From quotes to questions:

Hannah Arendt: “The poets will always be accused of lying. And it is basically right. After all, they are the only ones from whom we expect the truth.”

What truth do you expect from poets? Are there synonyms for “lying” that you’d use to avoid the connotation of deceit yet to capture the distance poets often maintain from what you’d consider concrete, pragmatic concerns?

Caroline Walker Bynum: “Surely our job as teachers is to puzzle, confuse, and amaze. We must rear a new generation of students who will gaze in wonder at texts and artifacts . . . slow to project . . . quick to assume there is a significance, slow to generalize about it. For a flat, generalizing, presentist view of the past . . . makes it boring, whereas amazement yearns toward an understanding, a significance always a little beyond both our theories and our fears. Every view of things that is not wonderful is false.”

Seriously? Aren’t you here to solve puzzles rather than to be puzzled? What is presentism? Can we avoid it? Moreover, if we’re not trained to generalize from particulars, that is, to come up with statements that make sense of particulars, how can we predict and control what happens? Accurate predictions and complete control—shouldn’t those be the aims of higher education? Amazement is extracurricular; isn’t it?

William Butler Yeats: “The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity.”

What might Yeats have meant by “best” and by “worst”? What would those terms have to mean for you to subscribe to the truth packed into this line?

Thucydides: “Pericles . . . was their leader rather than being led by them [the Athenians], because he did not speak to please them.”

Shouldn’t we expect leaders to be led by followers’ preferences when, in a democracy—and ancient Athens purportedly was “the cradle of democracy”—leaders are elected to implement what citizens want done?

Abu Hanifa: “Difference of opinion in the community is a token of divine mercy.”

Does it follow that consensus is a sign of divine displeasure or wrath? Was the eight-century sage suggesting that responsible or religiously committed leaders ought to undermine conventional wisdom? Can small “communities” (classrooms, committees, families) cultivate multiple, conflicting opinions without jeopardizing community or common sense?
Oliver Wendell Holmes: “Life is painting a picture, not doing a sum.”

Is Justice Holmes simply saying that quality of life should be more important than the quantities of goods we accumulate? Aren’t the two related? Or is he saying something directly relevant to the education you’re receiving?

Aurelius Augustine: “Justice having been removed, what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale? What are criminal gangs but petty kingdoms? A gang is a group of persons under the command of a leader, bound by an agreement or covenant that governs the association in which plunder is divided according to a constitution of sorts. . . . For the answer given by a captured pirate to Alexander the Great was amusing but true. When great Alexander asked why the pirate terrorized seafarers, the latter boldly replied, suggesting that his purpose and Alexander’s were identical. When I do what I do with a small vessel, he noted, I am called a pirate. Because you do the same with a mighty navy, you are called an emperor.”

Does the anecdote prove Augustine's point about government and larceny? If you were Alexander how would you respond to the pirate’s equation?

Emily Gill: “What is needed is a reformulation of the discourse of tolerance, a repoliticization that heightens our awareness of the difference between tolerance and justice.”

To distinguish between tolerance and justice, do we really need the “reformulation” that Gill summons? Why not simply say “tolerance” is therapeutic, a result of altered orientations or attitudes, whereas “justice” is political, a result of legislated or negotiated arrangements? So if leaders aspire to manage difference, should they invest more emphatically in therapies or in media strategies aimed to “reformulate the discourse of tolerance” to change hearts and minds or should they put greater effort into changing laws?

Martha Nussbaum: “Nations all over the world will soon be producing generations of useful, docile, technically trained machines rather than complete citizens who can think for themselves, criticize tradition, and understand the significance of another person’s sufferings and achievements.”

Nussbaum thinks that the humanities could and should serve as an antidote. Do you share Nussbaum’s distress? If docile citizens are useful and well-trained, should we object that somehow they are docile and therefore incomplete citizens? Is it fair to compare them with machines? How important is it for leaders to criticize tradition?

Susan Sontag: “The photographer’s intentions do not determine the meaning of a photograph, which will have its own career, blown by the whims and loyalties of the diverse communities that have use for it.”

Nonsense? Aren’t the loyalties and disloyalties—as well as the whims—of communities determined by the images that artists/photographers give them? Isn’t the person behind the camera in control? Don’t the persons, factions, and media-moguls, who pay the freight, frame what viewers see? And doesn’t what we see shape how we think about wars, leaders, candidates, poverty, nobility?
Niccolò Machiavelli: The worst [leaders] can fear from a hostile people is to be abandoned by them, but from a hostile nobility [they] must fear not only being abandoned but also being attacked.”

It follows, therefore, that leaders must cultivate affection—or, at best, indifference—to avoid being abandoned and/or attacked. Now how should they go about doing that? Doesn’t leadership often involve formulating policies that displease the elites (Machiavelli’s “nobility” or aristocracy, maybe our plutocracy or “political insiders”) as well as the general population? Should leaders keep their unpopular views veiled to retain constituents’ affections?

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 in bold print. You’ll want to take special note of these bold questions, because they are good candidates for exam questions. But we ask them not because the answers lay at the foundation of leadership studies; the asking does. The conversations generated by our asking ought to draw our various likes and dislikes into the open, problematize some ideas we may take for granted, and prompt encounters with problems and problem-solvers we might otherwise have left unexplored.

We’ll start with several classics in the humanities that examine the caliber of leadership in various settings. Along the way, you’ll be asked to formulate opinions about the “dirty hands theory,” the usefulness of such terms as “charisma,” “populism,” “demagoguery,” and “faction,” as well as the propriety of propriety—whether (and when) leaders are well-advised to shock followers, to appease (thereby following followers, to some extent, to honor conventions, or to cultivate misgivings about conventional wisdom. Then we’ll review and assess the power of imagery and oratory before ending with what I call “applications.” We’ll take what we’ve learned about leadership and apply it a problem your generation will continually face—the problem of pluralism—and to the problems emerging leaders in the developing world face as they negotiated post-colonial challenges.

If this appeals and the work I’ll ask you to complete, which is detailed in the schedule below, doesn’t frighten you into another section or class, welcome !!!

**BUT . . .** before you decide whether all this might be a good way to spend parts of your semester and strap yourselves into this course, check out to the next section on . . .

**Requirements and Grades**

Lively, informed encounters with our questions, obviously, require your lively and informed participation in class discussions. “Require” means I expect it. I deduct points from the final grades of the participants who don’t meet that expectation—who are often absent and/or unfamiliar with assignments. 100 points are available. You’ll sit for 2 mid-term examinations consisting of take home and in-class portions—Sept 28th (30 points) and Nov 7th (40 points). You’ll divide the remaining 30 points to be awarded between a short paper, due the last day of classes, Dec 2nd and a final in-class quiz scheduled by the university—check the academic and exam calendars when posted on the website.
Students who miss a midterm due to illness (please obtain a physician’s note) or to deaths in the family, and students who miss a midterm to represent the university on the road may take the in-class portion within two weeks of the scheduled date. But please check your other courses. If they require curricular, co-curricular, or extra-curricular activities that conflict with the exam dates in my class, change sections or change courses to accommodate. Other classes’ assignments do not excuse you from my exams.

FYI, Classes on August 22nd and 24th will be critical; we’ll be discussing purposes and methods as well as the assigned reading. I’m circulating this syllabus in advance, so (1) you can start the chapters in Penn Warren’s bulky book and (2) so that you can change courses, if you plan to be late returning to campus. Final grades will be reflect your misses during that first week, even if you add the course in medias res. Hence, should you miss, your A+s become A-s, Bs become C+s, etc.

Several taboos and suggestions:

Taboos during class-time: late arrivals, early departures, mid-class breaks, laptops, multi-tasking.

Suggestions: You’ll be permitted to collaborate on the take-home portions of class exams and on the final paper. Whether you decide to submit your essays solo or submit with a group of your colleagues (no more than 3, please), I suggest you maintain a small network to review notes, sift class hand-outs, and discuss likely questions regularly------rather than on the days before the exams. I also suggest you consolidate the information/opinions provided in assignments, during discussions, and in presentations every week. Identify what background information will assist you to articulate coherently your views on the issues we discuss. One of my colleagues whose research targets best-practices in teaching / learning confirms that the sentences you compose, consolidating your notes, will “facilitate retrieval” come exam times. Adapting his advice, I suggest that you capture and consolidate your opinions each week selecting the information that will enable you to illustrate and argue for them (and argue against alternatives) on a single page.

Finally, I’m here to help. I’ll schedule review sessions and be available at your convenience, save for those weeks preceding and following the exams. At least five days in advance, email me the days and times you’re available, and I’ll try to accommodate your schedules..

You’ll be responsible for readings on electronic reserve as well as for all or assigned parts of books available for purchase at the student book store.

Thomas More, UTOPIA Wendy Brown, REGULATING AVERTION

Niccolo Machiavelli, THE PRINCE William Shakespeare, CORIOLANUS

William Chafe, CIVILITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

George Bernard Shaw, SAINT JOAN Robert Penn Warren, ALL THE KING’S MEN

Susan Sontag, REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS

John A. Farrell, CLARENCE DARROW: ATTORNEY FOR THE DAMNED
SO-- what do we do and when do we do it?

8/22 Aims and strategies. We'll start there, but you'll be expected to carry the discussion of the first two chapters of Penn Warren's ALL THE KING'S MEN.

“Judge Irwin has come out for Callahan.” That said, Governor Willie Stark sprints to the judge’s home in chapter one, leaving a photo opportunity in his birthplace to get to Burden’s Landing. Penn Warren stages the confrontation between the two splendidly. Give me your impressions of each belligerent. Chapter two is an extended flashback. You’ll learn how Willie, after a false start, becomes governor. Compare his tactics to any of the candidates currently running for president.

8/24 Read KING’S MEN, chapter 3.

We’ll start with your thoughts about the crisis precipitated by Byram White. Be sure you know how Willie resolved the crisis and what two of the other characters, Hugh Miller and Jack Burden thought about Willie’s justifications. Look for the phrase “clean hands”; is it possible for leaders to accomplish worthy objectives while keeping their hands clean? What would that mean?

8/29 Finish the novel and read Michael Walzer’s essay, “Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands,” which you’ll find on electronic reserve (see the library’s webpage, scroll down the “for students column” until you find “find course reserves.”

Why do you think Penn Warren included the flashback chapter about Cass Mastern and Annabelle Trice? When Penn Warren returns to the twentieth century and prepares to wrap up the book, what connects the medical-center contract awarded to Gummy Larson with the “politics rotten brick” that was used in the schoolhouse that collapsed at the start of Willie’s career? Jack Burden’s eyes become ours, but you may have had more sympathy with Adam Stanton’s responses to Willie Stark’s political piety. Let me know where, if anywhere, your sympathies lie. Compare what Willie Stark and Michael Walzer say about dirt.

8/31 Watch the film, ALL THE KING’S MEN, the version that won the Oscar for best picture of 1949. Read Machiavelli’s THE PRINCE, chapters 5 through 8.

How does the film differ from the novel? Machiavelli’s advice to leaders was controversial when it was offered and still is. What do you imagine caused and still causes controversy?

9/5 Read the rest of Machiavelli’s PRINCE.

If you had to select only one chapter from today’s assignment to use as an ample introduction to Machiavelli’s opinions about leadership, which chapter would you choose and why? Markus Fischer’s study of Machiavelli describes his subject’s ideal “state” as “a war machine,” but do you consider that characterization an exaggeration? Compare Machiavelli’s perspectives on government to Augustine’s, which you’ll find among the quotes that introduce this syllabus.

9/7 Read Thomas More’s UTOPIA, BOOK 1.

With whom do you agree--Hythloday, the character Thomas More, or the author Thomas More?
9/12 Read More’s UTOPIA, book 2 and see the film MAN FOR ALL SEASONS.

Bolt’s film gives you a rather vivid depiction of what happened to More because he failed to take his Hythloday’s advice. He expressed his discontent with leadership in late medieval England in several ways. List them, using the film and both books of UTOPIA, please, and evaluate their effectiveness.

9/14 Read John Adam’s short letter and Thomas Jefferson’s response, on electronic reserve.

At issue in the early days of the republic was what to do with the elites, the aristocracy. Adams and Jefferson agreed that there was a difference between “natural” and “artificial” aristocracies. What was the difference? What allowances was Adams prepared to make to give the better of those two aristocracies a voice in government? Why did Jefferson dissent? He attributed the disagreement to geographical and cultural factors. Did his explanation make sense to you? Compare Nussbaum’s prophesy (see the quotes at the start of this syllabus) with Jefferson’s faith in the electorate. To evaluate each, draw on your perceptions of the current campaigns of Trump and Clinton.

9/19 Read Shaw’s SAINT JOAN, the preface and the play.

In what ways did Joan shock those whom Shaw describes as “conventional people”? Would you call Joan “charismatic”? Why? Why not? At the start of the fifth scene, Joan seems to shun celebrity and “let[s] the king have all the glory.” Was she being disingenuous? How would you characterize Shaw’s depictions of Cauchon and Warwick? Sympathetic? Antagonistic? What do the preface and epilogue add to your understanding of charisma, celebrity, leadership, and legend? Ladvenu might not be the center of attention in the play, but before he leaves the epilogue he offers unsettling remarks that a reader could take to be one of the most important lessons Shaw wanted to convey. Agree? Finally, how would you respond if asked whether Shaw’s play and preface substantiate Yeats’s comment on leaders’ passions and convictions (another of our syllabus’ introductory quotes).

9/21 Read the chapters from C. Wright Mills’s POWER ELITE, on electronic reserve.

Writing in the 1950s, Mills suggested that economic, military, and political elites distanced themselves from the people over whom they exerted influence. The first two were more important that the third, and, purportedly, they pursued their self-interest shamelessly. Mills’s appraisals seem an outcry that protests the mediocrity and mindlessness spreading from the elites to the general public. Our class’s discussion will put his perspective back in its time. Your challenge is to gauge to what extent it might be correct today to say, as Mills did, that “people now accept the immorality of accomplishment as a going fact” and to suggest what, if anything contemporary leaders ought to do about it.

9/26 Read Shakespeare’s CORIOANUS, acts 1-3 and see The Fiennes version of the play, the film CORIOLANUS.

Shakespeare had his classical sources, Livy and Plutarch, but his play responds to early modern efforts to give people greater influence with the elites who ruled them. What’s the character of his response? How would he respond to Jefferson? To Mills? To Thucydides (another quote at the front)? Fiennes’s version is quite a modernization. How does its setting affect your take on the play’s political lessons about leadership?

Opposition between bankers and management, on one side, and laborers and their unions, on the other, complicated the administration of justice. In this acclaimed biography, you’ll find a somewhat flawed but often admirable litigator, who invites comparisons to some of the other renegades we’ve encountered in class. In one of the unassigned chapters, Darrow’s warning is quoted: “the powers of reaction and despotism never sleep.” From the assigned chapters, can you defend whether Darrow significantly alerted others to the dangers represented by those powers? He has been called both a “populist” and a “progressive.” Does either shoe fit? Both?

10/5  Read parts of Darrow’s opening statement in the case Idaho v Haywood (on electronic reserve) and youtube the speeches by Richard Nixon (called “the Checkers Speech”), Barak Obama (at the 2004 Democratic convention, and Al Sharpton (also at the 2004 Democratic convention).

Our topic is oratory. Your job is to measure the effectiveness of four celebrated orators. Clearly--and effectively--restate what you think the purposes of each happened to be. Then assess effectiveness.

B R E A K

0/12  Read Susan Sontag’s REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS. Google Roger Fenton’s Crimean war photographs, “Officers of the 50th Regiment” and “Valley of the Shadow of Death”; google Tennyson’s poem, “Charge of the Light Brigade”; Goya’s painting “Third of May”; Randall Jarrell’s poem, “Death of the Ball Turret Gunner.” On the last, research a bit, so you know what a ball turret is.

Now our topic is oratory and imagery. We want to ascertain, as best we can, orators’ and artists’ purposes as well as to evaluate their effectiveness in achieving them. Have photographs of the kind Sontag discusses numbed us to human suffering and injustice? Would we be mistaken to call much of the photography she interprets “documentary” or “journalism”? If so, why? Are Sontag’s claims about photographs as emblems and spectacles justifiable? “Indecency” is a word Sontag uses to characterize the co-spectatorship or collaboration between photographers and viewers. Does that seem accurate? What bearing does it have on leadership? Using Goya’s THIRD OF MAY and Fenton’s photographs, you should be able to assess Sontag’s point about “taking photographs” and “making pictures.” Return to the quotes from Hannah Arendt and Oliver Wendell Holmes, and tell me whether today’s assignment helps you answer the questions in bolt font under each. And consider the old saw—“a picture is worth a thousand words”—and, by comparing REGARDING THE PAIN to Jarrell’s poem, tell me if that old saw still cuts. Then turn to Sontag’s analysis and the other assignments for today AND return to Sharpton’s and Obama’s oratory, and tell me whether you think that “old saw” still cuts.
10/17    Read Klarman’s “How Brown Changed Race Relations: The Backlash Thesis” (on electronic reserve) and Chafe’s CIVILITIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS, the introduction and chapters 1-5. See the film SELMA.

Is the evidence Klarman presented for his “thesis” sufficient to persuade you of its validity? Should we call a movement non-violent, if it deliberately incites others’ violence? From your assignments, select four persons, events, or phrases that you’d feature in your explanation of leaders’ successes / failures during the civil rights crises of the 1950s and 1960s. Relate your explanation to the quotes from Yeats, Hanifa, and Gill at the front of the syllabus. What is “the progressive mystique”? How would you characterize the Pearsall Plan and the strategies employed by Governor Hodges?


Justice Thomas agreed with the majority opinion, which struck down integration programs in Seattle and Louisville. A footnote to his opinion claims that “nothing but an interest in classroom aesthetics and a hypersensitivity to elite sensibilities justifies . . . racial balancing programs.” He disagreed with dissenting justices who argued that “benign race-based decisions” were permissible to repair damage done by what Justice Breyer called “stubborn facts of history [that] linger”—to the great disadvantage of African-Americans. Do you agree with Thomas that there are no “benign race-based decisions”? Is Thomas or Breyer the more astute interpreter of the problems related to pluralism? What might you identify as the most compelling parts of Thomas’s argument? The most objectionable? If you were a justice, would you vote for government remedies to de facto segregation? Or would you concur with Thomas and the majority in the Seattle case that legal remedies should apply only to discrimination, which can be closely connected to laws denying minorities equal protection that was guaranteed by the fourteenth amendment to the Constitution, that is de jure segregation.

10/24    Read selections from Samuel Huntington’s CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS, on electronic reserve as well as Huntington’s “Hispanic Challenge.” See the film 9500 LIBERTY.

What, in Huntington’s view, makes recent waves of immigration different from those that preceded it? Was Emma Lazarus too optimistic when she composed the poem now at the base of the Statue of Liberty, proclaiming that she (and we) were ready to welcome “the tired and poor,” the “wretched refuse” and “huddled masses yearning to breathe free”? If Huntington is correct when he claims that “the West won the world not by the superiority of its . . . values . . . but by its superiority in applying organized violence”—and that non-Westerners never forget “this fact,” should we be surprised by “civilizations” “clashing”?

10/26    Read Wendy Brown’s REGULATING AVERSION, chapter 1.

What does Brown mean when she writes about “liberalism”? “Tolerance talk,” she will say, “masks” the efforts of liberal leaders and governments to maintain the illusion of sovereignty and to “codify” the superiority of what is normal and “hegemonic” while tolerating the marginal or heterodox. The language in this assignment is difficult. You might begin by getting a grip on the terms here in italics.
10/31 Read Brown’s REGULATING AVERSION, chapters 2, 4, 6-7.

So is the discourse of toleration the problem or the solution to the problems of pluralism? Brown thinks it’s a problem. Why? Do you (dis)agree? Why is it significant to Brown that toleration which once was preached to protect individuals’ religious choices is now applied to qualities (race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual preference)? Brown seems to suspect that if we deflated calls for tolerance (of the “why-can’t-we-all-get-along” variety) we might be better able to cultivate greater dedication to the dream articulated by Martin Luther King, that vision that all might be judged by the content of their characters. Is she being naïve? Is tolerance all we can hope for? Is it enough?

11/2 See the film CRASH AND GOOGLE/READ Robert Frost’s poem “Mending Wall.”

Do these assignments help you identify, unscramble, and perhaps even resolve the problems related to pluralism and assimilation that face leaders in your generation? What do those terms (“p” and “a”) mean to you? While helping to mend the wall, Frost’s speaker doubts the value of its existence. What do you make of that?

11/7 SECOND M IDTERM

11/9 No assignment. What leadership lessons would you draw from the conduct of the campaigns and the results of the federal election held yesterday?

11/14 Read Hodder-Williams article “Dr. Banda’s Malawi,” on electronic reserve; look over MALAWI’S LOST YEARS, edited by Kapote Mwakasungura and Doug Miller, on print reserve; and youtube “the end of empire series chapter 13,” “Rider and the Horse”--please watch it for background.

Your assignment from this point to December 2nd is to compose a well-researched analysis of Banda’s rise to the presidency of Malawi, his consolidation of power, his solutions to the problem of pluralism within Nyasaland / Malawi—and in central and south Africa. I’ll be looking for clear exposition, astute interpretation, and persuasive evaluation—in no more than eighteen hundred words. Rules regulating collaboration on take-home portions of exams apply here as well. Your essays should exploit some of the material on electronic and print reserve—a brief early interview with Banda, the Banda packet of speeches delivered during different phases of his career, and the bishops’ pastoral letter (that, along with, Africa Watch’s Report, “Where Silence Rules”---google it) precipitated general elections, which, in turn, doomed the Banda presidency (“for life”). Your interpretations and evaluations of leadership in Nyasaland / Malawi should demonstrate an understanding of some of ideas we’ve aired in class in our discussions of power, leadership, charisma, convention, and corruption. SO—use what you know about Coriolanus and Machiavelli, about imagery and oratory, about progressive mystiques, failed idealism, and populism.

11/16 Further discussion of your “Leadership in Malawi” papers.

11/21 No class

Has “current consumer culture” invaded our University? If so, should we beat it back or welcome it? What does Edmundson find so disagreeable about college classrooms? About students’ end-of-term evaluations? About commencement addresses? What do you find distasteful—or even distressing?

12/2  Submission and discussion of your Banda essays.

Final Quiz scheduled by the university

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**Jepson School of Leadership Studies**

**Revised Syllabus Insert**

**Awarding of Credit**

To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 14 hours each week, which includes class time.

**Disability Accommodations**

Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors early in the semester to discuss arrangements for completing course exams.

**Honor System**

The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System, specifically, that submission indicates that students have neither gotten nor given unauthorized assistance during completion of their work.