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LS 395.01: Political Imagination in Literature - Honors

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PHIL/LS/ENLT (HONORS) ~~395~~ 395

POLITICAL IMAGINATION IN LITERATURE

HONORS SECTION

PROFESSOR: RON PERRIN

FALL SEMESTER: 2000

Course Description

Selections from the writings of Sophocles, John Milton, Herman Melville, Victor Hugo, Andre Malraux, Rudyard Kipling, D. H. Lawrence, Emile Zola, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Twain, Dostoevski and others are used to highlight and study central topics of political theory: the origins of the state, the sources of political obligation, political authority v. individual liberty, the right of revolution, the foundations of justice, and the qualities of political leadership.

Text: The Political Imagination in Literature (Fac Pac).

Topic and reading assignments:

Week of September 4 "The Origins of the State"
John Milton, Denis Diderot, Rudyard Kipling
pp. 5-34

Week of September 11 Tuesday: "Origins of the State"
James Agee, Jean Giono
pp. 34-56

Thursday: "Social Justice and Political
Obligation"
William Shakespeare, Victor Hugo,
Sophocles
pp. 62-79

Week of September 18 Tuesday: "Justice and Obligation"
Mark Twain, Herman Melville
pp. 79-99

Thursday: "Authority v. Liberty"
Feodor Dostoevski
pp. 107-131

Week of September 25 Tuesday: "Authority v. Liberty"
Henrick Ibsen
pp. 132-160

Thursday: "The Tyranny of the Majority"
D.H. Lawrence
pp. 160-185

Week of October 2 Tuesday: First Examination

Thursday: "Political Morality"
Arthur Koestler, Jean-Paul Sartre
pp. 192-219

Week of October 9 Tuesday: "Political Morality"
Bertolt Brecht, William Butler Yeats,
William Carlos Williams, Robert Penn
Warren
pp. 220-236

Thursday: "Revolution"
William Blake, Thomas Carlyle, Andre Malraux
pp. 242-269

Week of October 16 Tuesday: "Revolution"
Emile Zola, Joyce Cary, Ramon Sender,
Isaac Babel, William Butler Yeats
pp. 293-302

Week of October 23 "Government and Bureaucracy"
Tuesday:
Hans Christian Anderson, Charles Dickens
Frans Kafka
pp. 307-326

Thursday:
Anthony Trollope, George Eliot
pp. 326-340

Week of October 30 Tuesday: Second Examination

Thursday: "Political Leadership"
Homer, William Shakespeare, Leo Tolstoi
pp. 345-376

Week of November 6 Tuesday: Go vote!

Thursday: "Political Leadership"
George Orwell, Herman Melville
pp. 376-389

Week of November 13 Tuesday: "Political Leadership"
Heinrick Mann, Arthur Koestler,
Isaac Babel
pp. 390-404

Thursday: Political Economy"
William Shakespeare, Gustave Flaubert,
Theodore Dreiser
pp. 408-422

Week of November 27 Tuesday: "Political Economy"
Joseph Conrad
pp. 422-445

Week of December 4: "Political Psychology"
Tuesday;
Doris Lessing, Lionel Trilling,
Henry James, Richard Wright
pp. 466-493

Thursday: Heinrich Mann, Joseph Conrad,
Feodor Dostoevski
pp. 494-515

Week of December 11 Student Presentations of Term Papers

Term paper and presentation:

A term paper of 5-10 pages is required of each student. The paper will identify and develop the political implications and/or content of a literary work not included in the assigned readings. A selective list of readings will be distributed to the class but students are encouraged to seek out works of their own choosing. Early in November a tutorial session will be held with each student to review the draft of the term paper. If time permits some, if not all, students will be expected to present summaries of their term papers during the last week of the semester.

Grading criteria:

Performance on the three examinations will determine 45% of the final grade, term papers 40%, class attendance and participation 15%.

In assigning the final grade particular attention will be given to the following considerations from the University Catalog's description of the Davidson Honors College.

"Honors courses are limited in enrollment to 20-25 students and are conducted in a seminar format, *emphasizing critical thinking, the development of written and oral communication skills, direct contact with the faculty, and use of original texts . . .*"