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?
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 make “politics” seem “unserious.”

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 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 tackling what I call “applications,” taking what we learned about leadership and applying it to problems your generation currently faces—and for the forseeable future will face.

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 one quiz (January 14, 5%) and 3 exams (2 mid-terms: February 20 (30%); March 27 (35%); and a final exam scheduled by the university (30% ). Each of the last three tests asks for one essay response (+/- 700 words) and several short responses to questions (+/- 3 sentences each).

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 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, impromptu mid-class breaks, 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. ER indicates availability of electronic reserve. If you have questions, folks at the library’s front desk will have answers.
SO-- what do we do and when do we do it?

Jan. 14: Read ALL THE KING’S MEN, chapters 1 and 2. Prepare for your first quiz, today!! Unless your absence is excused (see the section on requirements and grades), this exam cannot be made-up. Late registration is not an excuse.

“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 governor and how he conducts himself in office. Do you agree with his assessment of the importance of “dirt”?

Jan. 16: class as scheduled

Jan. 21 --MLK-- no class

Jan. 23: Read KING’S MEN, chapters 3-6 and Michael Walzer’s essay on “Dirty Hands” (ER).

Why do you think Penn Warren included chapter 4 about Annabelle Trice and Cass Mastern? Use Yeats’s quote at the front of the syllabus to evaluate the characters and (in?)activity of Willie, Jack Burden, Anne Stanton, Hugh Miller, and Adam Stanton. Tiny Duffy and Gummy Larson have cameo roles in the sixth chapter, but construction and staffing the hospital become increasingly important. What signals as much? Apply Walzer’s analysis of “dirty hands” to Penn Warren’s novel.

Jan. 28: Read KING’S MEN, chapters 7 and 8 and Machiavelli’s PRINCE, chapters 1-14.

Compose three sentences that relate each of these three to each other and to a significant theme in this class: Machiavelli, Willie Stark, Michael Walzer

Jan. 30: Finish Machiavelli’s PRINCE.

Pick several figures—in addition to Cesare Borgia and King Louis of France—whom you’re likely to use to illustrate Machiavelli’s advice to rulers.

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? Which of Machiavelli’s final chapters speak directly to the concerns raised by Thomas More’s creature in Utopia, Hythloday?

Feb. 6: Read any 25 consecutive pages of UTOPIA, book 2 and Ari Adut’s REIGN OF APPEARANCES, pages 1-14 (ER)

Do you think More (the author of Utopia) would take the same position as the Thomas More who appears as a character at the end of the first book of Utopia? Adut thinks “civic dialogue” is a fiction and, as a result, citizens become spectators rather than active participants in the drama of public life. Is Adut correct? Is that a problem?

Feb. 11: finish KING’S MEN, and prepare to take your first mid-term today

Feb. 13: recuperate; no class.

Feb. 18: Read Shakespeare’s CORIOLANUS, first 3 acts and watch the Ralph Fiennes film version --

https://login.newman.richmond.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Frichmond281800%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3D5b2955acbbc4d1ae924c36196f3791c4320e44ecfa249df741a56fcaeb30f12

How does the film differ from the text? Which quote at the front of our course syllabus has the most direct bearing on this assignment? Are the two tribunes servants of the citizens, manipulators of the citizens, or both? What do you make of Menenius’s story of the stomach?

Feb. 20: Read that portion of Shaw’s preface to MAJOR BARBARA entitled “The Gospel of St Andrew Underschaft.”

Organize your impressions of Undercroft and Shaw using the terms “mystic nexus” and “cash nexus.”

Feb. 25: Finish reading the preface and read the play, MAJOR BARBARA.

The first act in the drawing room is really a second preface; the “action” begins in the second. How would you summarize the positions articulated there? The play pits idealist Barbara against her realist father Underschaft. Stake your position on power and poverty alongside either of the two or between them.
Feb. 27: Read C. Wright Mills, POWER ELITE (ER).

What does Mills mean by “the mindlessness of the powerful” and “the higher immorality”? He wrote in the 1950s, but would you say his criticism is valid today?

March 4: Read Klarman’s “How Brown Changed Race Relations: The Backlash Thesis” and Chafe’s CIVILITIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS, the introduction and first two chapters. Watch the film, “Selma”:

https://login.newman.richmond.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Frichmond281800%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3D5b7e56af69715c56a21705dc265ea2cddff662040bfd4e3d94f4cc4e64db48ad9

Where is the backlash in Klarman’s “backlash thesis”? Compare the leadership styles, objectives, and methods of Martin Luther King as portrayed in SELMA to those of Luther Hodges in CIVILITIES? Would you consider movements or persons non-violent if their intention was to provoke or incite violence?

March 6: Read Chafe’s CIVILITIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS, chapters 3 and 4.

Was the sit-in an effective tactic? How would you measure effectiveness? In my iteration of the Jepson course entitled “Justice and Civil Society,” I exchanged an “or” for the “and.” Would you consider the exchange justifiable after reading Klarman, watching “Selma,” and reading Chafe’s accounts of the Woolworth counter and subsequent “insurgent efforts”?

Spring Break

March 18: Read Chafe, chapters 5 and 7 and Clarence Thomas's “concurring opinion” in the 2007 Seattle case, (ER marked “Seattle,” but do NOT read the Breyer dissent, which precedes it. Scroll down through Breyer’s much longer essays until you find the Clarence Thomas opinion.)

Thomas agreed with the majority opinion, which struck down school 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”? As Chafe reports, Greensboro, despite the sit-ins and the apparent goodwill of Spencer Love and Edward Zane, fell behind other North Carolina cities in protecting African-American citizens’ civil rights. Why? Have we advanced very far along these lines? Why? Or why not?

March 20: Read Huntington’s “Hispanic Challenge” and watch John Oliver’s take on “Migrants and Refugees,” you tube at--https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umqvYhb3wf4 -- and the film “9500 Liberty”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNiGwsZ5dki

Why does Huntington think recent Hispanic immigration is unique? Which parts of his analysis make sense? Which seem overstated or wholly flawed? Google Emma Lazarus’s poem, “The New Colossus” placed at the base of The Statue of Liberty; apply the terms “idealism” and “realism” as you assess it. Draw the same terms into your responses to Huntington’s article, the Oliver segment on European responses to migrants, and the documentary film on Prince William County, Virginia.
March 25: Read Edmundson’s “Liberal Education” (ER).

Although some of you may experience the liberal arts as a dungeon-like affair, a set of cells (courses) isolated from “the real world” and packed away from your plans to fit in it, Edmundson suspects, for that reason, students and faculty colleagues alike treat the liberal arts as “lite entertainment.” Could he be right? He also complains that undergraduates, faculty colleagues, and administrators “buy into” a business model wherein students become consumers or clients. Sift your experiences at UR and tell us (1) what makes higher education higher? And (2) have we forgotten that education is serious--dare I say--business? Has reading Edmundson changed the way you’ll prepare for . . .

March 27: your second mid-term

April 1: Read Brown’s WALLED STATES, WANING SOVEREIGNTY, chapters 1-3 and Robert Frost’s poem: “Mending Wall” -- https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44266/mending-wall

When and why do good fences make good neighbors? Has Brown convinced you that walls are symptomatic of waning sovereignty? Define sovereignty. Frost’s narrator seems to scuffle verbally with his neighbor as they replace stones and mend the wall, yet he meets every year to do just that. What does that tell you about the poet’s purpose?

April 3: Watch “Crash” -- https://login.newman.richmond.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Frichmond281800%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3D0a38d7995ef8206a0aa8117aab0fb650ff2d39977d84c9694dbb3dc6d69f7440

Consult the Walker Bynum quote at the top of the syllabus then formulate your assessments of the film.

April 8: Read Sontag’s REGARDING THE PAIN OF OTHERS

Are posed pictures inauthentic? Google “Dorothea Lange, Migrant Mother,” and tell us whether you see determination or desperation. Discussing photographs that shock, Sontag wonders if “shock has term limits” ; what does that mean: what do you think? Google some of the pictures Sontag analyzes to test her the adequacy conclusions. Which ones did you consult? What did you conclude?

April 10: Youtube and watch the speeches by Barak Obama and Al Sharpton, both at the Democratic National convention in 2004.

What lessons about leadership have you learned from Sontag (on imagery) and from the assignments today (on oratory)?

April 15: no class
April 17: Read Arendt’s EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM, chapters 1-8, 14-15, and the epilogue.

Readers fretfully ponder the book’s subtitle, “The Banality of Evil”; what does it lead you to expect? Find statements in the assignment that would help you launch a discussion of one of the quotes you find at the front of this syllabus. For example, “[A] more . . . decisive flaw in Eichmann’s character was his almost total inability ever to look at anything from the other fellow’s point of view” ---- Nussbaum.

April 22: Read Walker Connor, ETHNONATIONALISM, pp. 196-209 (ER) and watch the film SWING KIDS -- https://login.newman.richmond.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcampus.swankmp.net%2Frichmond281800%2Fwatch%3Ftoken%3D5d603659f648e28f1c3f2c01a01b94c129ae270407162992c8f1d29154ba248b

What does Arendt mean by “inner emigration”? Does the film present an adequate option to “inner emigration” or a demonstration of it? Use the Yeats quote at the top of our syllabus to evaluate the responses of the film’s leading characters--Peter, Thomas, Arvid. What is ethnonationalism? Connor emphasizes emotions, which theoretically might be tamed in an effort to liberalize nationalism. Or would you agree with the following paragraphs excerpted from an essay that suggests nationalism cannot be tamed or liberalized?

To say that the sentiments fueling nationalist fervor pass along networks of non-elites is not to deny the significance of pitchmen and princes--or presidents. Hitler’s appeal was (and is) incontestable. Yet, to my mind, pole position belongs to Niccolò Machiavelli, who compiled an assortment of ruthlessly effective leaders, from Darius and Hannibal to Cesare Borgia and Pope Julius II, to awaken his dedicatee, Lorenzo de’ Medici, to the need for an Italian redeemer in the early sixteenth century. Then, strictly speaking, there was no Italy. The Piedmont and peninsula were divided into republics and principalities, the elites of any acting with depraved indifference to the wellbeing of their neighbors. French troops camped in swatches of Lombardy; Aragonese officials ruled Naples, the south, and Sicily. Machiavelli thought foreign occupation humiliating. Packing his Principe with illustrations of self-interest, conflict, and the circumstances and daring that had made for ruthlessly effective leadership, he finished by emphasizing the need for ‘Italian valor’ and ‘Italian resourcefulness’ (virtù italica)–and Lorenzo’s leadership–to stop the flood of others (illuvione esterne) from dividing and conquering all that was left of Rome’s greatness. An assortment of peculiarly Italian traits, Machiavelli tells Lorenzo, would ensure a victory over the ‘barbarians,’ for there were no better soldiers in Europe than Italians. It was providential that Italy had been overrun and had endured ordeals without leadership (senza capo). God created both the need and the vacancy, both of which beckoned (as Machiavelli had begged) Lorenzo to undertake a ‘sacred’ campaign.¹

Italy in fragments--some ‘owned’ by outsiders--disturbed and spurred Machiavelli, who would have had no brief for an early modern equivalent of the multi-ethnic state. He hoped that Lorenzo de Medici would tidy up the mess that a millennium and more of multi-culturalism made of Italy after Romans’ rule of Western Europe eroded. Challenges facing nationalists centuries later are related to what distressed Machiavelli and are related, of course, to the persistence of self-interest and conflict--a persistence liberals and political moralists call ‘assumption’ while political realists call it ‘fact.’ Yet challenges today are quite different. As I write, global and regional alternatives retain some appeal,

even though so many regional associations are failing or feeble. What Tony Judt noticed in 1994 seems to be just as true now as it was then: nationalism, to many, is ‘more realistic than socialism’ and ‘more immediately reassuring than liberalism.’

Realistic and reassuring, probably, yet Antje Helmerich notices that nationalist parties seem insatiable. Cheerful after an election cycle that rewards them with media recognition and perhaps a modicum of power, nationalists generally grow hungry for more—more privileges or more conformity within their ranks. Their very survival depends on pressing their arguments in multi-ethnic states for decentralization and political autonomy. Might satisfaction come when states are brought into line with ethnic boundaries? Arguably, no; for nationalists’ sentiments often morph into imperialist ambitions. And when internal enemies disappear—exiled, exterminated, or sequestered underground—external others will appear and be seen standing between nations and their destinies. But political realists, setting aside the drivel about democratic or even authoritarian utopias, understand that states’ striving for power is irrepressible. This ‘striving’ can be overlooked—as some liberals and moralists demonstrate—but it cannot be overcome.

April 24: Read James Madison’s essay, published as FEDERALIST 10:

https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10

If citizens actively participate with their leaders in determining policy, disagreements would likely lead to the development of factions. Does Madison think them a danger? How did he propose to deal with them? Disagreements make it difficult to govern—and to grade. So what advice do you have for those commissioned to do either?

(final exam: scheduled by the university)

H A V E A W O N D E R F U L S U M M E R

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