

Humanities 324
Spring 2009
10694
TR, 3:10-4:20, ZH244
F, 11:30-12:35, LH 125

Dr. Richard Laws
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Introduction:

The third in a series of four Humanities courses, this class broadly examines the world's intellectual and cultural developments between the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century and the Second World War. During this exploration, we will study and question many of the ideals and ideologies which arose from and helped to shape this period and still influence our thinking today, such as "liberalism," "enlightenment," "Romanticism," "racism," "sexism," and "cultural synthesis."

In other words, the readings for this course deal with big ideas and tackle the cosmic questions such as "who are we?"; "what does it mean to be an individual in an industrial world of mass consumption and exploding population?"; "who should be included as equal citizens and who does not count politically?"; "what is knowledge and how is it limited or even misleading?"; "is there a place for faith in a scientific worldview?" These are just a few of the many subjects the authors and thinkers covered in this course have confronted, and studying how they grappled with these crucial problems will help, ideally, each of you in your own quest to develop a personal philosophy.

One way we will pursue this goal is by concentrating on how these authors communicated their ideas, how they attempt to persuade their readers that their answers are THE ANSWER. This approach will involve a sharpening of the intellectual tools required for critical interpretation and thinking, which are necessary for navigating our own culture overflowing in information and argumentation. Similarly, by thinking about how these well-known writers communicate, we will be strengthening our own skills of persuasion by class debate, public presentation, and essay writing.

Development of better interpretive, writing, and thinking skills; a broad examination of the culture which has produced us all and in which we all live; and a stronger foundation for constructing an individual philosophy to guide you through these perennial questions—this course promises to repay your efforts with all that a liberal humanistic education offers, and when approached with the right attitude and willingness to work, it can be a great deal of fun, too.

For more on the general course objectives, consult this website:
<http://www.unca.edu/humanities/goals.htm>

Required Texts:

The Asheville Reader: The Modern World, 2nd edition (AR in the schedule)
Gloria Fiero, *The Humanistic Tradition*, vols. 4-6, 5th edition (F4-F6 in the schedule)
Jun'ichiro Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows*
Henry David Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience and Other Essays*
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
Maxine Hong Kingston, *China Men*

In addition to these books, which are available at the bookstore, I will also regularly e-mail excerpts of other works which you will need to print, read, and bring to class.

Assignments:

Rhetorical Analysis, Friday, February 13, 2-3 pages: 10%
Midterm, Friday, March 6: 10%
Comparative Essay, Thursday, March 26, 4-5 pages: 15%
Research Essay, Friday, May 1, 8-10 pages: 20%
Final Exam, Thursday, May 7, 3:00-5:30: 20%
Quizzes: 10%
Participation: 15%

The midterm will be a take home exam with two sections, the first requiring identification of quotations from the assigned material and the second assigning a well-structured essay answering one of two questions. The final will have a similar take-home component as well as a **cumulative in-class section which you will answer during the scheduled final exam period.** You will need a bluebook for this final exam.

The first essay is a brief (2-3 pages) rhetorical analysis of one of the assigned primary sources, which you will choose, from the beginning weeks of the semester. The second essay (4-5 pages) requires that you further broaden those analytical skills by comparing two distinct sources from separate weeks, with close readings of each and analysis of how they are similar and different.

The research essay (8-10 pages) will allow you to explore a specifically textual topic related to the course that interests you in greater depth, using both primary and secondary sources to formulate your own original arguments. To encourage early research for this essay, **a formal prospectus on your topic will be due on Tuesday, April 14.** This will give each of you an opportunity to work through your ideas, possible sources, and prospective arguments before undertaking the composition of your essay.

On late assignments: If you have a documented medical reason for turning in an assignment late, let me know before the due date and we will plan an alternative. Otherwise, assignments submitted late will be marked down a whole letter grade for each day following the due date, including Saturday and Sunday. If late, e-mail the assignment to me as soon it is completed and then bring a paper copy to the next class.

More information on these assignments will come in the following weeks.

Attendance:

To get the most from the readings and ideas that this class examines, you will need to participate, and participation requires your presence. Therefore, attendance in this section is mandatory. More than three unexcused section absences will lower your final grade. Excused absences require medical documentation or similar reason. Late arrivals can be counted as absences, as well as be disturbing to other students, so get to class on time.

To receive full credit for attendance, you will also be expected to participate with appropriate comments, questions, and attentiveness. Participation means that you attend sections fully prepared, having read the assigned material and thought about the major issues. Also, participation requires that we show respect for each others opinions and ideas. Insults and belittling comments are unacceptable in an academic classroom. **Since we will refer to the relevant texts often, you should bring them to sections as well.**

Also, in the name of good taste and my sanity, **turn off all cell phones.** They are obnoxious and intrusive little machines, and we can do nicely without them.

General Issues:

All homework assignments and essays should be typed and in proper format—12-point font with 1” margins. Save your work often: failures of software or hardware are not acceptable reasons for a late assignment. And **staple your work**; I cannot keep up with loose papers and will not accept them.

If you are having problems with writing, I would be happy to work with you on composing the essays for this class and on general writing issues. If you need further assistance, I recommend the university Writing Center, which is an excellent campus resource. You will find it on the first floor of Ramsey Library, room 136 next to the reference section.

Plagiarism is a serious matter and will be handled by the appropriate authorities. Turning in any work which is not your own and not properly acknowledged as such will result in failure in the course.

I plan to use e-mail often for assignments and information, so be sure that your campus account is working and check it often. Also, feel free to e-mail me with questions or ideas, but use these messages as practice with your formal writing. **In other words, when contacting me online, write as precisely and clearly as possible, and use Standard English spelling and grammar.**

Schedule:

Note that this schedule is subject to change, with topics possibly taking more or less time or requiring more reading than is now assigned. If so, I will give fair notice.

Week 1

Thursday 1/15: Introduction to the course

In-class reading: Thomas Jefferson, from *Notes on the State of Virginia*
Chief Seattle, 1854 Oration

Friday Lecture, 1/16: “Science and the Enlightenment”—McClain/Spellman

Week 2

Tuesday, 1/20: Science and the Beginnings of Enlightenment Thought

Immanuel Kant, “What is Enlightenment” (AR 59-66)
Galileo Galilei, from “The Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina” (AR 2-8)
Francis Bacon, from *Novum Organum* and *Of Studies* (F4, 78-80)
René Descartes, from *Discourse on Method* (F4, 81)

Tuesday, 1/22: Enlightenment Consciousness and Liberalism

John Locke, from *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (F4, 82-83)
Locke excerpts, e-mailed

Friday Lecture, 1/23: Enlightenment and Liberalism: Rights and Revolution”—Pearson

Week 3

Tuesday, 1/27: From the Awakening to the American Revolution

John Locke, from *Two Treatises on Government* (AR 26-36)
Jonathan Edwards excerpts, e-mailed
Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence (AR 76-81)
James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, from *The Federalist Papers* (AR 85-90)
Abigail Adams, “Letter to John Adams” (AR 170-174)

Thursday, 1/29: The Revolution in France, Politics and Imagery

Jean Jacques Rousseau, from *The Social Contract* (AR 50-58)
National Assembly of France, *Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen* (AR 91-94)
Edmund Burke, from *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (AR 103-112)

Friday Lecture, 1/30: “Industrialization, Romanticism, Alienation”—McClain/McNerney

Week 4

Tuesday, 2/3: Making Sense of the Modern World, Self and Society

G.H.F. Hegel, from *Phenomenology of Spirit*, e-mailed
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, from *The Communist Manifesto* (F5, 79-81)
More Marx, e-mailed

Thursday, 2/5: Making Sense, Liberal and Conservative

Adam Smith, from *The Wealth of Nations* (AR 68-75 and F4 103)

John Stuart Mill, from *On Liberty* (AR 262-267)

Alexis de Tocqueville, from *Democracy in America* (AR 236-245)

Friday Lecture, 2/6: “Slavery and American Freedom”—Judson

Week 5

Tuesday, 2/10: American Slavery and Race: Anthony Johnson

Thursday, 2/12: American Slavery, Race, and Minstrelsy: Naturalizing Difference

Jefferson, from *Notes on the State of Virginia*, e-mailed

Olaudah Equiano, from *The Life of Olaudah Equiano ...* (AR 181-185 and e-mailed)

Equiano, from *Travels* (F4, 115-117)

Benjamin Benneker, Letter to Thomas Jefferson and Jefferson’s Response (AR 113-118)

Frederick Douglass, from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (AR 206-212)

Friday Lecture, 2/13: “Native American Experience”—Pearson

Rhetorical Analysis Essay due

Week 6

Tuesday, 2/17: ‘Nothing But Freedom’—Race After Reconstruction

Booker T. Washington, “Address at the World’s Fair in Atlanta” (AR 344-349)

W.E.B. DuBois, from “Strivings of the Negro People” (AR 360-366)

Ida B. Wells, “Speaking Out Against Lynching” (AR 355-359)

Thursday, 2/19: Losing the ‘Middle Ground’: Native Americans and Western Empire

Simon Pokagon, from “The Future of the Red Man” (AR 304-310)

Zitkala-Sa, “Why I am a Pagan” (AR 311-314)

Ohiyesa, from *The Soul of the Indian* (AR 315-320)

Friday Lecture, 2/20: “Women Suffrage in America”—Campbell

Week 7

Tuesday, 2/24: From Abolition to the Struggle for Full Equality: Women’s Rights

Mary Wollstonecraft, from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (AR: 186-201)

John Stuart Mill, from *The Subjection of Women* (AR 222-228 & F5, 81-82)

Sojourner Truth, “A’nt I a Woman?” and “Address to the First Annual Meeting of the American Equal Women Rights Association” (AR: 218-221)

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, et al., “Declaration of Sentiments” (AR: 213-217)

Susan B. Anthony, from *The Declaration Rights for Women* (AR: 273-276)

Thursday, 2/26: Women’s Rights, continued

Friday Lecture, 2/27: “Darwin and Darwinism”—Weber, Payne

Week 8

Tuesday, 3/3: Empire in Africa

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden" (F5, 74)

Thursday, 3/5: Reading against the Grain: Conrad Continued

Friday, 3/6: "Islam and the Modern World"--Payne

Midterm due

Week 9

Tuesday, 3/10, Thursday, 3/12, and Friday, 3/13: **Spring Break, no class**

Week 10

Tuesday, 3/17: Transcendentalism in America

Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (AR 163-168)

Henry David Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience"

Walt Whitman, from *Song of Myself* (5), e-mailed

--"I Sing the Body Electric," e-mailed

Thursday, 3/19: Western Empire and Resistance

Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows*

Lin Zexu's Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria (F5, 75-77)

Mahatma Gandhi, from *Indian Home Rule* (AR 321-326)

Friday Lecture, 3/20: "WWI and the European Crisis of Consciousness"—Uldricks/Nallan

Week 11

Tuesday, 2/24: Searching for Meaning without Transcendence

Charles Darwin, from *Origin of the Species* (AR 382-390)

Friedrich Nietzsche, from *Beyond Good and Evil* (AR 414-423)

Thursday, 3/26: Search for Meaning, continued: Freud and the Unconscious

Sigmund Freud, from *Civilization and Its Discontents* (F6, 27-29)

Comparative Essay due

Friday, 3/27: Spring Symposium, no lecture

Week 12

Tuesday, 3/31: Search for Meaning, continued: Literature and Art

Franz Kafka, "A Country Doctor" (AR 428-434)

Matthew Arnold, "Dover Beach," in-class

William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming," in-class

Thursday, 4/2: Search for Meaning, continued: Modern Spirituality?
Carl Jung, from *The Spiritual Problem of Modern Man* (AR: 441-446)
J. Krishnamurti, "Truth is a Pathless Land," e-mailed

Friday Lecture, 4/3: "Enlightening China and Japan"--Ho

Week 13

Tuesday, 4/7: Immigration and Cultural Synthesis
Maxine Hong Kingston's *China Men*

Thursday, 4/9: Kingston's *China Men*, continued

Friday Lecture, 4/10: "Modernity and Modernism"—Hobby/McNerney

Week 14

Tuesday, 4/14: **Research Prospectus due**

Thursday, 4/16: Research presentations, continued

Friday Lecture, 4/17: "Fascism in the Interwar Years and Beyond"--McClain

Week 15

Tuesday, 4/21: Rise of Fascism
Benito Mussolini, from *The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism* (AR 480-487)
Adolf Hitler, from *Mein Kampf* (AR 461-469)
Hannah Arendt, from *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (AR 497-502)

Thursday, 4/23: The Shoah and the 'Banality of Evil'
Elie Wiesel, from *Night* (F6, 64-65)

Friday Lecture, 4/24: "WW2, The Holocaust, Existentialism"—Uldricks/Davis

Week 16

Tuesday, 4/28: Existentialism and Post-Structuralism
Albert Camus, from *The Myth of Sisyphus* (AR 513-517)
Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Republic of Silence" (AR 518-521)
Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" e-mailed

Thursday, 4/30: Where does Modernity leave us? What's left of Modernity?

Friday Lecture, 5/1: "The New Physics"—Konz
Research Essay due

Final Exam: Thursday, May 7, 3:00-5:30