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1-2014

LSH 152L.04: Introduction to the Humanities - Medieval to Modern

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Recommended Citation

Dietrich, Paul A. and Jones Lofink, Laura A., "LSH 152L.04: Introduction to the Humanities - Medieval to Modern" (2014). *Syllabi*. 872.

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Introduction to the Humanities

LSH 152L; 04
Spring, 2014
MWF 10:10-11:00
General Lecture: Th11:10-12/North ULH
LA 202

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:

1/27 Introduction. Dante's **Divine Comedy**

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

Plenary Lecture 1/30 - Introduction to LS 152 - Justman, LS

2/3 **Purgatorio** - The Ascent of the Mountain and 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 2/6 - *Dante's Commedia Divina* - Dietrich, LS

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

2/10 Christian Humanism and Renaissance Platonism in

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

Plenary 2/13- Renaissance Humanism - Pico, Erasmus, More - Dietrich

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

2/17 Presidents' Holiday - no class

2/19 Folly, Peace and the Philosophy of Christ in Erasmus's

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

"Julius Excluded"

Plenary 2/20 -The Reformation - Dietrich

2/24 Satire, Social Criticism, and Reform in More's **Utopia** and Luther's

"On Christian Liberty"

Plenary 2/27 - *Return of Martin Guerre* (video - in part)

IV. *The Exploration of the Self in the Northern Renaissance* (16c/17c)

3/3 Montaigne's 'Book of Myself' and Shakespeare's **Hamlet**

Plenary 3/6 - Introduction to Shakespeare - Linda Woodbridge, Penn State Univ.

3/10 An Anatomy of Melancholy? Action, Character and Criticism

Plenary 3/13 - Shakespeare video w/ Stanley Wells

V. *The Scientific Revolution and the Birth of Modern Philosophy* (17c)

3/17 Science and Method in Descartes' **Discourse on Method**

Plenary 3/20 - The Scientific Revolution - Marsha Frey, Kansas State University

3/21 Midterm Exam

VI. *The Poetry and Art of Meditation in the Age of the Baroque* (17c)

3/24 The Erotic and the Sacred in Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and Marvell

Plenary 3/27 - The Enlightenment - Greene, History

3/31-4/4 Spring Break

VII. *The Age of the Enlightenment* (18c)

4/7 Reason and Satire (Pope, Kant, Swift and Voltaire's **Candide**)

Plenary 4/10 - The French Revolution - Linda Frey, History

VIII. *Romanticism* (18c/19c)

4/14 Nature and the Redemptive Imagination in Wordsworth, Blake, et al.

Plenary 4/17 - Romanticism - Vanita, LS

IX. *The Rise of Realism* (19c)

4/21,28 Suffering, Dystopia, and Self in Dostoevsky's **Notes from Underground**

Plenary 4/24 - Tolstoy and Dostoevsky - Justman

X. *The Age of Revolution and the Modern World* (19c)

Plenary 5/1 - The Russian Revolution - Greene, History

5/5 From the Declaration of Independence & James Madison's "Federalist Papers #10" to Karl Marx to Hannah Arendt's "On the Nature of Totalitarianism"

Plenary 5/8 - The Totalitarian Spectre - 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. Weekly quizzes may be needed to encourage you in this regard.
4. Thematic essays (4-5 pages) in response to two of the major readings (e.g., Dante, More or Shakespeare; Voltaire or Dostoevsky) will be due before Spring break and at the end of the term, respectively. Topics to be discussed. (20% 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 21 and a final exam on Friday, May 16, 10-12. (20% 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*