?
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 several sessions should be sufficient). Then we consider whether and why we need leaders, and we try to find standards with which to measure the effectiveness and integrity of leaders. We’ll talk with “old masters”--Machiavelli, Thomas More, Shakespeare, “Cato”--and we’ll finish up by taking a long look at public policy in the middle of the twentieth century, sifting fiction, FDR, and frightful events in the 40s. 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, 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). Frequent absences and/or conspicuously flawed preparation will cost you.

You’ll be asked to submit two papers--hard copy, double-spaced, carefully proofed, insightful, grammatical. One paper is due 9/16 (10% or 10 points -- 3-5 pp). One is due 11/18 (35% -- 7-9 pp). Late papers are taxed 4 points per day. The midterm exam is scheduled for 10/19 (20%); the final exam will be scheduled by the registrar (35%). Both are to be completed in-class.

Please acquired the following--available at the university bookstore

James Surowiecki, THE WISDOM OF CROWDS  Robert Penn Warren, ALL THE KING’S MEN
William Shakespeare, CORIOLANUS  Hannah Arendt, EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM
Thomas More, UTOPIA  Niccolo Machiavelli, THE PRINCE

Schedule

8/24  Introduction

8/26  Read Andy Abbott’s ZEN OF EDUCATION--accessible on e-reserve (as are several other assignments marked “ER”) and on-line (google “zen of education”). Start reading Penn Warren-- see 10/19 for details.

8/31 Read Graff, THE PROBLEM PROBLEM and TWO CHEERS FOR THE ARGUMENT CULTURE (ER). What are the perils of participating in the argument culture, and what is the problem problem? What does Graff mean when he says that education is “a forum for disagreement? Do you agree? If so, have you undermined the purpose of education by agreeing?
9/2 Read Edmundson TEACHING THE TRUTHS (ER).

9/7 Labor Day-- wrap up our purposes of education with a picnic-- 3410 Breezewood, 3PM. Go south on Huguenot Road, cross Huguenot bridge-- ¼ mile right on Cherokee. Go 4+/- miles to the stop sign, take a right on Old Gun Rd. Go 2+/- miles and go left on Young Manor. 2nd left is Breezewood. My house is 1st driveway on the left.

9/9 Read Surowiecki, THE WISDOM OF CROWDS, chapters 1-3, 6, and 9-11.

9/14 Read Sunstein, REPUBLIC.COM 2.0, chapters 1-2 and 4 (ER).

9/16 Your first paper is due today. Bring along an abstract (a summary of the position you take / the argument you make--4+/- coherent sentences). The question you’re addressing in 3-5 brilliant pages: What are the implications for the study of leadership of what you’ve learned from at least two of the following: Sunstein, Surowiecki, Graff, and Edmundson.

9/21 Read Machiavelli’s PRINCE.

9/23 Machiavelli, again.


9/30 Read More’s UTOPIA, book 2.

10/5 Read More’s (Margaret Roper’s) letter to Alice Alington (ER).

10/7 Read the selections from Machiavelli’s DISCOURSES, pp. 64-68 and 209-212 (ER) and from Cato’s LETTERS, pp. 820-831 (ER).

**Autumn break**

10/14 Read Shakespeare’s CORIOLANUS. Were the tribunes in the play correct to look after their constituents’ (and their own) interests? Would you consider Coriolanus’s “fatal flaw” contempt or humility?

10/19 MIDTERM EXAM-- 4 sets of terms/names in which each is to be related to the others and all terms/names in the set are to be related to a significant issue covered in class. Hence, you might find Coriolanus / contempt/ humility, in which case your answer to the second question for 10/14 could be adapted as the response to an exam question. You’ll be responsible for all that we’ve covered so far in our conversations AND Penn Warren’s ALL THE KING’S MEN, pp. 1-342

10/21 Read Max Weber, SOCIOLOGY OF CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY (ER).

10/26 Read Terry Price, LEADERSHIP ETHICS, chapter 4 (ER). Guest, Professor Terry Price

10/28 Complete Penn Warren’s ALL THE KING’S MEN. Guest, Atty Jimbo Parrott

11/2 Willie, Jack, and leadership--again

11/4 off

11/9 Readings--addresses, etc of Franklin Delano Roosevelt are to-be-announced, but you’ll find them on e-reserve. Guest, Professor Susan Dunn.
11/11 Read the opinions of Justice Frankfurter and Justice Stone in the 1940 case before the Supreme Court, Minersville School District v Gobitis--


Did you find Frankfurter’s reasons for compelling individuals to act against their conscientiously held religious convictions compelling or disturbing? If the choice between conformity and liberty had been yours to make, how would you have voted?

11/16 Read Surowiecki, chapter 12. Your papers are due in two days (7-9pp), but your abstracts are due today. Your job is to assess the Niebuhr quote on the first page of this syllabus (and the questions below it) in light of what you have learned from and about Machiavelli, More, Cato, Coriolanus, Weber, Willie, Jack, the Stantons, President Roosevelt, and Justices Frankfurter and Stone.

11/18 Papers are due.

11/23 Read Arendt, EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM, chapters 1-8, 14-15, and the epilogue. Is it unfair to condemn behavior that seemed normal at the time and only reprehensible afterward?

Turkey


What does Edmundson consider “the pedagogical challenge”? Has this course met it successfully? Have we--directly or indirectly--encouraged each other to trust ourselves “against the weight of current opinion”?

12/2 Read kepel, THE CHALLENGE OF CIVILIZATION (ER). One leadership challenge ahead is to manage the multipolarity in the Middle East. Become current by reading back issues of THE ECONOMIST and assess Kepel’s analysis of the Bush and Bin Laden failures as well as his vision and strategies for the future.