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?

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: “To be sure, nobody who really thinks about history can take politics altogether seriously.”

What could Sontag be thinking about here? Surely, political leadership is one of the most serious considerations put before us. Or is it? Her comment follows a short discussion of Sebastião Salgado’s photographs collected under the title “Migrations: Humanity in Transition.” Google those images, and see if they put “politics” in an “unserious” perspective.

In this section of LDST 101, we’re going to revisit some of these quotes and 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, because the material above could reappear on exams. But we ask these questions not because the answers lay at the foundation of leadership studies; the asking does. And the conversations generated by our asking ought to problematize some ideas we take for granted, and prompt encounters with the 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,” and the usefulness of such terms as “charisma,” “populism,” “absolutism,” and “faction.” You’ll also be asked under what circumstances leaders would be well-advised to shock followers or to appease those following them. We’ll consider to what extent and why leaders ought to honor conventions—and when
they should 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 problems your generation are likely to face, problems of pluralism and fascism.

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 of LDST 101 or into another 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--2/13 (25 points) and 3/29 (35 points). 10 points will be awarded for five responses to assignments, collected at the start of class (2 points each). You’ll be expected to complete these responses (a few well-crafted sentences) for each class. The remaining 30 points to be awarded for a short research paper due at the time scheduled for the final exam.

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, Class on January 11 will be critical; we’ll be discussing purposes and methods as well as the assigned reading. I circulate this syllabus in advance, (1) so you can start chapters in Penn Warren’s bulky book or do some reading in the other lengthy assignment, Erik Larson’s GARDEN OF THE BEASTS and (2) so you can change SECTIONS OR courses, if you plan to be late returning to campus. Please know that final grades reflect your miss during that first week.

The course aims to promote conversation and collaboration. You may submit collaborate essays for the take-home portions of your mid-terms, and you may collaborate and submit the collaborative research project. Up to four students may submit a single take-home response; up to five, the end-of-term research project.

Several taboos: late arrivals, early departures, mid-class breaks, laptops, multi-tasking.

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

**Erik Larson**, IN THE GARDEN OF THE BEASTS  **Wendy Brown**, WALLED STATES, WANING SOVEREIGNTY

**Machiavelli**, THE PRINCE  **Shakespeare**, CORIOLANUS  **More**, UTOPIA

**Shaw**, SAINT JOAN  **William Chafe**, CIVILITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

**Robert Penn Warren**, ALL THE KING’S MEN  **Susan Sontag**, REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS
SO-- what do we do and when do we do it?

1/9   No class.

1/11  Read KING’S MEN, chapters 1-3.

“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.

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?

1/18  Finish the novel.

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. Finally, assess the novel in light of what you’ve read (in the syllabus quotations) from Augustine’s CITY OF GOD. Under what conditions, if any, is it permissible or defensible for leaders to become unscrupulous? How would you define (and apply to the novel or to current political / commercial leadership the terms “corruption” and “indiscretion”?

1/23  On electronic reserve you’ll find John Adams’s letter to Thomas Jefferson and Jefferson’s reply. Read both—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 / cultural factors. Does his explanation make sense to you? And measure Nussbaum’s prophesy (another syllabus quote) with Jefferson’s faith in the electorate.
1/25 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.

1/30 Watch the film, IDES OF MARCH (streaming information below), and read Machiavelli’s THE PRINCE.

To stream . . .

https://login.newman.richmond.edu/login?qurl=http%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Frichmond281800%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3Da26e319ad4f0f2ec25c8349e80198013d2ab9f40f54ec9a9a9b8b0d96011f75

“It's little wonder that from the film's vantage point . . . moderate [politicians] are Machiavellian devils”: so says THE ATLANTIC’s review of IDES. Do you agree? As for Machiavelli, if you had to select only 3 chapters to assign to your class so that colleagues would get a good glimpse of what THE PRINCE was about, which 3 would you select and assign? Why those three?

2/1 Read book 1 of Thomas More’s UTOPIA.

Should you agree to consult leaders who have absolute power? Hythloday says “no.” The character Thomas More in book 1 says “yes.” With whom do you agree? What happens at Cardinal Morton’s dinner party? Why is it significant?

2/6 Read More’s UTOPIA, book 2. Watch the film MAN FOR ALL SEASONS.

Now that you’ve read all of UTOPIA, you could tell me authoritatively what Thomas More, the author (opposed to—or in agreement with—More, the character) thinks about public service and politics. The book was written in 1516, fifteen years before the action depicted in the film. Relate what occurred later in More’s career (and on the screen) to More’s position in his UTOPIA. Relate both to syllabus quotes from Arendt, Bynum, and Nussbaum.

2/8 Read Michael Walzer’s “The Problem of Dirty Hands” on electronic reserve.

Relate what Walzer and Willie Stark say about dirt to other assignments you’ve read for class.

2/13

m l d t E r m e X a m

2/15 Recuperate
2/20  Read Shakespeare’s CORIOLANUS, acts 1-3 and watch the Fiennes 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?

2/22  Read Shaw’s SAINT JOAN, scenes 1-4.

Says the king: “He is sending a saint: an angel. And she is coming to me: to me, the king, and not to you Archbishop, holy as you are.” Why is that significant? Compare to Joan to Coriolanus. Describe Cauchon and Warwick. The former worries what would happen if “every girl thinks herself a Joan.” Why?

2/27  Finish reading the play, SAINT JOAN, including “the epilogue.” Shaw’s preface is broken into nearly forty small fragments, each with its own title. Read ten of those fragments.

What does the epilogue add to your understanding of leadership then—and now? Tell my why you selected the ten titles / fragments you chose to read and whether the content fulfilled the promise that attracted you after reading the titles. How did Saint 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 disingenuous? Return to your descriptions of Cauchon and Warwick. Would you characterize Shaw’s depictions of those two sympathetic? Antagonistic? What does the preface 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 an important—if not the most important—lesson 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.

3/1  Oratory: You-tube the following: Richard Nixon’s “Checkers Speech”; Barack Obama’s speech at the 204 Democratic National Convention; Al Sharpton’s speech at that same convention; the first twenty minutes of Donald Trump’s acceptance speech at the Republican National convention (ending with “the American people will come first once again.”)

What were the most effective and least effective moments or phrases in each speech? Why?

SPRING BREAK

3/13  Imagery: Read Susan Sontag’s REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS

Can posed pictures be authentic? Google “Dorothea Lange, Migrant Mother,” and consider whether you’re looking at a picture of determination or desperation. Is Lange’s mother with her children an image that expresses the dignity of humanity or the wretchedness that comes with destitution and displacement?
Watch the film SELMA and visit [link](http://cbsnews2.cbsistatic.com/hub/i/r/2013/05/02/ed7d9dc3-c3f8-11e2-a43e-02911869d855/resize/620x/b772fb8fe9364e8b7f8272f21e95e374/Birmingham.jpg)

Sontag writes about “the indecency of co-spectatorship”: Tell me what that might mean to you after you’ve watched the film and viewed the photograph. Return to the Sontag quote at the front of our syllabus; does it make more sense (or less) now that you’ve read her book?


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

Read Justice Thomas’s concurring opinion in the 2007 Seattle School District case about race-based remedial measures, [link](http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/05-908.ZC.html) and on electronic reserve as “Thomas - Seattle.”

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.

Watch the film CRASH; google and read Robert Frost’s poem, “Mending Wall”; and read Wendy Brown’s WALLED STATES, WANING SOVEREIGNTY, PP. 7-102.

A fairly recent article on ethnicity by David Siroky and Ceylun Mahmudlu suggests the obvious: “countries that fail to cultivate civic nationalism among minorities face persistent problems of separatism.” Does CRASH see that as a problem as well, or is the problem for the majority and minorities that they will constantly collide or “crash” rather than separatism? Or, by redefining “separatism” as a psychological rather than a physical or territorial problem, would we improve leaders’ chances of solving it? Frost’s narrator doesn’t seem to like the wall he’s mending. So why is he mending it? Would walls solve any of the problems illustrated in CRASH? Tell me whether Brown
convinces you when she relates building walls to “waning sovereignty”? When do good fences make good neighbors?

3/29

mldtemexam

4/3 LOOKING AHEAD TO RESEARCH; Read Larson’s BEASTS, pp. 3-69, 93-112, 128-173, 207-259

Begin to formulate your images of Hitler’s lieutenants, Goebbels and Göring, as well as your appraisal of Ambassador Dodd.

4/5 Read Larson’s BEASTS, pp. 303-364.

4/12 See the film SWING KIDS.

Can it happen here? You may recall that Goebbels excused early atrocities by suggesting that intense feelings of joy can lead to “irrational” behavior. One Nazi recreational program, however, boasted the title “strength through joy.” Use your definitions of “rational” and “irrational” to assess what occurred in Germany during the 1930s.

RESEARCH

Specially scheduled sessions will convene from April 13 through the end of the month to assist you to complete your papers. Attendance, optional. But the last class is required:

4/26 Read Mark Edmundson’s “On the Uses of a Liberal Education,” on electronic reserve.

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.