SYLLABUS
for
PROGRAM IN STRUCTURED LIBERAL EDUCATION

Spring 1989
Department 999
Course Number: 093
Units: 09
SLE FACULTY

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Robert Watson
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# REQUIRED TEXTS

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Copied Selections for the entire quarter are available at the Stanford Bookstore.
WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

PAPER #1
Due Monday, May 1st at 5:00 pm

"Western culture in the XIX Century was riven by conflict which found expression both in thought and in society: Romanticism vs. Realism, Idealism vs. Materialism, Man vs. Nature. Liberalism, as ideal and policy, sought to provide a resolution of these conflicts."

--(Eric Crid’homme, History, Progress, & Ideas, Paris: Editions Communards, 1872)

Write an essay testing the validity of this statement, choosing the authors we have studied through the end of Week 4 of spring quarter. You must write on no fewer than three authors, one of whom must be Marx. You are, of course, free to write on more than three authors, but you should be cautious about spreading yourself too thinly. It is important to organize your ideas into a coherent argument, not just go through the writers 1-2-3.

PAPER #2
Due Monday, at 5:00 pm

"In a decaying society, art, if it is to be truthful, must also reflect decay. And unless it wants to break faith with its social function, art must show the world as changeable. And help to change it."

--Ernst Fischer, The Necessity of Art

Starting at the end of the last century, the role of both art and the artist changed radically. As never before, art became a vehicle for the presentation of the new spiritual and political visions. Artists, in turn, saw themselves as both prophets and propagandists, intimately involved in the changing definition of the individual and society. To meet the needs of this explicitly social role, artists developed new styles of literature, theater, and the visual arts. Subject matter formerly deemed inappropriate for 'high art' now became central themes of creative expression.

Write an essay using no fewer than two creative authors we have studied in the latter part of the course (Ibsen, Eliot, Brecht, Woolf, Kafka, Wiesel, and Sartre). How do these authors reflect the new role of art, and how do they react to the changed political and social realities of the modern era? What political programs are implicit in their work? You may wish to reflect on "The Shock of the New" as background for you discussion.

Papers should be 10 pages, and must be double spaced.
The SLE Players

Following the success of Lysistrata in the Fall and the Molière plays in the Winter, SLE students now have the opportunity to choose the production for the Spring Quarter. The organizational meeting for students interested in producing this play will be held soon after the beginning of Spring Quarter. If you would like to be a part of the Spring production, contact Suzanne Greenberg as soon as possible. The performance date is set for Thursday, May 25th.
WEEK 1

Romanticism

Tuesday, April 4th
3:15 pm  Plenary: Romanticism and Philosophy
Prof. David Wellbery, German Studies
7:00 pm  Lecture: Hegel
John Goheen, SLE

Wednesday, April 5th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections
7:00 pm  Lecture: Frankenstein and 19th Century Romanticism
Prof. Barry Katz, VTSS

Thursday, April 6th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections
6:00 pm  Film: "Frankenstein," Suzanne Greenberg

Reading:
Mary Shelley, Frankenstein
Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind (1807), "Master/Slave" (copied selection)
Selections from Romantic poets: Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats
Engels, Working Class Manchester pp. 579-585 (Marx/Engels Reader)

Study Questions

1. How did the Industrial Revolution transform European society? How did it contribute to the formation of new social classes, new forms of political organization, and new economic institutions?

2. What is the bourgeoisie, and how is it different from earlier "middle classes?"

3. Does Hegel find a god in history? How does he criticize the traditional theological god?

4. When and why does Hegel think history begins? How does Hegel explain that the movement of history is toward freedom? What does he mean by freedom, and how does his concept differ from liberal individualism? What is the role of great men in history?


6. What is the role of "recognition" in the master-slave relationship? Why is the master-servant relationship so central to Hegel's theory?

7. What does Hegel mean when he writes "...the fear of his master is the beginning of wisdom...?"
WEEK 2

Idealism, Realism, and Materialism

Tuesday April 11th
3:15 pm Lecture: Marx I
Steven Fuller, SLE
7:00 pm Balzac and the Modern Novel
Prof. Raymond Giraud, French and Italian
8:00 pm "Shock of the New"

Wednesday April 12th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Lecture: Marx II
Steven Fuller, SLE
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
6:00 pm Film: "The Organizer," George Cattermole

Thursday April 13th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections

Reading:
Balzac, Pere Goriot, (1834)
Marx/Engels, Theses on Feuerbach pp.143-145 (1845); Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts pp.70-81 (1844); The Communist Manifesto (1848), pp. 469-500

Study Questions

1. How does the bourgeois concern with money change the nature of social ties and obligations? What is Balzac's indictment of the change? How does it compare to Rousseau's view of property?
2. Is hypocrisy essential to the bourgeois world? Do Balzac and Machiavelli depict the same sort of hypocrisy?
3. How does the relatively new form of literature known as the "novel" reflect the new age? What are the essential characteristics of a novel? Why is the novel called "the characteristic bourgeois art form"?
4. How does the city of Paris represent the new social order? How does Balzac's view of Paris differ from earlier cities such as classical Athens of Renaissance Florence?
5. What does Marx see as the defining features of the new capitalistic system? How does he know that another system is possible?
6. Why does Marx think that the proletariat will rebel? Is this inevitable? Will they need help from intellectuals? What kinds?
8. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx lists ten measures by which communism is to be achieved. Some of these measures have been implemented in the U.S. Has this led to communism? Why not?
WEEK 3

The Struggle in History and Nature

Tuesday April 18th
3:15 pm Plenary: Marxist Economics
Prof. Myra Strober, School of Education
7:00 pm Lecture: "If Sharks were People"
Steven Fuller
8:00 pm "Shock of the New"

Wednesday April 19th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Lecture: Darwin
Prof. Craig Heller, Biology

Thursday April 20th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Film: "Seeing Reds," Ken Peter

Reading:
Marx/Engels, Capital pp.302-312, 319-329, 351-361, 439-442 (1867-83),
Darwin, The Origin of the Species, pp. 35-38, 48-74, 82-87, 98-103, 108-131, (1859); The Descent
of Man, pp. 154-176, 196-208.

Study Questions

1. Does history come to an end for Marx after the Revolution? How important is this to his theory?
2. What are the laws of capitalism that determine its development? Are these general laws of history or specific to capitalism?
3. What does Marx mean by the "fetishism of commodities?" How does this apply in modern America? To life at Stanford? Compare this to Rousseau's view of property.
4. What is the labor theory of value? Why is it important? How is Marx's critique of capitalism different from the bourgeois critiques of Balzac and Mill?
5. What doctrines in Aristotle made the conception of the evolution of man inconceivable?
6. After the theory of evolution of man, is it still possible to declare that man is "half ape, half angel"?
7. Does the doctrine of the "survival of the fittest" have ethical implication? Economic implications?
8. What criticisms can be made of the attempt to explain social and cultural phenomena in terms of biological phenomena?
9. "The reason that the human brain makes the human way of life possible is that it is the result of that way of life." Why is this quotation not a mere truism? Why do evolving biological systems not lend themselves to linear causal explanations?
"The brain is not an organ of thinking, but an organ of survival, like claws and fangs." How might Darwin try to explain the development of human's symbolizing capacity?
What characteristics does the theory of evolution have as a type of explanation? How is it the same as, or different from, other types of explanation we have seen (e.g., in its interpretation of fossil records, relation of theory and logical reconstruction to evidence, etc.)? Is it closer to history or physics?
10. Why might the very notion of "human nature" be suspect?
11. Interpret the following: "The directions of man's organismic development is socially determined; implication of this statement?
12. Are science and the religion inevitably opposed? Is the religious criticism of Darwin different from the difficulties Galileo had with the church? Why had Galileo been accepted by everybody, but Darwin hasn't?
WEEK 4

Liberalism

Tuesday April 25th
3:15 pm Plenary: Max Weber and Social Theory
   Prof. Arnold Eisen, Religious Studies
7:00 pm Lecture: Mill and Liberal Theory
   George Cattermole, SLE

Wednesday April 26th
8:00 pm Shock of the New
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Lecture: Burke and DeMastre
   Jon Reider, Office of Admissions

Thursday April 27th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Film: "Modern Times," Steven Fuller

Reading:
   Burke and DeMaestre, (copied selections)
   John Stuart Mill, On Liberty
   Max Weber, Selections, (copied selections)

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Study Questions

1. What are the distinctive features of the economic system known as "capitalism"? What elements of capitalism coincide with liberal ideas? What elements are potentially in conflict with liberal ideas?
2. On what grounds does Mill argue for freedom of thought and expression? Is it the highest value for him? Where would he rank it compared to the value of private property?
3. According to Mill, why would society respect dissenting views concerning an issue that is commonly held to be true?
4. Why does Mill fear conformity? What features of industrial (mass) society are working to produce it?
5. How much individual freedom can a society permit? Does Mill go too far in your opinion?
6. What is the pattern for modern society? Why is bureaucratic-legal domination the characteristic form of power for modern society? Why is bureaucracy a sign of progress? What are its positive features?
7. How have Proletariat ideas been crucial in the formation of capitalism?
8. Some have called Weber "a disenchanted liberal." In what sense is this true? How have trends in modern society made it difficult to believe in the individualism of Mill?
9. Weber and other sociologists were engaged in a "Debate with Marx's ghost." How was Weber critical of aspects of Marx's theory?
10. What does Weber believe is the value of modern science? What are its limitations? What does he think about liberal parliamentary democracy?
WEEK 5

The Critique of "Rational" Society

Monday May 1st
5:00 pm PAPER DUE

Tuesday May 2nd
3:15 pm Plenary: Nietzsche, Prof. Van Harvey, Religious Studies
7:00 pm Lecture: Ibsen and Modern Drama
Leigh Sealy, SLE
8:00 pm "Shock of the New"

Wednesday May 3rd
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm FREE

Thursday May 4th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Film: "Hedda," Bob Watson

Reading:
Ibsen, A Doll House

Study Questions

1. What is new about Nietzsche's critique of Christianity, as compared to Machiavelli's and Marx's?
2. Is his critique of Christianity a valid indictment of a civilization that is now largely secular?
3. What does Nietzsche mean by the "ascetic ideal"? Why is it life-denying? What would Nietzsche think of Rousseau?
4. How would Nietzsche change the world? What is his concept of the individual and his responsibilities to society? Compare this to Mill.
5. Do you think Nietzsche is right that all moral codes of good and evil reflect power relations between the strong and the weak? Is Nietzsche simply restating Thrasymachus?
6. What would Ibsen think of the possibility of living a life of moral integrity in modern bourgeois society? How are professional men like the doctor and the judge portrayed? Why?
7. What does Ibsen think of academic scholarship? romantic love? moral earnestness?
8. Would you call this play a tragedy? What is its structure, i.e., how does it build to a climax?
DIE

TRAUMDEUTUNG

Von SIGM. FREUD.

LEIPZIG UND WIEN
FRANZ DEUTICKE
ECONOMICS & SOCIETY

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract, 1762
Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations, 1776
Jeremy Bentham, The Principles of Morals and Legislation, 1789
Utilitarianism, 1790-1870
Tom Paine, The Rights of Man, 1791-1792
Louis Blanc, 1811-1882
Founding of Prussian Zollverein, 1818
Friedrich Engels, The Condition of the Working Class, 1844
John Stuart Mill, Principles of Political Economy, 1848
Emancipation of the serfs, Russia, 1861
Karl Marx, Capital, 1867

ARTS & LETTERS

Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770-1827
Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, 1781
Johan von Goethe, Faust, 1790-1808
Romantic movement, 1790-1850
William Wordsworth, lyrical Ballads, 1798
G. W. Hegel, Phenomenology of the Spirit, 1807
J. G. Fichte, Addresses to the German Nation, 1808
Francisco Goya, The Executions of the Third of May, 1814
Honore de Balzac, The Human Comedy, 1829-1841
Eugene Delacroix, Liberty Leading the People, 1830
Realism in literature and art, 1840-1870
Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood formed, 1848
Giuseppe Verdi, Il Trovatore, 1853
Richard Wagner, The Ring of the Nibelung, 1854-1874
Charles Dickens, Hard Times, 1854
Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary, 1857
Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace, 1866-1869
Pope Pius IX, Syllabus of Errors, 1869
WEEK 6

Birth of the Modern Self

Tuesday May 9th
3:15 pm Plenary: Lecture: Karen Horney: Psychoanalysis and Women
   Marilyn Yalom, Senior Scholar
   Institute for Research on Women and Gender
6:30 pm The Funda-Mentals of Freud
   Prof. Lee Yearley, Religious Studies
8:00 pm "Shock of the New"

Wednesday May 10th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Lecture: Fanon
   Jon Reider, Office of Admissions

Thursday May 11th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Film: "Suddenly Last Summer," Suzanne Greenberg

Reading:
Horney, TBA
Freud, Civilization and its Discontents, (1930) Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis Chapters 1, 5, 7, 13, 14, 20-23 (1917)
Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (case studies) pp. 7-106, 249-310

Study Questions

What is Freud's method of explanation? How does he get from observed symptoms to theory?

Are humans rational animals, or are there underlying sources of human behavior that the conscious mind is unaware of? What kinds of evidence does Freud have for this? Does this constitute proof?

Is it reasonable to call psychoanalysis a science?

Why are dreams so important to Freud? Why are they proof of the existence and the structure of the unconscious?

How does Freud construct a social theory on the basis of his individual psychology? Why does he feel it necessary to add to the concept of the death-wish to his original theory?

What is Freud's criticism of religion? Does this show the influence of Nietzsche?

Although Freud explicitly criticizes Bolshevism, many thinkers have tried to reconcile Marx's thought with Freud's. How would you go about doing this?
WEEK 7
The Arts I

Tuesday May 16th
3:15 pm Plenary: Joyce
   Asst. Prof. Michael Trabler, English
6:15 pm Discussion Sections
8:00 pm "Shock of the New"

Wednesday May 17th
3:15 pm Lecture: World War I,
   Prof. Gordon Craig, History
7:00 pm Lecture: Brecht
   Prof. Martin Esslin, Drama

Thursday May 18th
3:15 pm Discussion Sections
7:00 pm Film: "Black and White in Color," Suzanne Greenberg

Reading:
Eliot, The Waste Land (1922)
Southam, "Critical Notes on the Waste Land" (hand-out)
Brecht, Mother Courage
Joyce, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916)
Hughes, Shock of the New, ch.3-4 (recommended)

Study Questions

1. How does Eliot universalize the image of the "wasteland"? How does it reflect the times in which it was written?
2. The "change of Philomel by the barbarous king/ so rudely forced..." is etched upon the modern imagination. Why? What significance does Philomel hold for Eliot and his art?
3. "A writer's aesthetic always brings us back to his/her metaphysic." Why does Eliot juxtapose shards of images that bear no immediate apparent relation to each other? Why do you think Eliot believed he had to write the "Waste Land" in this fashion and no other?
4. What sort of hope, if any, is Eliot offering us at the end of the poem? Is this answer satisfying to you?
5. How does Tiresias figure into the poem?
6. How does Eliot's allusion to Dante's Inferno deepen and extend the meaning of "The Waste Land"?
7. Why does Brecht oppose the Aristotelian tenets of illusion, empathy, and catharsis in theater? What does he propose instead? What is the alienation effect and how does it work?
8. Can art be politically neutral? Does it lose some of its artistry if it is consciously political? Is there a difference between art that is consciously political and that which only has political implications?
9. From a Marxist point of view, why is the art of capitalism realistic?
10. Why should an artist deal so much with his unique concern of being an artist? What is artistic temperament? In what way is the artist a hero in the modern world? What is his quest?
11. How important is the plot of Portrait? Is Joyce's work like poetry? What is Joyce's theory of art? Why are art and religion related vocations? Why are they different?
12. What developments does Stephen Daedalus go through? Why must he leave Ireland? What has he learned?
WEEK 8

The Arts II

Tuesday May 23rd
3:15 pm  Plenary: Virginia Woolf
           Prof. Rucio Ruotolo, English
7:00 pm  FREE
8:00 pm  "Shock of the New"

Wednesday May 24th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections
7:00 pm  Lecture: Aime Cesaire
           Prof. Gregson Davis, Classics and Comparative Literature

Thursday May 25th
3:15 pm  Discussion Sections
7:00 pm  SLE Play

Reading:
Woolf, To the Lighthouse
Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex (copied selection)
Hughes, Shock of the New, ch. 5-8 (recommended)
Aime Césaire, "Return to My Native Land" (copied selection)

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Study Questions

1 How does Woolf reflect in her writing the transition to modernism that also applies to Joyce, Kafka and Eliot?
2 Why is it important for Woolf that women be able to write? What is literature about? Why do we need it?
3 Woolf's tone is one of self-conscious irony. Why is this rhetorically persuasive? Why does this work when bitterness or outrage might not?
WEEK 9

The Faces of Evil

Monday May 29th
5:00 pm  PAPER DUE

Tuesday May 30th
3:15 pm  Plenary: The Rise of Fascism and the Holocaust
Amy Sims, SLE
7:00 pm  Kafka: The Existential Modernist
Prof. Gerald Gillespie, German Studies
8:00 pm  "Shock of the New"

Wednesday May 31st
3:15 pm  Discussion sections

Thursday June 1st
3:15 pm  "Night and Fog" and Gloria Lyon, Holocaust survivor
6:30 pm  Film: "Triumph of the Will," Amy Sims

Reading:
Kafka, The Penal Colony: "Metamorphosis," "Report to the Academy," "In the Penal Colony." (1915-24)
Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem (1963) ch. II, III, VI, VIII, XIV, XV, Epilogue
Hitler, Mein Kampf (1924) (copied selection)
Weisel, Elie, Night

Study Questions

After his parents and the chief clerk are aware of his metamorphosis, Gregor tells them that he is only temporarily incapacitated and wants to get right back to work. What does this say about his character? How do material circumstances figure in Kafka's fantasy?

2. How does the father respond to Gregor?

3. What does Red Peter say about freedom in his report to the academy? What constituted the missing link between ape and man according to the narrator?

4. What conceptions of law, justice, and punishment are present in the "Penal Colony?" Do you think Kafka is artistically advocating a particular point of view regarding these?

5. How has Kafka developed new literary techniques? How has he broken with the 19th century realism of Balzac? How does he surprise the reader? What does this imply for the common sense assumptions of everyday life?

6. Do you agree with the judges' decision on Eichmann? Defend your answer.

7. Compare Eichmann's case (especially his insistence that he was not guilty "in the sense of the indictment" and his "Pontius Pilate" feelings) with Antigone's conflict in Sophocles' play.

8. What is the "banality of evil?" Can an administration (a super-humanly-inhuman entity in Arendt's words) murder? Could the Holocaust have happened if all Nazis were like Eichmann?

9. What does the Holocaust say about the progress of the human mind, human rationality, and moral development?

10. What ideas in the history of western culture contributed to the mind set that produced Auschwitz, and which ones contributed to the criticism of it?

11. Why was Arendt's book so controversial?
WEEK 10
The End

Monday June 5th
6:00pm Film "The Condemned of Altona"
Tuesday June 6th
3:15pm Lecture: Sartre and Existentialism,
Prof. Dagfinn Fallesdal, Philosophy
6:15 pm Discussion Sections

Wednesday June 7th
Reading Period
Thursday June 8th
Reading Period
5:00 pm Annual SLE Banquet

Reading:
Sartre, The Condemned of Altona (copied selection)

Friday and Saturday, June 10th and 11th all day: Oral Examinations