FROM QUOTES TO QUESTIONS:

Hannah Arendt: “The poets will always be accused of lying. 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? And, 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 comprehensive control—shouldn’t those be 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 signify 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?

Aurelius Augustine: “Justice having been removed, what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale? And what are criminal gangs but miniature 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. [To illustrate, take the answer given by a captured pirate to Alexander the Great. 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 ship, he said, I’m called a pirate. Because you do the same with a mighty navy, you’re 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 the humanities could and should serve as an antidote. Do you share her distress? If docile citizens are useful and well-trained, why 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?

George Bernard Shaw: “Democracy reads well, but it doesn’t act well.” What does it mean “to read well”? Do you agree that democracy doesn’t act well? Give me examples. What might make it act better?

Wendy Brown: “Liberalism seeks to split… supremacy from… autonomy, the power of the people from the action of the state.” Can liberal leaders then profess loyalty both to the people they serve by protecting their freedoms and to the states, businesses, academies they serve by protecting their integrity and the social order? Is there another way of thinking about liberalism that would accommodate both hierarchy (supremacy) and constituents’ autonomy? Liberalism usually has been associated with individualism, but is that fair when so many ostensibly intrusive policies rely upon the action of some state to ensure conditions conducive to the exercise of individual freedoms?

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**. Consider these as prompts for your paper submissions (see Requirements & Grades). We don’t ask these questions 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 wannabe problem-solvers we might otherwise have left unexplored.
We’ll make our way to 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,” “meritocracy,” and “faction.” You’ll also be asked under what circumstances leaders would be well-advised to shock followers instead of appeasing or consoling them. We’ll inquire to what extent and why leaders should honor conventions and when they should cultivate misgivings about conventional wisdom. Then we’ll be tackling what I call “applications,” taking what we learned about leadership and applying it to problems your generation currently faces—and for the foreseeable future will face. We’ll mix that with several classics to keep us alive to the possibilities of drawing lessons from back then into our contemplation of what’s next.

If we’re still in the classroom in November, there’s a special treat--special guest--to explore how we can--and why we should--laugh, notwithstanding all the leadership challenges we/you face as your generation makes its way through the century. Andy Jones, senior writer for TV’s terrifically successful ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA will you give you an insider’s view of the “laughter industry” and of Hollywood’s ins, outs, and abouts. See the reading assignment and videos for November 17/19.

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 the next section on...

**REQUIREMENTS & GRADERS**

Lively, informed encounters with our questions, obviously, require your lively and informed participation in class discussions. “Require” means that I expect it. I deduct points from the final grades of participants who don’t meet that expectation—who are often absent and/or unfamiliar with assignments. 100 points are available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Papers (4 Total of 5)</th>
<th>15 pts. each</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper Exam</td>
<td>25 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 pts</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You’ll complete 4 of the 5 assigned position papers responding to prompts inscribed below each assignment. Your responses will be worth 15 points each. All or part of an additional 15 points will be assigned for class participation. That leaves 25 points for your final examination. **Papers responding to prompts will be no more than 800 words and must be submitted as a PDF email attachment no later than 6 AM the day of the class.** EDUCATION IS CONVERSATION, so you may collaborate with as many as 5 student colleagues and submit a joint paper. I’ll discuss the upsides and downsides of such collaboration during our first class.

**Several taboos: late arrivals, early departures, multi-tasking.**

Our sessions will ordinarily be divided into 4 portions: instructor’s presentations with student contributions based on that day’s student submissions as well as the reading assignments; break-out groups for student conversation over food; sessions to harvest the results of break-out groups; AND concluding sessions either to preview or review your film assignments and set the contexts for the following week’s assignments. **I will schedule breaks, so avoid leaving during discussions. For colleagues zooming in, do not switch to a blank screen.**

You’ll be responsible for readings on Blackboard as well as for all (or assigned parts) of books you’ll acquire online, kindling etc. If you have questions, folks at the library’s front desk will have answers.
TEXTS

You’re advised to purchase (or kindle or E-book) the following:

1. Robert Penn Warren, All The King’s Men (BEWARE: Avoid the restored edition)
2. Robert Harris, Munich
3. Erik Larson, The Splendid and The Vile
4. Wendy Brown, Walled States, Waning Sovereignty
5. Hannah Arendt, Eichmann In Jerusalem

Portions of other texts will be assigned and available on Blackboard (Bb).

SO-- What do we do and when do we do it?

SCHEDULE OF READINGS & PAPER PROMPTS


“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 at his birthplace to get to Burden’s Landing. Penn Warren stages the confrontation between the two memorably. What do you remember? Chapter two is an extended flashback. You’ll learn how Willie, after a false start, becomes the governor and how he conducts himself in office. Do you agree with his assessment of the importance of “dirt”? What impressions of Jack Burden, Judge Irwin, and Sadie Burke have your formed?

September 1: Read ALL THE KING’S MEN, chapter 3 and Michael Walzer’s article on “Dirty Hands.” Watch the film THE IDES OF MARCH.

Paper Prompt #1-- Apply Walzer’s analysis to evaluate the leadership of Willie Stark as demonstrated in the first and third chapters of ALL THE KING’S MEN-- and to evaluate the various kingmakers in THE IDES OF MARCH.

September 8: Read ALL THE KING’S MEN, chapter 4 and Machiavelli’s PRINCE, chapters 1-10, 15-26 (https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1232/1232-h/1232-h.htm).

What reasons might Penn Warren have had to drop the story of Cass Mastern into his tale of twentieth-century politics? If you had to select only two chapters from today’s assignment in Machiavelli so student colleagues would get a good glimpse of what THE PRINCE was about, which two would you select and assign? Why? Select two figures Machiavelli introduces as examples. Of what are they examples?

September 15: Read ALL THE KING’S MEN, chapters 5-7 and the introduction to Ari Adut’s REIGN OF APPEARANCES (Bb).

Paper Prompt #2-- Is Adut’s assessment of leadership and “spectatorship” in the public realm nowadays sound? Might Jack Burden qualify as one of Adut’s spectators? Do Burden’s characterizations of his
“participation” (“the big sleep,” etc.) relate to twenty-first-century reactions to public policy, political practice, and leadership in business or education?

September 22: Read Shakespeare’s CORIOLANUS, acts 1-3, and watch Ralph Fiennes’ version of CORIOLANUS.

Do Shakespeare’s sympathies appear to be with the citizens, with the senate, or with Coriolanus? Prepare to defend your choice. How does the film differ from the play? Relate the Thucydides quote at the front of the syllabus to today’s assignment.

September 29: Watch DELAYING WORLD WAR II (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5YsSLePjq8) and read Robert Harris’s MUNICH.

Paper Prompt #3-- Evaluate appeasement. History has been unkind to Chamberlain. Has Harris provided a significant reassessment? What, if anything, do the depictions of Legat and Hartmann help you appreciate the significance of the so-called Munich accord? How?

October 6: Read Larson’s THE SPLENDID AND THE VILE, pp. 3-65, 86-134, 171-228 and watch one of the two films, DUNKIRK or HOPE AND GLORY.

What did you learn from the films about Dunkirk or the London bombings that you could not learn from the book? And what can you learn from the book that adds to your experience of the films? Use the Yeats quote at the front of the syllabus to evaluate Churchill’s leadership? Were the government’s falsifications and exaggerations justified? How would you present Churchill’s “great trick” to persons interested in learning how to lead?

October 13: Read Larson’s THE SPLENDID AND THE VILE, 339-375, 413-454, 479-503 and watch the film FINEST HOUR.

Paper Prompt #4-- Did Churchill pay too much attention to what Hopkins and Roosevelt were thinking? Assess criticisms of Churchill that occasionally surface (e.g., pp. 450-452). The year recorded in Larson’s book was filled with retreats and defeats, so why might this be considered Churchill’s—and England’s—“finest hour”? “Nothing thrilled him more than spirited warfare and the prospect of military glory,” according to Larson; would that sort of competitiveness and obstinacy be valued among your inventory of leadership qualities in business or politics? Why or why not?

October 20: Read Hannah Arendt’s EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM, pp.1-150, 251-279; Thomas More’s UTOPIA, book 1, pp. 2-22 (Bb); and watch the film SWING KIDS.

Does Hythloday’s advice in UTOPIA relate to Eichmann’s participation in government? Does the film, SWING KIDS, help you understand why Eichmann conformed to his superiors’ expectations? Arendt’s book has been read as an exoneration of Eichmann? Do you see it that way? Why? Why not? Did the assignments this week assist you to avoid what Walker Bynum calls a “flat, generalizing, presentist view of the past”? (Check out the text of her quote at the front of the syllabus.)
October 27: Read (on Bb) Michael Klarman’s “How Brown Changed . . . The Backlash Thesis”; “In the Balance,” pp. 47-49; William Chafe’s CIVILITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS, pp. 3-11, 42-101; along with Clarence Thomas’s concurring opinion in the 2007 Seattle case; and watch the film SELMA.

**Paper Prompt #5-- Select any three of the five assignments for this week to put the struggle for civil rights in historical context, and assess the reasons for its successes and failures (after you identify them, of course).**

November 3: Read Wendy Brown, WALLED STATES, WANING SOVEREIGNTY, pp. 7-105; Samuel Huntington, “Hispanic Challenge” (Bb); and watch the film CRASH.

Do Brown’s remarks about “technologies of separation and domination” accurately present the factors that keep people of various races, faiths, and ethnic backgrounds marginalized during the twenty-first century or are there circumstances that she fails to consider--for instance, situations discussed in Huntington’s “Challenge”--that account for segregation and isolation? Does CRASH address Brown’s concern that prevailing socio-economic and political policies turn persons into “specks of human capital,” persons who, in her terms, ought to be treated as “moral subjects.”


Willie never gets a chance to tell Jack what he intended at the end. What do you think that was? David Runciman has a knack for finding flaws in democracy: “it’s not just that [people] don’t know,” he says, “but they don’t know they don’t know [despite] their unwavering view that they are right.” And that bodes ill for the future of democracy. Is Runciman right? Do you think democracy has a bright future? Were you to lead the country what structural changes would you make to save (or replace) democracy?

November 17: If we are still in-person, expect assignments from John Vorhaus, THE COMIC TOOLBOX and several episodes of IT’S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA, as well as Andy Jones, senior staff writer from that popular (15 consecutive years and running). **Important Note: Our class on November 17 will be held on November 19, 4:30-7:10 PM-- so unless you have a CURRICULAR obligation, plan to be there.**

If we are remote learning, you’ll have an assignment from C Wright Mills, THE POWER ELITE, pp. 298-361 (Bb), and we will meet at the regular time, November 17.

**FINAL EXAM: Paper due Friday, December 4* (Date to be confirmed)**