Course Title: Structured Liberal Education

Course Number:

Units: 009
REQUIRED TEXTS

Balzac, H., Pere Goriot. (New American Library)
Bowness, Alan, Modern European Art. (Harcourt Brace)
Brecht, B., Mother Courage. (Random House).
Dostoevsky, Notes From the Underground. (Signet)
Durkheim, Suicide. (Macmillan)
Einstein, A., Relativity and Special and General Theory. (Crown)
Joyce, J., Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. (Penguin).
Kafka, F., The Trial. (Signet).
Hobsbawm, E., The Age of Revolution. (New American Library)

COVER: In 1848, the people of Paris erected barricades at strategic points throughout the city to halt counter-revolutionary troops. Picture purports to be by an eyewitness and appeared in a London newspaper. Kagan, Ozment, Turner, The Western Heritage.
TERM PAPER

The written work for SLE this quarter consists of a term paper of 15-20 pages on a subject of your choice. The topic should be developed with the help of your tutor and any members of the SLE faculty you might wish to consult. It should deal with some aspect of questions raised and materials read during the Spring quarter. In all cases, your topic must be approved by your tutor and your section leader(s).

The paper should demonstrate your ability to treat a complex intellectual problem with thoroughness and sophistication. It is important to think about it from the beginning of the quarter and to work on it steadily rather than try to cram it into the last few weeks. The reading for the quarter does not diminish significantly toward the end because it is expected that you will have been working on your paper on a regular basis.

A successful term paper should try to achieve an appropriate balance between your own intellectual creativity and a scholarly appreciation of the literature relevant to your particular topic. Your personal contribution is probably the most important part of the paper. Although the topic should be of general intellectual interest, it should also be of personal concern to you. How you select it, define it, and investigate it are crucial aspects of this intellectual experience. The most significant problem that tends to develop is that of limiting the topic to a reasonable scope. Try to define a topic which can be adequately treated in a paper of this length.

A thoughtful paper should reflect on what others have thought on your topic. But this implies an intellectual conversation with the ideas of others rather than an attempt to exhaustively survey all existing literature. Some papers will involve secondary research, others intensive reading of primary sources. Your choice of topic and approach will determine the kind and extent of reading that you will do. Each paper should strive for an appropriate balance, though each one will differ in the degree of research involved. All papers should fall between the two extremes of purely personal meditation and pure research report. Proper footnote and bibliography style should be observed in all papers. If in doubt, check one of the numerous handbooks available in the bookstore.

Schedule: On Monday, April 28, at 5:00 P.M., a one page precis of your paper is due. This should describe your topic, your work to this point, the issues you are interested in, the materials you have consulted already and plan to consult in the future, and the major intellectual problems you foresee. It should demonstrate that you have already made substantial progress on your paper. Precis writing is itself an important intellectual experience. Observe the length guideline; force yourself to be both precise and concise. The precis should be typed and photocopied; turn in one copy for review by faculty and one copy for your tutor.

On Monday, May 12, at noon, a detailed outline of your term paper is due. The outline should be the blueprint of the paper. It ought to include both major headings which clarify the central idea of your paper (I,II,III, etc.) and subheadings which include the basic points you will be making (these should be specific but need not be unduly detailed). The outline should be typed and photocopied; turn in one copy for the faculty and one for your tutor.

On Tuesday, May 27, at noon, two copies of your paper are due.
Course Requirements Continued

Final Exam

The final exam for the course will be an oral exam of approximately half an hour, to take place on Friday June 6, Saturday June 7, or Sunday, June 10. Each student will be examined by a small panel of the faculty and tutors. The exam will cover the entire range of materials read during the year, with the greatest emphasis falling on the Spring Quarter reading. Of particular interest will be questions of how different kinds of periods treated similar questions or how they reformulated traditional problems in new ways. A list of general study questions will be distributed in advance to help you prepare for this exam. You should also be prepared to talk about the relationship between your term paper and the course as a whole, though this will not necessarily be the main focus of the exam. Students are not expected to have completely polished answers to questions; the emphasis should be on the quality of your ideas, not on the ease or glibness with which they are expressed.
WEEK I: March 31 - April 4

Topic: Capitalism and Liberalism

SCHEDULE:  

Tue 3:15  Plenary Session: "The Industrial Revolution and The Origins of Capitalism" - Mark Mancall
9:00  "The Philosophical Origins of Marxism: Kant and Hegel" - John Goheen. Bldg. 200 (History Corner) Room 305.
7:00  "Adam Smith and Economic Liberalism" - Ted Mitchell

Thu 9:00  "Balzac and the Bourgeois Novel" - Prof. Leo Weinstein, French. Bldg. 200, room 305.
3:15  Discussion Sections
7:00  "Star Power" - Jon Reider

READING:
Balzac, Pere Goriot.
Locke, Second Treatise on Government. (Copied Selections).
Smith, Wealth of Nations. (Copied Selections).
Bentham, Utilitarianism. (Copied Selections).

Study Questions

1. How does Locke develop and change Hobbes' idea of natural right? How does he differ in his theory of the state of nature? How does he connect this to the idea of liberty and eventually to property? Why does a person have a natural right to property? Are there any limits to this right?

2. How does Locke influence Smith and Bentham? How is the common theme of individualism carried through?

3. What were the conditions that made the emergence of a new society possible? What were the principal characteristics of the industrial age compared with the previous one?

4. What were the characteristics of the bourgeoisie as a class? How did they differ from "middle classes" in the past? (cf. Aristotle's Politics).

5. How do Locke, Smith and Bentham reflect habits of mind inherited from Bacon? Why was their thought so attractive to the bourgeoisie? In what ways is it or is it not an apology for capitalism?

6. What basic elements of social life does Adam Smith think are important? What does he ignore?
7. How closely does modern capitalism resemble Smith's doctrines?
8. Does Balzac consider passions to be human strengths or human weaknesses?
9. How does the concern with money of the bourgeois world change the nature of social ties and obligations?
10. How does the city of Paris represent the new social order? How does Balzac's view of Paris differ from earlier cities such as Athens or Florence?
11. Is hypocrisy essential to the bourgeois world? Do Balzac and Machiavelli depict the same sort of hypocrisy?
12. How does the relatively new form of literature known as the novel reflect the new age?
WEEK II: APRIL 7-11

TOPIC: Critiques of Capitalism: Marxism and Romanticism

SCHEDULE:  
Mon  9:00  The French Revolution and Its Aftermath - Jon Reider. History, room 305.
9:00  "History of Social Welfare" - Prof. Richard Brody  
     Political Science. History, room 305.
3:15  Plenary: "Romantic Poetry" - Prof. Ann Mellor, English
3:15  Discussion Sections
3:15  Discussion Sections
7:00  Film: The Organizer

READING
Tucker, Marx-Engels Reader:  
Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts p. 70-105.  
Theories on Feuerbach pp. 143-145.
Romantic Poems (Copied Selections).
Bowness, Modern European Art. p. 9-21, 173-179, 195-198

STUDY QUESTIONS
1. What are the basic theoretical ideas of Marx? What does he see as the defining features of the new system? How does he know that another system is possible?
2. What is the relationship between theory and practice for Marx? How is philosophy a materialistic act?
3. Why does Marx think that the proletariat will rebel? Is this inevitable? Will they need help from intellectuals? What kinds?
4. Is Marx's theory of history deterministic? What does he mean by human freedom? How does this differ from Adam Smith's idea of freedom? Does history come to an end for Marx after the Revolution? How important is this to his theory?
5. Why is alienation so important to Marx? If it is not an inevitable feature of human existence, how can it be overcome? Is it unique to capitalist society? How does Marx's idea of alienation differ from similar ideas of from the Greeks and the Renaissance? Why is it a particularly modern concept and problem?
WEEK III: APRIL 14-18

TOPIC: Theories of History and Art.

SCHEDULE:

Tue 9:00  "Laws in History" - John Goheen. Bldg. 200, room 305.

Plenary: "Marxism" - Mark Mancall.

7:00  "Brecht and Epic Theater", Prof. Martin Esslin, Drama.

Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections

"The Revolutions of 1848"- Prof. Gordon Wright, History.

Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections

Film: Potemkin

READING: Tucker, Marx-Engels Reader: "Primitive Accumulation" p. 431-438;
"Non-Violent Revolution" p. 522-524; "On The Jewish Question" p. 26-52;

Hempel, Function of General Laws in History. (copied selections)

Brecht, Mother Courage.

Short Organum for the Theater (copied selections).


Bowness, Modern European Art  p. 198-216.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What are the "laws" of capitalism that determine its development? Are these general laws of history, or specific to capitalism?

2. Is it fair for Marx to generalize about capitalism from the British example of 1860? How much of his critique is still valid today? How would you be able to verify this? Does it matter if the revolution has not come about in the specific manner he seems to have predicted?

3. What does Marx mean by "scientific socialism"? How does this compare with other ideas of science? How does Hempel's article implicitly criticize Marx's theory of history?

4. How can Marxism be applied to a specific historical situation, such as the debate over the origins of capitalism? Does a Marxist simply ascribe everything to economic causes? How does a Marxist select evidence and make historical generalizations?

5. 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?

6. What does the character Mother Courage stand for? What does she believe in? What are the alternative roles suggested by her children, and why won't she accept them? Could Marx analyze the events of the play?

7. Does Mother Courage "learn" in the play? What is the audience supposed to have learned?
WEEK IV: APRIL 21-25

TOPIC: Darwin and Ibsen

SCHEDULE:

Tue 9:00 "Victorian Britain" - Prof. Peter Stansky, History. Bldg. 200, room 305.

Plenary: "Darwin" - Prof. Craig Heller, Biology.

"Marxism and Art" - Mark Mancall.

Wed 9:00 "Ibsen" - Prof. Lyons, Drama. Bldg. 200, room 305.

Discussion Sections

Film: Hedda Gabler

Thu 3:15 Plenary: "Sociobiology" - Prof. William Durham, Anthropology.

Film: Inherit the Wind.

READING


Ibsen, "The Wild Duck".

Benjamin, "Work of Art" (Copied Selections).

Butterfield, The Origins of Modern Science Ch. 11 & 12.


STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What doctrines in Aristotle made the conception of the evolution of man inconceivable?

2. With what traditional views does the theory of evolution conflict? Can they be harmonized with the theory of evolution?

3. After the theory of evolution of man, is it still possible to declare that man is "half ape, half angel"?

4. Does the doctrine of the survival of the fittest have ethical implications? Economic implications?

5. What criticisms can be made of the attempt to explain social and cultural phenomena in terms of biological phenomena?

6. "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 simple (undirectional) causal explanations?
7. "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?

8. What characteristics does a 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.)?

9. Why might the very notion of "human nature" be suspect?

10. Interpret the following: "The directions of man's organismic development is socially determined; to this extent it could be said that man is a self-producing being." What are some of the implications of this statement?

11. What is the effect of modern technology on the process of producing art? on the process of appreciating art? Has art become less personal? Is taste more standardized? Is this good for art?

12. 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?

13. From a Marxist point of view, why is the art of capitalism realistic?

14. Why is an "original" piece of art worth more than a perfectly reproduced copy? Does its value as a piece of art inhere in its creation or in its material existence?
WEEK V: APRIL 28 - MAY 2

TOPIC: Critiques of Rationalism: Nietzsche and Dostoevsky

SCHEDULE:

Mon 5:00 Term Paper Précis Due

Tue 9:00 "Nietzsche's Germany" - Amy Sims. Bldg. 200, room 305.
3:15 Plenary: "Dostoevsky" - Prof. Carol Anschuetz, Slavic Languages.
7:00 "Nietzsche" - Prof. David WellberrY, German Studies

Wed 9:00 "Nietzsche and National Socialism" - Amy Bldg. 200, room 305.
3:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 Modern Art and Music, Peter Pesic.

Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 "Weill, Schoenberg, Stravinsky" - Peter Pesic.

Sat 8:30 Weill/Schoenberg/Stravinsky Concert. Opera House, San Francisco.

READING


Ecce Homo. p. 217-269, 326-335

Thus Spake Zarathustra (copied selections).

Dostoevsky, Notes From the Underground.

Machlis, The Enjoyment of Music (Copied Selections). Read before concert.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is wrong with traditional culture in Nietzsche's view?
2. Does Nietzsche belong to the tradition of utopian thinking?
3. What reactions would Plato have to Nietzsche's thinking?
4. What is Nietzsche's response to the claim that "man is a rational animal"?
5. What is Nietzsche's criticism of the Western religious tradition? Why is civilization based on guilt? How would he solve this problem?
6. How would Nietzsche criticize Marx? Can the two be reconciled?
7. What is the meaning of Zarathustra's message: "God is dead"? If God is now dead, in what sense was he once alive?

8. Who are the last men? Are there any affinities between Nietzsche's description of the last men and Marx's conception of man in capitalist society? What does Nietzsche think of capitalist society?

9. What is the significance of the time of day in Thus Spoke Zarathustra? Are certain types of activity characteristically undertaken at different times of day? Why?

10. What are the origins of our religious, or more generally, extra-worldly impulses (thoughts)?

11. Zarathustra tells us that the healthy body and the Overman are the meaning of the earth. How are these related?

12. What differences are there between Zarathustra's notion of the friend and the Judeo-Christian notion of the neighbor?

13. Is Notes From the Underground a work of social criticism?

14. What is rationality, or irrationality, for that matter?

15. What types of social conditions might give rise to the type of consciousness represented in Notes?

16. Who is the narrator in Notes? Is there more than one narrative perspective? Is the narrator a reliable narrator? Can Notes be read literally? Can one legitimately infer authorial meaning or intentions from narrative statements?

17. Compare and contrast Dostoevsky's view of man and society (assuming such views can be inferred) with those of Freud. What might Marx say of Notes?

18. Is the narrator sick, or all-too-sane, or does it matter?
TOPIC: Weber and Durkheim

SCHEDULE:

Tue 9:00  "Fin de Siecle and the First World War" - Amy Sims.
          Bldg. 200, room 305.

3:15 Plenary: "Durkheim"- Prof. Ann Swidler; Sociology.

7:00  "Max Weber" - Jon Reider.

3:15 Discussion Sections

7:00  "Modern Art and Music" - Peter Pesic.

Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections

READING:

From Max Weber 77-156, 196-252. Copied Selections


Bowness, Modern European Art. p. 87-104

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. In what ways is The Protestant Ethic a critique of Marx? How does Weber define capitalism? What specific ideas of Marx does he reject? Is he more optimistic about capitalism than Marx in the long run?

2. What is Weber's philosophy of history? What is the importance of the metaphor of the iron cage? Is Weber a liberal, i.e. a believer in the individual? How has he changed from Adam Smith?

3. Does Weber think one must be a Protestant to be a capitalist? What exactly is the link between religion and economics for him?

4. How does Weber's concept of bureaucracy fit into his theory of history? Why is bureaucracy the most rational form of authority? What does rational mean in this context? Why is bureaucracy the most typical form of modern authority? What would Weber think of the difference between socialism and capitalism?

5. What is Weber's method? What is an ideal type? How does he go about understanding history? How is this different from a scientific approach to history as favored by Hempel or Marx? What is verstehen?

6. What is Weber's ideal of scientific objectivity? Is it applicable to the social sciences? Do you think it is practical?

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Study Questions Continued

Durkheim

1. What are the three kinds of suicide for Durkheim? What is anomic suicide, and why is it the most important kind?

2. Why is anomic suicide the most representative kind in modern society? What is there in society that prompts people to commit suicide?

3. Why does religious affiliation seem to affect suicide rates? What other factors influence them as well?

4. What does it mean to say that suicide is a social fact, not just an individual one? How does Durkheim's explanation of suicide differ from one you might make if someone you knew committed suicide? Why is Durkheim not as interested in the reasons an individual might give for contemplating suicide?

5. How does Durkheim's method differ from Weber's? Why is he more likely to use statistical data?

6. How is Durkheim responding to Marx? What are the changes in approach to studying society scientifically?
TOPIC: Discovery of the Unconscious: Freud and Joyce.

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<td>Mon</td>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Detailed Outline of term paper due.</td>
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<td>Tue</td>
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<td>Plenary: &quot;Freud&quot; - Jon Reider</td>
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<td>&quot;Joyce&quot; - Prof. Bill Chace, English</td>
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READING

Freud, Outline of Psychoanalysis

Sexual Enlightenment of Children

Civilization and Its Discontents

Joyce, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man


STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Is man a rational animal after all? 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?

2. If Freud is right about human behavior, does this contradict Marx? Weber? What does he have in common with Nietzsche?

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

4. Why should an artist deal so much with his unique concerns of being an artist? What is an artistic temperament? In what ways is the artist a hero in the modern world? What is his quest? What does he stand in opposition to?

5. How important is the plot of The Portrait? Is Joyce's work like poetry? What is Joyce's "theory of art"? Does the concept of epiphany find parallels in the work of Freud? In the work of Wordsworth? Why are art and religion related vocations? Why are they different?

6. Why should Freudian analysis find Joyce's way of thinking dangerous for weaker persons than he?

7. How can Freudian thought be applied to analysis of society? Is there a significant difference between Freud's psychological theories and his social theories?
8. What kinds of institutions does Freud find have psychological principles underlying them?

9. How would you go about reconciling Marx and Freud?
WEEK VIII: MAY 19-23

TOPIC: The Explosion of Meaning

SCHEDULE:

Tue 3:15 Plenary: "Kafka" - Peter Pesic.
7:00 "Surrealism" - Mark Mancall
Film: Un Chien Andalou

Wed 3:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 Modern Art and Music - Peter Pesic

Thu 3:15 Discussion Sections
7:00 Film: Six Characters in Search of an Author
Introduction by Prof. Lyons, Drama.

READING
Kafka, The Trial
Breton, Manifestos on Surrealism (copied selections)
Bowness, Modern Art. p. 105-165

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How does Kafka see the problem of the individual in modern culture? Why does he use law as the dominant metaphor in The Trial?

2. What ideas of Weber's can be found in Kafka?

3. How does Kafka break with realistic tradition in literature, such as Balzac? What is the new element?

4. What would Kafka think of Nietzsche?

5. How is Pirandello's play radically different from previous forms of drama? What does he have in common with Brecht? What is a "character" to Pirandello?

6. What is Pirandello trying to say about art? What is the relationship to the theme of illusion and reality? In what sense is art real? In what sense is it realistic?

7. How is surrealism a critique of previous modes of artistic expression? What is communicated through the apparently extreme or arbitrary selection of elements? What is the political message inherent in this approach?
WEEK IX: MAY 26- MAY 30

TOPIC: Relativity and Reality

SCHEDULE:

12:00 TERM PAPER DUE

3:15 Plenary: "Einstein" - Mason Yearian, Peter Pesic.


3:15 Discussion Sections

7:00 Film: Marat-Sade

READING:

Einstein, Relativity. (concentrate on the first half of the book)

Heisenberg, "History of Quantum Theory" and "The Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Theory" (copied selections)

Bowness, Modern European Art. 166-172.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Consider the following question which Einstein tackled at the age of 16: You are running at the speed of light. What do you see? How would a beam of light look to you?

2. What are Newton's ideas of space and time? How does Einstein change them?

3. Does relativity mean that everything is relative? If not, what things are absolute or invariant?

4. Your roommate says, "A and B are moving past each other. According to Einstein, A says that B's ruler is contracted and B says that A's ruler is contracted. This is obviously contradictory." What is your response?

5. Describe the kind of reasoning used by Einstein in his thought-experiments. Are they empirical? Merely theoretical?

6. Einstein remarked in later years that he was not influenced by the Michelson-Morley experiment in his development of special relativity; he refers to theories as free creations of the human mind. Why then had no one put forward the relativity theory earlier?

7. Why does the speed of light have such a special place in the relativity theory? Why isn't some other speed so important? (sound, for instance).

8. Your roommate says, "It's absurd to describe an electron as both a wave and a particle. These are contradictory qualities, and it is senseless to apply them to the same object." What is your response?

continued next page.
9. What does Einstein mean in saying, "God does not play dice?" How does he know?

10. What implications do relativity and quantum mechanics have for art literature, politics and religion?

11. Since the Renaissance there seems to be a widening gap between the world of common sense and that of physical theory. Which description is to be believed? How do you reconcile them?
WEEK X: June 2-June 6

TOPIC: Conclusions and Reflections

SCHEDULE:

7:00  Modern Physics: Its Implications - Peter Pesic
7:00  Plenary: "The Eclipse of the Individual" - Mark Mancall, et al.

Fri & Sat  Oral Exams

READING

Eliot, T.S., Selected Poems, The Wasteland

Southam, Guide To the Selected Poems of T.S. Eliot. Concentrate on the section that pertains to The Wasteland.

Have a nice Summer.