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. 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 wanna-be 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 that 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 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 and Grades

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. You’ll take two midterms (March 2: 20 points; April 13: 35 points). You’ll submit three brief papers (10 points each; you’ll have 5 topics/prompts from which to select your topics; papers are due by 10AM the morning of the class in which they and the assignment will be discussed) and a final paper (15 points).

Students who miss a midterm due to illness or to family crises should get an excuse from an appropriate dean to qualify to take the in-class make-up. --Students who miss a midterm to represent the university on the road may take the in-class portion within 2 weeks of the scheduled date. But please check your
other courses. If they require co-curricular or extra-curricular activities that conflict with exam dates in my class, drop this course. Other classes’ assignments do not excuse you from my exams.

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

Our sessions will ordinarily be divided into 3 portions: instructor’s presentations with student contributions; break-out groups for student conversation; sessions to harvest the results of break-out groups. **I will schedule breaks, so avoid leaving during discussions.**

You’ll be responsible for readings on electronic reserve as well as for all (or assigned parts) of the books available at the student book store. ER indicates availability of electronic reserve. If you have questions, folks at the library’s front desk will have answers.

**TEXTS -- available at the bookstore**

Wendy Brown, WALLED STATES, WANING SOVEREIGNTY  William Chafe, CIVILITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS  
Machiavelli, THE PRINCE  Shakespeare, CORIOLANUS  David McCullough, JOHN ADAMS  
Thomas More, UTOPIA  Robert Penn Warren, ALL THE KING’S MEN (avoid the restored edition)  
Hannah Arendt, EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM

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


“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?

January 20: Martin Luther King-- day off

January 27: Finish ALL THE KING’S MEN. Read Mark Edmundson’s essay on liberal education and Michael Walzer’s essay on the problem of dirty hands (both ER)

**OPTIONAL ESSAY PROMPT: Apply Walzer's analysis to evaluate the leadership of Willie Stark, Penn Warren’s protagonist in ALL THE KING’S MEN** (750 words)

February 3: Read McCullough’s JOHN ADAMS, chapters 1-3 and 5 and 7 (pp. 350-85).
Adams’s recollection of how Jefferson came to write the Declaration of Independence” reveals his assessment of the distribution of power and prestige in the colonial enterprise and a quite possibly accurate description of his self- and public-image (“I am obnoxious, suspected, and unpopular”). Is that how McCullough portrays him? Summarize Adams’s opinions about “political authority” and “perfect democracy.”

February 10: Read McCullough’s ADAMS, chapters 8 and 10 and selections from Gandhi’s “Quit India” speeches of 1942, accessible at https://www.mkgandhi.org/speeches/qui.htm

OPTIONAL ESSAY PROMPT: Use Adams’s career as mapped by McCullough, parts of Penn Warren’s novel (if you wish), and perhaps a few shreds of Gandhi to explain whether (or not) and, if so, when, why and how we should distinguish between politicians and statesmen. (800 words)

February 17: Read Shakespeare’s CORIOLANUS, acts 1-3 and watch the film Coriolanus, streaming at . . . https://login.newman.richmond.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Frichmond281800%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3DAC78E50EE2ECD52D

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

February 24: Read Machiavelli’s PRINCE and the chapter (3) on Stalin in Frank Dikötter’s HOW TO BE A DICTATOR (ER).

If you had to select only 2 chapters to assign to your class so student colleagues would get a good glimpse of what THE PRINCE was about, which 2 would you select and assign? Why? Select two figures Machiavelli introduces as examples. Of what are they examples? THE PRINCE has been characterized as political science and as political satire. How would you characterize it? Why?

OPTIONAL ESSAY PROMPT: Assess what you’ve learned from the Dikötter chapter on Stalin in light of Machiavelli’s advice to would-be leaders. (750 words).

March 2: Read Thomas More’s UTOPIA, book 1 -- Mid-term today

Part 1 of your mid-term today is a short (600 word maximum) essay to be submitted at the start of class. Please tell me why you think Hythloday’s or character Thomas More’s advice about entering public service is sound or unsound. Part 2 will be given in class: 2 short essay questions.
Mid term break

March 23: Read any 20 consecutive pages of Thomas More’s UTOPIA, book 2 and the introduction to Ari Adut’s REIGN OF APPEARANCES (ER)

Is the trade-off More’s Utopians made worth it? What have they traded--and for what? Is Adut’s analysis sound?

March 30: Read the first three chapters of Wendy Brown’s WALLED STATES, WANING SOVEREIGNTY; Samuel Huntington’s “Hispanic Challenge” (ER); Enoch Powell’s “Rivers of Blood” speech accessible online, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/3643823/Enoch-Powell%3Bs-Rivers-of-Blood-speech.html and watch CRASH streaming at

https://login.newman.richmond.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Frichmond281800%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3D88bb95134461acf7a1a0494aed41a551d3d41c1946a8065dfc51efe5a47beff8

OPTIONAL ESSAY PROMPT: Huntington and Powell flail away at immigration policies they believe to be unwise. If Wendy Brown is correct, their judgments are clouded by their insecurity, though a case could be made that some of their concerns about assimilation and social solidarity are well-grounded. Make that case and articulate Brown’s criticisms before offering your evaluation of the speeches and of Brown’s perspective. (800 words)

April 6: Read Michael Klarman’s “How Brown Changed Race Relations” and Clarence Thomas’s concurring opinion in the 2007 Seattle case (both ER) before reading Chafe’s CIVILITIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS, chapters 1-4 and 7-9. Watch the film SELMA, streaming at

https://login.newman.richmond.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Frichmond281800%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3DC4C94081D1BE02CA

OPTIONAL ESSAY PROMPT: As you’ll learn, liberal governor of North Carolina and failed presidential candidate Terry Sanford endorsed separation of the races and refused to endorse school integration. This week’s assignments should enable you to put that position in historical context--perhaps, with Thomas’s case, to justify it. Your job is to analyze and evaluate the conditions that made Sanford’s endorsement and refusal to endorse appear reasonable. And feel free to add your assessment, deploying words such as “reasonable,” “just,” “unreasonable,” and “unjust.” (800 words)

April 13: Read Arendt’s EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM, chapters 1-8 and the epilogue.

OPTIONAL ESSAY PROMPT: Does Arendt exonerate Eichmann? (750 words)
April 20: **Midterm**: Read the two chapters on reserve from C. Wright Mills, *POWER ELITE*, and youtube and listen To Al Sharpton and Barak Obama (2004): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SBFREiCkf8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SBFREiCkf8) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueMNqdB1QIE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueMNqdB1QIE)

“Ruling class”; “power elite”; “charisma”: take what you’ve learned this week about these terms so closely associated with leadership, combine it with what you’ve learned elsewhere in the course as we meandered around aristocracy, democracy, authority, and pluralism; then add three quotes from the front of the syllabus that might assist you to package plausibly and persuasively your conclusions about the challenges leadership will face in your generation--distributing power and shaping sensible policy. Consider today’s discussion practice for your final paper.