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LS 152L.04: Introduction to the Humanities

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Introduction to the Humanities

LS 152L.04
Spring, 2013
MWF 10:10-11:00
General Lecture: Th11:10-12/North ULH
LA 140

Paul A. Dietrich
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Hours: MWF 11-12:00
& by appt.

“Classics are certain texts, events, images, rituals, symbols and persons (in which we acknowledge) a disclosure of a reality we cannot but name truth...some disclosure of reality in a moment of ‘recognition’ which surprises, provokes, challenges, shocks, and eventually transforms us; an experience that upsets conventional opinions and expands the sense of the possible; indeed a realized experience of that which is essential, that which endures – the presence of classics in every culture is undeniable. Their memory haunts us. Their actual effects in our lives endure and await ever new appropriations, constantly new interpretations.”

David Tracy

Course Syllabus

I. *Individual and Cosmos in the Late Middle Ages* (14c)

Week of:

1/28 Introduction. Dante's **Divine Comedy**

Inferno - The Hell Descent and Damnation (1-5,11,18,19,21,24-26,28,32-34)

Plenary Lecture 1/31 – Medieval and Modern – Justman, LS

2/4 **Purgatorio** - The Ascent of the Mountain & Purification (1,7-10,12,13,17,18,27-33)

Paradiso - The Love that Moves the Sun and Beatitude (1,7,10-13,24-26,28,30-33)

Plenary 2/7 – Dante's *Commedia Divina* – Dietrich, LS

II. *The Early Italian Renaissance and the Wonder of the Human* (15c)

2/11 Christian Humanism and Renaissance Platonism in

Pico della Mirandola's "On the Dignity of Man"

Plenary 2/14– Renaissance Humanism – Pico, Erasmus, More - Dietrich

2/18 Presidents' Day – no class

III. *Faith and Freedom – Catholic Reform and the Protestant Reformation* (16c)

2/20 Folly, Peace and the Philosophy of Christ in Erasmus's

"The Praise of Folly", "The Complaint of Peace", NT Forewords, and

"Julius Excluded"

Plenary 2/21 – Luther and the Reformation – Eglin, History

2/25 Satire, Social Criticism, and Reform in More's **Utopia** and Luther's

"On Christian Liberty"

Plenary 2/28 – *Return of Martin Guerre* (video – in part)

- IV. *The Exploration of the Self in the Northern Renaissance* (16c/17c)**
 3/4 Montaigne's 'Book of Myself' and Shakespeare's **Hamlet**
Plenary 3/7 - Introduction to Shakespeare - Linda Woodbridge, Penn State (ret.)
 3/11 An Anatomy of Melancholy? Action, Character and Criticism
Plenary 3/14 - *Shakespeare* video - Stanley Wells
- V. *The Scientific Revolution and the Birth of Modern Philosophy* (17c)**
 3/18 Science and Method in Descartes' **Discourse on Method**
Plenary 3/21 - Bach, Beethoven, and the Boys - Glass, Music
 3/22 Midterm Exam
- VI. *The Poetry and Art of Meditation in the Age of the Baroque* (17c)**
 3/25 The Erotic and the Sacred in Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and Marvell
Plenary 3/28 - The Enlightenment - Greene, History
 Spring Break - 4/1-4/5
- VII. *The Age of the Enlightenment* (18c)**
 4/8 Reason and Satire (Pope, Kant, Swift and Voltaire's **Candide**)
Plenary 4/11 - The French Revolution - Frey, History
- VIII. *Romanticism* (18c/19c)**
 4/15 Nature and the Redemptive Imagination in Wordsworth, Blake, et al.
Plenary 4/18 - Romanticism - Vanita, LS
- IX. *The Rise of Realism* (19c)**
 4/22,29 Suffering, Dystopia, and Self in Dostoevsky's **Notes from Underground**
Plenary 4/25 - Tolstoy and Dostoevsky - Justman
- X. *The Age of Revolution and the Modern World* (19c)**
Plenary 5/2 - The Russian Revolution - Greene, History
 5/6 From the Declaration of Independence & James Madison's "Federalist Papers
 #10" to Karl Marx to Hannah Arendt's "On the Nature of Totalitarianism"
Plenary 5/9 - The Totalitarian Specter - Mayer, History

Required Reading

Dante, **The Portable Dante**, Viking (Musa trans.)
 Erasmus, **The Praise of Folly and Other Writings**, Norton
 More, **Utopia**, Penguin Classics
 Shakespeare, **Hamlet**, Signet Edition
 Descartes, **Discourse on Method**, Library of Liberal Arts
 Negri, Paul, ed., **Metaphysical Poetry: An Anthology**, Dover
 Voltaire, **Candide**, Penguin Classics
 Applebaum, Stanley, ed., **Romantic Poetry: An Anthology**, Dover
 Dostoevsky, **Notes from Underground**, Eerdmans
 (LS 152 ERES facpac - <http://eres.lib.umt.edu> - password "Erasmus")

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and participation are crucial in a class such as ours. (10% of grade.) It is not possible to engage in a deep conversation with these books and with each other if you miss class. Therefore, three absences (or persistent tardiness) will lower your grade one letter grade. Six unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.
2. There will be occasional, brief in-class written responses to the plenary lectures during the Friday class following the lecture. (10%) No make-ups.
3. You are expected to complete the assigned reading in a timely fashion. You are asked to bring three questions or discussion points based on the readings to each class.
4. An essay (5-7 pages) in response to the major readings (e.g., Dante, More, Erasmus, Shakespeare) will be due before spring break. Topics will be discussed. A second essay will be due at the end of term in response to Voltaire, 17c & 19c poets, and Dostoevsky (30% each.) No late papers. Evidence of plagiarism will result in failure of the course. (Special materials on writing will be forthcoming.)
5. There will be a midterm exam on Friday, March 22 and a final exam is scheduled on Monday, May 13, 10-12. (30% each.)

For those who elect the P/NP option, the equivalent of a "C" is necessary for a "Pass".

"A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say. A classic is something that tends to relegate the concerns of the moment to the status of background noise, but at the same time this background noise is something we cannot do without. (Conversely) A classic is something that persists as a background noise even when the most incompatible momentary concerns are in control of the situation." *Italo Calvino*