FROM QUOTES TO QUESTIONS:

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 thieves 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 the agreements or covenant governing the association in which plunder is divided according to a constitution of sorts. To illustrate, take the answer given by a captured pirate to Emperor 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?

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?

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. We don’t ask these questions because answers lay at the foundation of leadership studies; asking does. And 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 thru 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.
If this appeals to you 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 & GRADES**

Lively, informed encounters with our questions, obviously, require lively and informed participation in class discussions. “Require” means that I expect it. Class participation grades (see below) reflect your success in meeting that expectations as well as, alas, absences and your unfamiliarity with assignments.

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<td><strong>Papers (4 Total of 5)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Final Paper Exam</strong></td>
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100 pts

You’ll complete 4 of the 5 assigned position papers responding to prompts available on Panopto or in emails sent the week before your papers are due.

**Papers responding to those prompts will be no more than 800 words and must be submitted as a PDF email attachment no later than 7 AM the day of the class.** EDUCATION IS CONVERSATION, so you may collaborate with as many as 4 student colleagues and submit joint papers. 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 conversations over food; sessions to harvest the results of break-out groups; AND concluding sessions to preview your next 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. Bryan Caplan, *Open Borders: The Science and Ethics of Immigration*
3. Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann In Jerusalem*
Assigned portions of other extended readings are available online or on Blackboard, but if you like to have your copies handy, the paperbacks are relatively cheap: Thomas More, *Utopia*; Niccoló Machiavelli, *The Prince*; Wendy Brown, *Walled States and Waning Sovereignty*; Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*; William Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*; Erik Larson, *The Splendid and the Vile*.

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

January 28: Read ALL THE KING’S MEN, chapters 1-2; More’s UTOPIA, book 1.

“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. Robert 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”? Thomas More’s first book gives Hythloday the major role, arguing that one should avoid service to leaders like Willie. More, the character, very briefly objects that one ought to serve—if only to limit a leader’s damage. Imagine Jack Burden’s response to the two.

February 4: Read ALL THE KING’S MEN, chapter 3; Ari Adut’s Reign of Appearances, pp. 1-14 (Bb); and watch the film THE IDES OF MARCH.

If you were commissioned to finish the novel ALL THE KING’S MEN with a fourth and final chapter, what would you do (compose a chapter summary. How might Adut respond if asked to characterize “the essence of the public sphere.” THE IDES OF MARCH gives you a glimpse of the not-so-public part of politics; what four adjectives would you use to describe Stephen?

Film: [https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/richmond281800/watch/A0C34B15BDC7FB45?referrer=direct](https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/richmond281800/watch/A0C34B15BDC7FB45?referrer=direct)

*(Paper prompt #1: Adut comments on the “frustrations” experienced by persons hoping to participate meaningfully in “the public sphere.” Identify and assess any sources of frustration you’ve detected in ALL THE KING’S MEN and IDES OF MARCH.)*

February 11: Read ALL THE KING’S MEN, chapters 4 and 5; read Machiavelli’s PRINCE, chapters 1-10.

Why do you think Penn Warren dropped chapter four, a flashback to the nineteenth century in the middle of his story of twentieth-century political life? Which of Machiavelli’s chapters about the acquisition of power would apply best to Governor Willie Stark?
February 18: Finish Machiavelli’s PRINCE; read Michael Walzer’s article, “Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands.”

Which of Machiavelli’s chapters would you assign, if you were obliged only to assign one? What does Walzer think of Machiavelli’s recommendations, and, in Walzer’s judgment, what should leaders do, if they are inevitably to dirty their hands in order to lead effectively?

(Paper prompt #2: Which two of Machiavelli’s chapters best illustrate the problem of dirty hands, as Walzer defines it?)

February 25: Read ALL THE KING’S MEN, chapters 6 and 7; read C. Wright Mills, THE POWER ELITE, pp. 325-361.

The Stanton family starts playing very important roles in Penn Warren’s story; discuss Anne’s and Adam’s significance. Wright Mills wrote POWER ELITE in the 1950s; does his analysis of “the conservative mood” and “the higher immorality” apply today?

March 4: Read Shakespeare’s CORIOLANUS, acts 1-3; watch the film version of CORIOLANUS, the Realph Fiennes production.

Film:  
https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/richmond281800/watch/AC78E50EE2ECD52D?referrer=direct

Cominius thinks “valor” is Coriolanus’s “chiefest virtue.” One could argue that candor is a close second. But candor got him into trouble. Assess the usefulness and the appeal of valorous and candid leaders in any two previous assignments.

(Paper prompt #3: Evaluate the tribunes’ leadership, their willingness and ability to represent their constituents, and their bouts with Coriolanus--while you appraise the wisdom of the quotes from Shaw and Thucydides at the front of the syllabus.)

March 11: Read Larson’s THE SPLENDID AND THE VILE, pp. 104-125, 435-454; watch the film, DARKEST HOUR; and read Gary Dickson’s article on charisma.

http://www.mdpi.com/journal/religions/special_issues/charisma_medieval

Film:  
https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/richmond281800/watch/1821A04C048131B5?referrer=direct

What have you learned from these assignments about charisma and about Churchill’s “great trick”? 

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March 18: Read Hannah Arendt’s EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM, pp.1-150, 251-279; watch the film, “SWING KIDS.”

Film: https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/richmond281800/watch/725D8A9A24C045FC?referrer=direct

Arendt has been accused of having exonerated Eichmann. What’s your assessment? Has she been too critical of the show trial and insufficiently critical of man on trial? Does the film help explain the lure of conformity, explain, that is, why the likes of Eichmann had more or less mindlessly followed their leader to catastrophic effect?

(Paper prompt #4: Defend, revise, or reject the following statement: The Nussbaum quote at the front of the syllabus appears to bear directly on Arendt’s assessments of Eichmann.)

March 25: Read Susan Sontag’s REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS and listen to the speeches made by Barak Obama and Al Sharpton during the 2004 democratic convention.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SBFREiCkf8
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWynt87PaJ0

Refer to the Sontag quote on page 3 of the syllabus and answer the questions listed there. Compare the two YouTube speeches; Obama, arguably, is overly idealistic and Sharpton, more realistic. But which appears more effective? Why?

April 1: Read Michael Klarman’s essay on the backlash thesis and Justice Thomas’ concurring opinion in the Seattle case. Watch the film SELMA and John Oliver’s segment on school segregation.

Film: https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/richmond281800/watch/C4C94081D1BE02CA?referrer=direct

Oliver segment: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8yiYCHMAIM


April 8: Read Bryan Caplan’s OPEN BORDERS: THE SCIENCE AND ETHICS OF IMMIGRATION; read Samuel Huntington’s “The Hispanic Challenge”; watch the film CRASH.
Film:

https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/richmond281800/watch/8F19AB1D5DBABD16?referrer=direct

Review both Caplan’s book and Paul Haggis’s film as if you were Samuel Huntington?

(Paper prompt #5: Caplan’s contention that immigration restrictions are solutions in search of a problem. Evaluate that statement as Huntington might? as the makers of CRASH might? And as a would-be leader who needs to come up with a solution to the very real problems pluralism poses.)

April 15: Read Wendy Brown’s WALLED STATES, WANING SOVEREIGNTY, pp. 7-105; and read Robert Frost’s poem, “Mending Wall.”

Do Brown’s remarks about “technologies of separation and domination” relate to stereotypes we witnessed operating in CRASH as well as concrete barriers? Do you agree with Brown that sovereignty is “anti-democratic? If so, would you prefer to save sovereignty or democracy? If not, formulate a definition of “sovereignty” that allows for—or encourages—democracy. Can you imagine the narrator in Frost’s poem or his neighbor responding to the Brown book’s position on borders? Please, do so.

April 22: Finish ALL THE KING’S MEN; read Horton’s essay on political theory and Kaufman’s essay on nationalism.

What, according to Horton, is “the point of political theory,” and what is the peril of nationalism?