INTRODUCTION

This syllabus contains the academic calendar for the Program in Structured Liberal Education, the weekly reading assignments, lectures, discussions, films, etc. It should be used as a guide in preparing your work for the Program. By studying it earlier rather than later, you can pace your work to ensure proper preparation for discussion participation. You should prepare the assigned texts before the first lecture of each week.

The syllabus also contains Study Questions which deserve your attention. These questions are intended to stimulate your thinking about the topics and texts for each week. They do not require specific answers and are at times purposefully broad. They will not appear on the final examination, nor will they necessarily be used during discussion. They are meant, rather, to illustrate the kinds of questions you should be asking yourself about the topics and texts. You should think about them not only because they are valuable and relevant in and of themselves, but also because they are a means to learn how to generate questions. The question itself and how one asks it are equally as important as the answer offered.
SLE FACULTY

Andrew Aisenberg
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in History. Research interests in 19th and 20th century French and European history. 333-4347 (home)

Suzanne Greenberg
Lecturer in SLE, Acting Director of SLE (1996-97) and Coordinator of SLE. Ph.D. in History of Education. Research interests in the history of Victorian England. 725-0102 (office); 326-5548 (home)

Mark Mancall
Professor of History, Director of SLE. Interests in Jewish history, Chinese history, South and Southeast Asian history, Marxism and socialism. On sabbatical 1996-97.

Jonathan Reider
Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions. Intellectual interests in the French Revolution, the history of political and social thought, anti-Semitism, the history of Stanford, and baseball. 723-2091 (office); 326-3465 (home)

Mollie Schwartz Rosenhan
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in History. Research interests in Judaism and feminism, utopias, and gender issues in the Holocaust. 326-1313 (home)

Irena Smith
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in Comparative Literature. Research interests in American, Russian, and French literature. 324-1690 (home)

Charles Sigismund
Lecturer in SLE, Ph.D. in Social Theory. Interests in the economics and sociology of knowledge. A book on knowledge as wealth and a novel about the future of work are in progress. 712-1561 (home)
REQUIRED TEXTS

Bible, Holy Bible New Revised Standard with Apocrypha (Oxford)
Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, ed. and trans. McWilliams (Penguin US)
Dante, *The Inferno*, ed. and trans. Mandelbaum (Bantam)
Defoe, D., *Robinson Crusoe*, (Bantam)
Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Rubin
Locke, J., *Second Treatise of Government*, (Hackett)
Shakespeare, W., *King Lear*, (Signet)
Shakespeare, W., *Tempest*, ed. Langbaum/Signet (Penguin US)
Shelley, M., *Frankenstein*, (Penguin US)

SLE Course Reader II

THE SLE PLAYERS

Because of the overwhelming success of Lysistrata in the Autumn, SLE will undertake the second of its three productions planned for this year. As in the Autumn, the scope of this production will depend entirely upon student interest and enthusiasm. We have not chosen a play for this quarter and, instead, will rely on thespian students to select the work which will best display their talents, as well as illuminate some facet of this quarter's intellectual project. If you would like to be a part of this production in any way, whether on stage or behind the scenes, please place your name on the sign-up sheet on the SLE bulletin board in Florence Moore Main Lounge. The organizational meeting for this quarter's production will be held soon after the beginning of the quarter. We encourage ALL students to participate. The performance date is set for Thursday, March 6th, 1996.
WEEK 1
Rome: Foundation Myths and Empire

Tuesday, January 7th
3:15pm  Lecture: Rome
         Prof. Maud Gleason, Classics
6:00pm  Lecture: The Aeneid and the
         Founding of Rome
         Ed Frueh, SLE

Wednesday, January 8th
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Film: I. Claudius

Thursday, January 9th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
6:00 pm Film: I. Claudius, continued

Reading:
Virgil, The Aeneid Books, 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12

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Study Questions

1. *Pietas* is the word for filial duty and patriotism. It is the “patriarchal” virtue of Roman culture. Contrast Aeneas’s *pietas* with the character of Homer’s heroes.

2. Virgil’s poetry shows us “lacrimae rerum,” the tears of things. Describe this tragic vision in your own terms.

3. Is the Aeneid an apology for imperialism, an ancient example of political propaganda? Do you find any factors in the poem which would seem to go against this claim?

4. From the standpoint of the mythical, the Aeneid would seem to be a family struggle between Jupiter and Juno. How would you interpret this statement in modern terms?

5. Analyze the entire episode with Dido. What does it tell us about the character of Aeneas? What does it tell us about his quest? What ultimately does it tell us about the Roman Empire?

6. Analyze the concept of furor in the poem. Why is it important? How does it shape characters such as Dido, Turnus, and Mezentius?

7. What is the price of conquest? How is it exacted from Aeneas? From the Romans?

8. What does Virgil see as the particularly Roman contribution to the world? Does Rome in some sense have a destiny?
WEEK 2
Christianity and Empire

Tuesday, January 14th
3:15pm  Lecture: The Growth of Christianity
         Prof. Van Harvey, Religious Studies
6:00pm  Lecture: History and Resurrection in Jewish and Early Christian Hopes
         Prof. Robert Gregg, Religious Studies and Dean of Memorial Church

Wednesday, January 15th
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Lecture: St. Augustine
         Prof. Maud Gleason, Classics

Thursday, January 16th
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Film: Jesus of Montreal

Reading:
St. Augustine, Confessions Books I, II, IV, VII-VIII, X (Sections 6-39)

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Study Questions
1. Compare the two Gospels. Do they describe the same Jesus? The same events? How do they differ? Does each book have a distinct tone, emphasis, or style?
2. Are the Gospels history, eye-witness accounts, legend, myth, fiction, and/or theology?
3. Do you find the theology of Paul consistent with the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels?
4. Does it make sense to talk of a "Judeo-Christian" heritage? In what ways is the New Testament continuous with the Hebrew Bible? In what ways is it discontinuous?
5. In what ways and to what extent are Christianity and Platonism compatible?
6. How can the Christian "other-worldly" be reconciled with the "real-world" needs of political and social life?
7. Why is Augustine writing his Confessions? To whom, besides God is he addressing them?
8. What is his analysis of sin? Why are the senses so important in sinning? What role does the pear tree episode play in his life?
9. Why does Augustine convert? Why does it take him so long to make up his mind?
10. How does Augustine's Confessions reflect the decay and disintegration of the Roman Empire?
11. What changes did St. Augustine have to make in Platonism in order to make the two compatible? Is it possible to be both a rationalist and a believer?
12. Is Christianity more naturally a religion for an empire, a monarchy, or some other form of government? Is there any form of government with which it is totally at odds in principle?
WEEK 3
Dante

Tuesday, January 21st
3:15pm  Lecture: Inferno
        Prof. Robert Harrison,
              French and Italian
6:00pm  Lecture: The Decameron
        Prof. Lawrence Ryan,
              English

Wednesday, January 22nd
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Lecture: The Gothic
        Prof. Barry Katz, California
              College of Arts and Crafts

Thursday, January 23rd
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Film: The Seventh Seal

Reading:
Dante, Inferno
Giovanni Boccaccio, The Decameron:
Day I:  Introduction, pp. 49-68; Tales 2, 3, pp. 82-89;
Day II: Tale 9, pp. 207-220;
Day III: Tale 1, pp. 234-241, Tale 10, pp. 314-319;
Day V:  Tale 2, pp. 417-423;
Day VI: Tale 10, pp. 505-514;
Day X: Tale 5, pp. 757-761, Tale 9, pp. 794-812

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Study Questions

1. Why should the first sinners to whom Dante speaks in the Inferno be the lovers Paolo
   and Francesca? Why is it appropriate for Dante to respond as he does to Francesca’s
   story? What does his reaction signify about the nature of their love affair?

2. Why would sins of violence and malice (or fraud) be punished more severely in
   Dante’s hell than sins resulting from sensual appetites? What might Plato have said
   about Dante’s ordering of the different kinds of sins? In what order of severity
   would you rank sins? Why order them at all?

3. How does Dante’s account of the fate of Ulysses (Odysseus) differ from that in the
   Odyssey? What is Dante’s apparent attitude toward Ulysses, and why does he place
   him in the Eighth Circle of the Inferno?

4. What is Boccaccio’s attitude toward religion, the Church, priests, etc.? Why does he
   show them being hypocrites so frequently?

5. What insights into daily life, customs, and social structure does Boccaccio provide?
   What is his attitude toward women?

6. What are Boccaccio’s positive values that emerge underneath the humor? Is
   Boccaccio a humanist? In what sense?

7. The sub-title of The Decameron is “Prince Galahalt.” What is the significance of that
   sub-title?
**WEEK 4**

**Buddhism**

**Monday, January 27th**
5:00pm  PAPER #1 DUE
3:15pm  Lecture: Introduction to Buddhism I
        Prof. Linda Hess, Religious Studies
6:00pm  Lecture: Introduction to Buddhism II
        Prof. Linda Hess, Religious Studies

**Tuesday, January 28th**

**Wednesday, January 29th**
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Lecture: Gender and Buddhism
        Prof. Linda Hess, Religious Studies

**Thursday, January 30th**
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Film: Rashomon

**Reading:**
Readings on Buddhism (copied selections)

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**Study Questions**

1. What are the Four Noble Truths?
2. Can you explain the Noble Eightfold Path and the Middle Way?
3. Is there a difference in the Buddhist and Hindu conceptions of karma? of rebirth? of dharma?
4. How are teachings about personal and social ethics related to progression in the scale of being?
5. How did the world come into being?
6. What is the Buddhist view of suffering and of joy?
7. How might Buddhist mystical theology reflect and support particular social orders?
8. How might a shift in Buddhist theology from spatial to temporal models affect Buddhism's sense of the person?
# WEEK 5
## The New World

### Monday, February 3rd
- 5:00 pm | Lecture: The Tempest
- 6:00 pm | Lecture: The New World in the European Imagination

### Tuesday, February 4th
- 3:15 pm | PAPER #2 DUE
- 6:00 pm | Lecture: The Tempest

### Wednesday, February 5th
- 3:15 pm | Discussion Sections
- 6:00 pm | Lecture: Justice for the Indians

### Thursday, February 6th
- 3:15 pm | Discussion Sections
- 6:00 pm | Film: The Mission

### Reading:
- Shakespeare, The Tempest
- Bartolome de las Casas, “In Defense of the Indians” (copied selection)
- Michel de Montaigne, “On Cannibals”, “On Coaches” (copied selection)

### Study Questions

1. **How would Shakespeare have us respond to the suffering and weakness of mankind?**
2. **What evidence is there that the actions of various characters violate Shakespeare’s understanding of natural law? Consider the relationship of people to each other, to the state, and to the gods. What is the role of the fool (Ariel) in this presentation of the upsetting of order?**
3. In Act I, Scene I of The Tempest, how are the relationships among the characters defined? Who professes power? Who is in visible control? Which authority appears to be more “rational?” What may the storm itself symbolize?
4. What is Caliban’s attitude toward nourishment, work, and sexual promiscuity? How do he and Ariel describe pleasure and freedom? How would their utopian dreams differ from that of Gonzalo?
5. In his actions and in his advice, how does Gonzalo display considerate behavior towards others in Act I, Scene I? Is this behavior political as well?
6. At the beginning of the play, what relative value does Prospero attach to his learning? By the end of the play, has he amended or maintained the same belief?
7. **Why was the existence of the American Indians a problem for the Spanish? Why was Aristotle relevant to attempts at solving the problem?**
8. How would you apply other philosophers we have read: for example, Plato or St. Augustine, to this issue? Could you use Aristotle differently than Las Casas did in his response to Sepulveda?
9. **What is the hypothetical problem in our own era which is equivalent to the Indian problem for the Spanish, and how should we as a civilization confront it? What authors would you use to understand it?**
   - Do you think Las Casas has a good argument? How would you support his reasoning but on other grounds?
   - How does Montaigne reflect a new skepticism about the values of Renaissance Europe? How does he use the idea of the New World to develop this theme? How does his attitude compare with those of Las Casas and Shakespeare toward “savages”? How does Columbus’s attitude compare to that of Montaigne?
WEEK 6
Tradition and Change

Tuesday, February 11th
3:15pm  Lecture: Utopias
        Jon Reider, SLE
6:00pm  Lecture: The Reformation
        Prof. Van Harvey,
        Religious Studies

Wednesday, February 12th
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Lecture: Machiavelli
        Prof. Robert Harrison,
        French and Italian

Thursday, February 13th
3:15pm  Discussion Sections
6:00pm  Film: A Man for All Seasons

Reading:
More, Utopia
Machiavelli, The Prince

Study Questions

1. In what ways is Thomas More a “Renaissance” thinker? What aspects of his thought are more medieval in emphasis?
2. Why would a close advisor of the King of England write a book that was by implication so critical of the society of his own day?
3. What is the purpose of creating a Utopia that, by definition, may never be realized? What does he borrow, and not borrow, from Plato?
4. What arguments does More make for the elimination of private property? What potential does More see for the individual without the burden of private property? Do you agree? Is More a forerunner of modern socialism, as Engels argued?
5. Why does More, a devout Catholic, create a utopia without Christianity?
6. Is politics a moral, amoral, or an immoral activity? Is politics about the public good or about power? Is it possible to be an effective politician and a morally good person at the same time?
7. What is the role of violence in politics? Is it always bad? Can evil means be used to achieve good ends? Do governments have a right to use violence when citizens do not?
8. Does Machiavelli’s idea of justice go beyond “might makes right?” What would he think of Thrasymachus (Plato)?
9. What would it mean to study politics scientifically? Is this what Machiavelli does? How do his methods compare with those of other political writers such as Aristotle? What is Machiavelli’s view of human nature? How might Machiavelli’s personal experience in an environment of severe political disorder have influenced his thought? What does Machiavelli mean by “civic virtue”? Is it more or less important to a nation than the concrete institutions of government? What causes the corruption of civic virtue, and what can be done to reverse this corruption?
WEEK 7
Far Horizons

Tuesday, February 18th
12:00 pm  PAPER #3 DUE
3:15 pm  Lecture: The Scientific Revolution
         Prof. Denis Phillips,
         Philosophy and Education
6:00 pm  Lecture: King Lear
         Prof. Ron Rebholz, English

Wednesday, February 19th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections
6:00 pm  Lecture: Descartes
         Prof. John Perry, Philosophy

Thursday, February 20th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections
6:00 pm  Film: King Lear

Reading:
Shakespeare, King Lear
Descartes, Meditations

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Study Questions

1. What aspects of Aristotle's conception of tragedy are applicable to King Lear? Can both Oedipus and Lear be included under the rubric of tragedy? How would we have to alter Aristotle's definition to do so?

2. How does King Lear reflect the disintegration of the harmonious world view of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance?

3. Is there a Greek sense of fate in King Lear? Are there also Christian elements? Why is it set in a non-Christian society?

4. How would Shakespeare have us respond to the suffering and weakness of mankind?

5. What is the contribution of the sub-plot involving Gloucester, Edmund, and Edgar to the total effect of Lear?

6. How are the conditions in the world, in the state, and in the individual related to one another in the course of King Lear? How is Lear a microcosm of society and the world at large?

7. Would "I doubt, therefore I am" be as indubitable as "I think, therefore I am"? Why is the latter question so crucial to Descartes?

8. Why does Descartes find it difficult to know that physical objects exist?

9. How does Descartes know that the mind and the body are two distinct "substances"?

10. Why does Descartes find the "geometrical method" so attractive?

11. Suppose you are asleep; does the "I" no longer exist?

12. Is Descartes' doctrine of innate ideas the same as Plato's "theory of ideas"?
WEEK 8
Rise of the Bourgeoisie

Monday, February 24th
5:00 pm  PAPER #4 DUE

Tuesday, February 25th
3:15 pm  Lecture: Robinson Crusoe and the New Consciousness
          Prof. Maureen Harkin, English
6:00 pm  Lecture: The Enlightenment
          Prof. Andrew Aisenberg, SLE

Wednesday, February 26th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections
6:00 pm  Lecture: Locke and Liberalism,
          Jon Reider, SLE

Thursday, February 27th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections
6:00 pm  Film: Danton

Reading:
Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe
John Locke, The Second Treatise of Government, Chs. 1-5, 7-9

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Study Questions

1. Robinson Crusoe was written in a period of British imperial expansion. How does this narrative present colonization?
2. Robinson Crusoe is a kind of salvation narrative, as well as a history of one man's colonial adventure. How are these two aspects of the text related?
3. Defoe as a novelist has generally been credited with pushing the novel in the direction of realism. What kind of effects does Defoe introduce that you would describe as realistic? What is a working definition of realism?
4. What is the significance of Robinson Crusoe's discovery at the midpoint of the novel of the footprint on the beach?
5. Does Locke define "human nature"? What are the basic psychological principles of Locke’s view of human nature? How do his political principles grow out of his psychology?
6. What is the difference between "liberty" and "license" in Locke?
7. Why does Locke argue we have a private right to property in nature? How does the invention of money affect the right to property? Do you agree that the poorest wage laborer in England is better off than the richest Indian Chief in America?
8. What is Locke’s critique of slavery? of suicide?
9. Locke speaks of the ways we are equal. In what respects does he assume we are not equal? What kinds of inequality are legitimate?
10. What are the traditional elements of Locke's thought? What is radically new?
11. What does the statement, "All Americans are unconscious Lockeians," mean? Do you think it is true? Is it a good thing?
WEEK 9
Victory of the Bourgeoisie

Tuesday, March 4th
3:15 pm Lecture: Rousseau and the French Revolution
   Prof. Andrew Aisenberg, SLE
6:00 pm Lecture: Mary Wollstonecraft
   Prof. Mollie Schwartz Rosenhan, SLE

Wednesday, March 5th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
6:00 pm Lecture: Frankenstein
   Prof. Barry Katz, California College of Arts and Crafts

Thursday, March 6th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
6:00 pm SLE Play

Reading:
Mary Shelley, Frankenstein
Mary Wollstonecraft (copied selection)
“Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen” (copied selection)

Study Questions

1. According to historian Eric Hobsbawm, the end of the 18th century ushers in the "dual revolution." Explain. What does the Industrial Revolution revolutionize? Were these two "revolutions" mutually exclusive or inextricably bound to one another?

2. Actions traditionally labeled as "feminine" include conception, birth, mothering, nurturing, providing. In what characters and at what times is the feminine manifested in Frankenstein? Does Mary Shelley imply that some activities/beliefs are "masculine"?

3. Is there a monster in Shelley's novel?

4. What is the view of science and technology communicated by this novel? In what sense is Victor Frankenstein a typical "creation" of the modern age? In what sense is Victor an embodiment of Romanticism and Romantic ideals? Is the monster a creature of the future or the past?

5. How is Frankenstein structured? What does each narrator's style of speaking indicate about his own value system? How does the changing point-of-view affect the reader's evaluation of the characters' morality?

6. To what social and economic conditions are the Romantic poets responding? What kind of value system do they create? What is new about their poetry?

7. Why does Mary Wollstonecraft feel compelled to write a Declaration of the Rights of Women? What is her agenda?

8. What is the relationship between Wollstonecraft's Maria and A Vindication of the Rights of Woman? What does Jemima's life story serve to illustrate for the reader?
WEEK 10
The Romantic Response

Tuesday, March 11th
3:15 pm  Lecture: Romantic Poetry
          Prof. Barbara Gelpi, English
6:00 pm  Lecture: Industrial Revolution
          Prof. Joseph Corn, History

Wednesday, March 12th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections

Monday, March 17th
10:00 am  EXAMS DUE

Reading:
Romantic Poetry (copied selections)

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Study Questions

1. What is the “Romantic movement”? What is the function of Romantic literature in the 19th century?
2. To what events or ideas are the Romantic poets reacting?
3. Is the Romanticism that you see in this poetry different from or similar to the Romanticism of Shelley’s Frankenstein?