

HON 101

Wisdom Stories from Antiquity

**Professor Ronald Schmidt**  
Syllabus and Study Guide  
Fall 2008

University Honors Program  
University of Southern Maine  
Portland, Maine 04104-9300

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## COVER ILLUSTRATION

From The Birth of Western Civilization, Michael Grant, ed.,  
Mcgraw-Hill Book Company, 1964, p. 109.

### The Apotheosis of Homer

At the top of this stone relief is Zeus, King of the Gods. To his lower left stands Mnemosyne, Goddess of memory. Zeus impregnated Mnemosyne, and the Muses were born. The Muses are Goddesses of the Arts who "move through" human artists. Today we still speak of someone under the spirit of the Muse. Homer begins the Iliad by saying "Sing to me Muse...."

The Muses are on the second tier of the engraving, one level under Zeus. At the far left of the picture is Clio, Muse of history. In her left hand is a book. Next to Clio is Thalia, Muse of comedy, Melpomene, Muse of tragedy, Euterpe, Muse of music and lyric poetry, and on the right, walking down the stairs is Terpsichore, Muse of dance. Below Clio, on the next level sits Calliope, Muse of epic poetry, Urania, Muse of astronomy, Polyhymnia, Muse of sacred music, Apollo, God of the Sun and reason, and then Erato, Muse of erotic poetry. Next to Erato, standing on a pedestal is either a poet or the sculptor himself (Apollonius).

Finally, on the bottom tier sits Homer on his throne, being given divine honor. Behind him stand World and Time. Supporting Homer's throne is a warrior (for the Iliad) and, on the far side of the throne, Odysseus, raising a ship's ornament (for the Odyssey). In front of Homer sits an altar. To the left of the altar is myth, to the right, history. Behind history, moving left to right, are poetry, tragedy, comedy, nature, integrity, memory, fidelity, and wisdom.

HON 101, Wisdom Stories from Antiquity, is the first course in a four-course sequence of introductory interdisciplinary courses entitled Ideas and Values: Inquiry and Analysis in Western Culture designed especially for the University Honors Program at the University of Southern Maine. The four courses have been designed with the assistance of two grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities (EL-20152-86 and EL-20184-87). The other courses in the sequence are HON 102 (Truth(s), Lie(s) and Legacy(s) in a Medieval Mindscape), HON 201 (Scientific Revolutions and Critiques), and HON 202 (Progress, Process, or Permanence).

HON 101

Wisdom Stories from Antiquity

Fall 2008

Syllabus

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Office Hours: MW 3:30-5:00  
126 Bedford St.

**Course Materials:**

1. Plato, The Trials of Socrates  
Hackett Press
2. Homer, The Iliad, (Fagles trans.)
3. Sappho, (Lombardo trans.) Hackett Press
4. Aeschylus I: Oresteia (Greene and  
Lattimore, eds.) The Univ. of Chicago  
Press
5. Sophocles, Antigone (Greene and  
Lattimore eds.), University of Chicago  
Press
6. Euripides, Medea (Greene and Lattimore  
eds.), University of Chicago Press
7. Thucydides, On Justice, Power and Human  
Nature (Woodruff trans.) Hackett Press
8. Plato, Symposium (Nehamas and Woodruff  
trans.) Hackett Press
9. The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the  
Apocrypha (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) Oxford Univ.  
Press
10. Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of  
Thomas Elaine Pagels, (Vintage)

During the first week of class, you should pick up a Reading Packet for HON 101, containing selections from various primary and secondary works, at the Honors House.

### 'Blueprint' Overview of Course

Why study the ancient world? The modern world is always the first subject matter of students. We either learn skills to help us function in our world (reading, writing, arithmetic) or learn directly about the world around us (current events, modern science, health). Why, then, should we bother to study the ancient world? Different people will give various answers to this question, but studying the ancient world in fact can help us better to understand the modern. Learning about the events, institutions, and attitudes of today eventually makes us ask how they came about, why they first began. These questions lead us into the past.

It is similar to meeting new friends. At first, you are interested in their present nature, what they do for a living, their interests, skills, hopes, senses of humor. After a while, you begin to seek historical information to understand new friends better. Where were they born? What were their parents like? Where did they grow up? By examining roots, we learn about the plant that subsequently grows. Remember, however, that none of us are exactly like our friends or exactly like our parents. The roots of a plant too are very different from the blossoms.

As we meet the peoples of the ancient world, we must be sensitive not only to what we share with them, but also to the differences between us. Difference too can be instructive, and help us to see ourselves and our modern world in better perspective.

Whom and what do we study in the ancient world? The "ancient" world (from the beginning of "civilized" societies in Mesopotamia about 3000 B.C.E. up until the "fall" of the western half of the Roman Empire in 476 C.E.) comprises a longer time span than the "modern" world (from 476 until today). In the ancient period there are very many peoples, cultures, and events which we could study. How do we choose between them? Ideally, we would not exclude any people, but time forces us to. Consequently, we have chosen to study cultures which have most influenced the development of modern European and North American

society. We will study the ancient Greeks, Hebrews, and Romans/Christians.

The Greeks, Hebrews, and Romans/Christians often are portrayed as the principle founders of an intellectual tradition called "Western Civilization," which supposedly extends to and includes our own society. What exactly did they each contribute to our world? A full answer to this question would best be supplied by you after completion of this course. We may, however, offer some conventional answers.

The Greeks are believed to have begun many of the disciplines of the modern academy. History supposedly was born there, as were philosophy, science, drama, biology, and literary criticism. Besides turning to the Greeks to understand aspects of modern culture, we turn to them to understand how our particular disciplines were formed. The Greeks also gave us democracy. Their mythology is rich with imagery and meaning, and a source of insight for the modern psychology of Freud.

The Judaic/Christian culture has had a major influence on our conceptions of God, ethics, and history. Indeed, current Middle Eastern politics cannot be understood unless one is familiar with the Bible. And even those who disregard the Bible or choose not to believe in the Judaic or Christian God, are still heavily influenced by Hebrew culture, insofar as the Hebrew influence has seeped into our general cultural attitudes and assumptions.

On the other hand, when we look at Greeks, Hebrews, and Christians simply as "founders," we sometimes forget the differences which separate us from them (and each one of them from the other). We run the risk of creating them in our own image, and of forgetting that a root looks little like a blossom.

Because we do not want our study of ancient peoples to be naive, our method of study must be interdisciplinary. For example, we are not simply interested in Greek history or math or philosophy or drama or science. Rather, we are interested in all facets of Greek culture and in the different methodologies for approaching the past utilized by modern historians, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists, etc. Put another way, what single discipline best reveals our modern culture? History? Economics? Art? Literature? Science? You would probably answer that one needs to examine all of these disciplines and others before one could begin to appreciate who

we are and what we value. The further advantage of interdisciplinary study is its ability to reveal how one discipline influences another. As a fairly modern example, consider Darwin's theory of evolution. It stands in the field of biology, but has considerably influenced our view of culture, history, religion, psychology, and even social welfare, to name a few disciplines. One who studies biology alone would miss this interdisciplinary impact.

In the end, this course is about asking questions. If the course works, you will take away from it not only more questions than answers, but an appreciation of why "the unexamined life is not livable for a human being."

### Nuts and Bolts Overview of the Course

#### Class Attendance & Participation:

Since class discussion and informal debate are central to the Honors Program, regular class attendance and thorough preparation are extremely important. Absence from class or failure to prepare adequately will be excused only in the most extraordinary circumstances. If you anticipate such an occurrence, you should speak with your instructor—phone number on page 3.

**\*\*ALERT! \*\*      *RESERVE SATURDAY DECEMBER 15 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.*  
*Final Exercise!!***

Grading:                      Your grade will be based on the following factors:

Long Essay (1)	20%
Short Essays (3)	30%
Journal Questions	20%
Class Participation	10%
Short Oral Report	10%
Final Oral Exercise	10%

It is imperative that all work be submitted on time. Grades for late work will be reduced by 10 points unless lateness is caused by circumstances beyond the student's control (e.g. illness, family problems, etc.). Please speak with your professor for clarification of this policy.

Essay Questions

- Short essays should be approximately 2-3 typed pages in length.
- The long essay should be approximately 5-6 typed pages in length.
- Essays must be submitted on the dates due.
- All submissions are to be typed, double-spaced, carefully proofread, well organized, well written, and free from errors in spelling and punctuation.
- After evaluation by the Honors faculty, essays will be returned with preliminary grades and comments.
- Students will then be required to rewrite and resubmit their essays (except for the final two essays).
- Students are encouraged to use word processing equipment on original submissions and rewrites, as such equipment greatly facilitates the writing process. Word processing equipment is available at the Micro-computer Laboratories, located in the Campus Center (P), Luther Bonney Hall (P), and Bailey Hall (G).

Journal Submissions

Responses to journal questions should normally be 1 to 2 typed pages, unless otherwise indicated. Students should do all journal assignments on loose-leaf notebook paper so that they can be easily removed for submission and reinserted for future reflection. Often your journal 'entries' will be of use in working out your ideas for the next essay.

**\*The discussion questions are just options, and that class discussion may well move in different directions over the course of the term.\***

Short Oral Report

Each student will do a 5-6 minute oral presentation comparing the gospels of Matthew and John.

Oral Exercise:

Each student will make an oral presentation at the end of the course (the Saturday

before finals week). Discussion of and practice for the oral presentation will take place during the preceding weeks.

Enrichment

Films, speakers, and other activities related to the Activities course are scheduled throughout the semester. Students must attend whenever possible. See *weekly schedule below*.

## Weekly Schedule of ASSIGNMENTS

Week One	<b>Monday</b> <b>September 1</b>	<b>Labor Day</b> <b>NO CLASS</b>
	Wednesday September 3	Plato, <u>Apology</u> in <u>The Trials Socrates</u> Read Introduction as well Journal Question (JQ) #1 due in class
Week Two	Monday September 8	Plato, <u>Apology</u> (cont.) Short Essay #1 due in class
	Wednesday September 10	Homer, <u>Iliad</u> , Books 1,6,9 Draft of Short Essay #1 returned
Week Three	Wednesday September 15	Homer, <u>Iliad</u> , Books 16,18,19 JQ #2 due in class Rewrite of Short Essay #1 due in class
	Wednesday September 17	Homer, <u>Iliad</u> , Books 22, 23, 24
Week Four	Monday September 22	Sappho (complete) JQ #3 due in class
	Wednesday September 24	Aeschylus, <u>Agamemnon</u> Short Essay #2 due in class
Week Five	Monday	Aeschylus, <u>Libation Bearers</u> , <u>Eumenides</u>
	September 29	JQ #4 due in class Short Essay #2 returned
	Wednesday October 1	Sophocles, <u>Antigone</u>

Week Six	Monday October 6	Thucydides, <u>On Justice, Power &amp; Human Nature</u> Read Introduction, Funeral Oration, The Plague
	Wednesday October 8	Thucydides (continued) Read Melian Dialogue, Debate over Sicily Rewrite of Short Essay #1 due in class JQ #5 due in class
Week Seven	<b>Monday October 13</b>	<b>October Break No Class</b>
	Wednesday October 15	Aristophanes, <u>The Clouds</u>
Week Eight	Monday October 20	Euripides, <u>Medea</u>
	Wednesday October 22	Plato, <u>Symposium</u>
	Thursday October 23	Evening Lecture: Professor Jeannine Uzzi 7:00 PM, 44 Payson-Smith
Week Nine	Monday October 27	Plato, <u>Republic</u> , Books I, VII (Excerpts in Course Packet) JQ #6 due in class
	Wednesday October 29	Xenophon, <u>Apology</u> (Reconsider Plato's <u>Apology</u> )
Week Ten	Monday November 3	<u>Matthew</u> Long Essay #1 due in class
	Wednesday November 5	<u>Genesis 1-22</u> JQ #7 due in class
Week Eleven	Monday November 10	<u>Genesis</u> (cont.) Long Essay #1 returned
	Wednesday November 12	<u>Exodus</u> JQ #8 due in class

Week Twelve	Monday November 17	<u>Job</u> Rewrite of Long Essay #1 due in class
	Wednesday November 19	<u>Gospel of John</u>
Week Thirteen	Monday November 24	Short in-class speech
	<b>Wednesday November 26</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Vacation NO CLASS</b>
Week Fourteen	Monday December 1	<u>Gospel of Thomas</u> Choice of story for final oral presentation due in class
	Wednesday December 3	<u>Gospel of Mary</u> Short Essay #3 due in class (no rewrite)
Week Fifteen	Monday December 8	Oral Practices
	Wednesday December 10	Oral Practices
	<b>*** Saturday December 13 8:30am-1:30pm</b>	<b>Oral Presentations *** End-of-Semester Luncheon (Following presentations) Meet at Honors House</b>

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Study Guide

The Study Guide questions which follow are intended to assist you in reading the assigned texts and preparing for class. You should read the questions before you approach the text, keep them in mind as you read, and seek to articulate answers. You should be aware that all the texts you will read in this course are extremely rich in meaning and that the Study Guide questions raise only certain issues. Other questions will undoubtedly occur to you as you read. You should think about those questions too and be prepared to share your thoughts in class.

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A Few Thoughts On Reading:

Any literary document raises certain basic questions:

1. Who wrote it?
  - a. Sometimes the author is unknown
  - b. Sometimes documents are wrongly ascribed to a given author
  - c. Sometimes we get lucky

For example, consider who "Plato" is.

We think we know who this is. Textbooks give his parents names even: Ariston and Perictione--and the dates of his life: 429-347 B.C.E. But the name "Plato" is likely to be a nickname: i.e. "broad-shouldered." Who is he really?

Any author writes from a point of view which is shaped by the author's sex (and the gender roles assigned that sex in the author's society), education, political empowerment, social status, economic status, life experience, etc.

Who is "Plato"?  
What is "Plato"?

What can this document tell me about its author? about  
"Plato"?  
What kind of person was he? she?

2. When & where was this document written?

Does the document itself provide any clues? (i.e. fire as  
a light source, human "bearers" of images made of wood and  
stone, "chains" as fetters, etc.).

What language does Plato use?  
Are we reading the original?

Differences of time and culture as well as differences of  
language will have to be "translated."

3. Why was this document written?

Any author writes to an audience, real or imaginary. The  
nature of the audience affects the presentation just as  
much as the nature of the author.

Does the document itself reveal any clues about the  
document's audience and the document's purpose?

**Plato, Apology**  
**(September 3 and 8)**

**Journal Question #1 (due September 3)**

What are the "earliest" and the "later" charges against Socrates? What is the difference between them? Why does Socrates say it is so important to distinguish these two sets of charges and to deal with each separately? Finally, try to say in your own words what you think each of the "earliest" charges means.

Discussion Questions

(No need to write out answers)

1. What are we to make of Socrates' statements: "No one does wrong willingly"; "To be wise is to know that one does not know"; "Nothing can harm a good man either in life or after death"; and "The unexamined life is not worth living for a man?" For example: Do these statements make sense? Do you agree with them? If not, what shifts in the statement might make it possible for you to agree?
2. Socrates is charged with "corrupting the young." What does that mean? Is it fair to say that he has "corrupted" Athens?
3. Can you distinguish the political issues involved in Socrates' trial from the philosophical issues?
4. In the Apology Socrates gives an example wherein he disobeyed orders from the legal authority. Is this consistent with his obedience to the authority which condemned him to death?
5. "The true champion of justice, if he intends to survive even for a short time, must necessarily confine himself to private life and leave politics alone." What does that statement mean for Athens? Do you agree that justice and politics cannot safely co-exist?
6. This trial takes place within a context. What indications can be found in the text itself as to this background or context?

**Short Essay #1 (due September 8, rewrite due September 17)**

Do you think Socrates' defense is adequate?

**The Iliad, Book 1,6,9  
(September 10)**

Discussion Questions

1. What is heroic behavior as portrayed by Homer in Book 1 of the Iliad? How does this differ from our modern conceptions of the hero?
2. In what respects do the events on Mount Olympus reflect events on earth in Book 1?
3. Analyze the conversation between Hector and Andromache in Book 6. What values does Andromache represent and what does Hector stand for?
4. Look carefully at the two courses of action that are possible for Achilles in Book 9. Which would you choose, and why? Which should Achilles, acting as a Greek hero, choose, and why?

**The Iliad, Books 16, 18, 19  
(September 15)**

Discussion Questions

1. A number of events and characters lead up to the death of Patroklos. Enumerate these. In what sense is Patroklos responsible for his own death? How does Patroklos' personality compare/contrast with Achilles'?
2. In Book 16, note Achilles' attitude toward the other Argives. What does this tell you about what matters most to a Greek hero?
3. In Book 18, Achilles and Hector each have a strong reaction to the death of Patroklos. Compare and contrast these reactions: for example, how is that reaction consistent - or inconsistent - with our earlier impressions of that hero? Does either reaction surprise you? why?

**Journal Question #2 (due September 15)**

Socrates' defense speech articulates a code of values which differs in striking ways from the behavior of heroes in the Iliad. Identify **three** statements of Socrates which would not be uttered by heroes in the Iliad and discuss why such statements would be out of place in the Homeric world

**The Iliad, Books 22, 23, 24**  
**(September 17)**

Discussion Questions

1. Consider very carefully the assembly of the Greeks which Achilles summons to 'unsay' his wrath. Does Achilles 'apologize'? either in the Greek sense of 'a speech for the defense' or in our sense of 'apology'? Does Achilles and/or Agamemnon take responsibility for the quarrel? Is the story of Zeus and Ate ('blindness') meant to excuse the king for his actions or to explain those actions? After this assembly, is the Iliad still the story of 'the wrath of Achilles'? Why is Achilles no longer interested in the gifts or in Briseis? How does Odysseus persuade Achilles to let the army eat before fighting? What does it mean that Achilles himself refuses to eat?
2. How is Hector's decision in book 22 motivated by the decision he made in book 18? (You may also wish to consider his response to Andromache in book 6)
3. Could the Iliad have ended with the death of Hector (which avenges Patroklus' death)? How would it change the poem--in 'message', in tone and mood--if it ended with Book 22?
4. In what way does the story-pattern of the chariot-race--that is, expected winners, actual winners, quarrels over winning and over prizes, resolutions--repeat the story-pattern of the quarrel in Book I? How is the chariot-race's pattern different? Why, for example, don't Antilochus and Menelaus get into a quarrel as Achilles and Agamemnon did?
5. In the last 'game'/contest, (or 'no contest'), is Achilles, as master of ceremonies and sponsor of the Games, in a similar position to Agamemnon's as commander-in-chief of the Greeks in Book 1? How does Achilles' behavior in this contest differ from Agamemnon's behavior in Book I? Why?
6. In Book 24, what is the gods' reaction to Achilles' treatment of Hector's body? Is the response unanimous? What does the response reveal about the gods?
7. In Book 24, Achilles chooses to give Hector's body back to Priam. What accounts for this choice?

8. In the Iliad, Book 24, Achilles says, "We men are wretched things, and the gods, who have no cares themselves, have woven sorrow into the very pattern of our lives." Does this quotation reveal anything about Homer's view of human nature in general? Is Homer bitter about human nature? Does he feel tenderness toward human nature? Both? Does the epic poem you have read presage a longing for some sort of poetic justice? Explain your answer.

**Sappho, complete**  
**(September 22)**

**Journal Question #3 (due September 22)**

Choose your favorite poem in Sappho. What in the poem speaks so directly to you? What images do you find especially powerful and why?

Discussion Questions

1. From reading all Sappho's extant poems and fragments, what can you learn about the events of her life? About her economic and social context? About the historical events of her lifetime? About her family, friends, profession? (Imagine yourself writing a 2-3 paragraph account of Sappho for a Western Civilization textbook--what could you say are the facts about Sappho?)
2. Contrast Sappho's code of values with that expressed in the Iliad and with that articulated by Socrates. Does this comparison help us understand the relationship between man and woman in the ancient world?
3. Consider Sappho's attitude toward the divine. How does this differ from that seen in the Iliad?
4. How does Sappho use imagery in her poetry?

**Agamemnon**  
**(September 24)**

**Short Essay #2 (due September 24, rewrite due October 8)**

What, in your mind, is terrifying about this world of Agamemnon? How is this terror expressed in imagery? Be specific.

### Discussion Questions

1. What role does the chorus play at the beginning of the play?
2. Does Clytaemestra's speech ending with the phrase "Oh, let there be no fresh wrong done!" (line 346) ironically foreshadow the eventual outcome of the play? How?
3. What is the significance of the continual imagery of nets and yokes?
4. The chorus in this play claims that "wisdom comes through suffering." Who suffers in this play? Who gains wisdom?
5. "You can praise or blame me as you wish;/It is all one to me. That man is Agamemnon,/my husband; he is dead; the work of this right hand/that struck in strength of righteousness." Is Clytaemestra righteous? Can one make the argument that she is a hero?
6. What do you make of Agamemnon's statement to Clytaemestra, lines 919 ff: "Do not try in woman's ways to make me delicate, nor, as if I were some Asiatic bow down to earth and with wide mouth cry out to me....I tell you, as a man, not god, to reverence me."
7. "Let there spring up into the house he never hoped/to see, where Justice leads him in, a crimson path." What **is** justice?
8. How does Aegisthus address the chorus toward the end of the play? How does the chorus respond to him? What do they chastise him for? How does he "explain away" the charge? How do you think Aegisthus will act now that Agamemnon is dead? Do you approve?

**Aeschylus, Libation Bearers, Eumenides**  
**(September 29)**

**Journal Question #4 (due September 29)**

Take any two of the following female figures or groups from Aeschylus' trilogy – Clytaemestra, Iphigenia, Cassandra, Electra, the Furies, Athena. Describe the assumptions about women and women's roles in family and society which your two figures or groups suggest. Could another reader interpret the textual evidence (which you just used to prove your point) differently?

Discussion Questions

1. Apollo says, "Never, for man, woman, nor city, from my throne/of prophecy have I spoken a word, except/ that which Zeus, father of Olympians, might command./This is justice. Recognize then how great its strength./I tell you, follow our father's will. For not even/the oath that binds you is more strong than Zeus is strong." What do you think "justice" is? Is it intrinsically related to power? What does justice mean to a) the Furies, b) Orestes and Apollo, c) Athena?
2. What do the Furies mean by this statement: "Should the city, should the man rear a heart that nowhere goes in fear, how shall such a one any more respect the right" (line 522-525)? What are the implications of this position for the social order?
3. "The mother is no parent of that which is called/her child, but only nurse of the new-planted seed/that grows. The parent is he who mounts." Why does Apollo make this argument? What does it mean?
3. Compare the way Athena uses persuasion to convert the Furies into the kindly Ones with Socrates' attempt to "persuade" his jury.

**Sophocles, Antigone**  
**(October 1)**

Discussion questions for Antigone to be distributed in class.

**Thucydides, On Justice, Power and Human Nature**  
**Intro, Oration, Plague, Melos, Sicily**  
**(October 6, 8)**

Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe Thucydides' method of critical inquiry? How do the first chapters of Thucydides' History illustrate this method?
2. What is the significance of the boast that "any citizen or stranger" can participate in the funeral procession, and that women can also be present?
- 3.(a) In the Funeral Oration, consider the differences between Pericles' view of the community as teacher and Socrates' conviction that an individual expert is the best teacher.
- 3.(b) Consider the difference between Pericles' (and the Athenians') attitude toward politics (II.40) : "...we do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business; we say that he has no business here at all..." and Socrates' ("The true champion of justice...must necessarily confine himself to private life and leave politics alone").
4. Why do we find Thucydides' account of the plague in Athens immediately after the Funeral Oration? (don't stop thinking once you have one answer!)
5. Why do people ever "persevere in what men call honor" (II.53)? What makes ethical and moral codes work?
6. How would you characterize the Melian position in their "debate" with the Athenians? Why don't the Athenians want to discuss justice?

<b>Journal Question #5 (due October 8)</b>
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Design a poster which conveys your perception of how the high ideals of the funeral oration of Pericles contrast with the argument given by the Athenians at Melos.

**\*\*NO CLASS MONDAY OCTOBER 13: October Break\*\***

**Aristophanes, The Clouds  
(October 15)**

Discussion Questions

1. The Clouds reflects a crisis in values in Athens. Define and describe the two "sides" of the conflict. Could the crisis have anything to do with the Peloponnesian War?
2. At the time of the play, Athens has effectively been at war, of one sort or another, for over 70 years. In what ways might this military experience have influenced, exacerbated, or brought about a crisis in values?
3. In the debate between Mr. Right (Dikaios logos) & Mr. Wrong (Adikos logos), do you see any connections between Mr. Right's arguments and the ideas/values portrayed in your readings in Homer and Aeschylus? Do you see any connections between either arguments and the Sophists? or Socrates? (cf. Apology, Crito). Can you tell which side of this argument Aristophanes would side with?
4. Does Aristophanes portray Socrates as the "villain" of the play?
5. What effects does education have on Pheidippides? What is the purpose of education? in your eyes? in Aristophanes' view? (in Socrates' eyes? **whose** Socrates?!)

**Euripides, Bacchae  
(October 20)**

Questions on Bacchae will be distributed in class.

**Plato, Symposium  
(October 22)**

Discussion Questions

Questions on Symposium will be distributed in class.

**Plato, Republic**  
**Book VII, Parable of the Cave**  
**(October 27)**

**Journal Question #6 (due October 27)**

Bring something to class that you consider a "cave"-like shadow image - use found objects from popular culture, news, political advertising, or something you make on your own.

1. Provide an interpretation of the detail in the myth of the cave. For example, what is the wall, who are the puppeteers, why are the prisoners bound at neck and legs, etc.
2. Can you fit the allegory of the cave to the image of the divided line?
3. What implications do the ideas Plato expresses in the divided line image and the allegory of the cave have for politics? For ethics? For living?
4. To what degree does this alternate account of the trial of Socrates confirm or challenge your view of his innocence or guilt? Why?

**Xenophon, Apology**  
**(October 29)**

Reconsider Plato's Apology.

**Matthew**  
**(November 3)**

**Long Essay (due November 3, rewrite due Nov. 17)**

Since the beginning of the course, we have been examining the historical context in which the trial of Socrates took place. Show in detail how your improved understanding of this context has affected your view of his innocence or guilt.

**Discussion Questions**

1. People often define our culture as having predominantly Christian values. Look at your own values, or generalize about those of the culture around you. Where do they

concur with the ethical teaching you find in Matthew, and where do they differ?

2. In what ways does Jesus seem to be similar in his values, his style of teaching, his overall career or life-story, etc., to Socrates; and in what ways does Jesus seem different?

**Journal Question #7 (due November 5)**

Was Jesus a social revolutionary or not? Answer this question for yourself, supporting your view with specific evidence from Matthew.

**Genesis**  
**(November 5, 10)**

Discussion Questions

1. What reason does God give for forbidding the tasting of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil? Why does God bar Adam and Eve from the Garden after they have eaten the forbidden fruit? How do you reconcile God's reasons in these two events? In other words, what is taking place in this story?
2. "They said to Pharaoh, 'We have come to reside as aliens in the land.'" (47.4). What is the significance of "alien" status in Genesis? How are membership or "home" defined?
3. The story of God's covenant with Abraham serves as a key event in the history of Israel, in a sense their starting point as God's chosen people. What does God promise Abraham? What does Abraham do to deserve this? Describe God's relationship with Abraham using several specific examples. [By the way, is it Abram or Abraham? When does it change? Why?]
4. Why is God so noticeably absent from the story of Joseph?

**Exodus**  
**(November 12)**

**Journal Question #8 (due November 12)**

In as many aspects as occur to you, compare and contrast the demand for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac with the demand for Agamemnon to sacrifice Iphigenia.

### Discussion Questions

1. In Homer's Iliad we saw a pantheon of gods playing a part in the outcome of the Trojan War. In Exodus, Yahweh is also involved in a human struggle. Compare the two events and the different divinities. What different concepts of "fate" and "justice" and divine-human relations are conveyed by each story?
2. In Exodus, God makes a covenant with the people of Israel, though he calls them a "stiff-necked people." From studying Israel's experiences in the desert, how would you describe the relationship between God and Israel? What role does Moses play? What does God do for Israel? What must they do in return?

**Job complete**

**(November 17)**

**Revision of Long Essay due in class!**

### Discussion Questions

1. Compare the depiction of Yahweh in Job with that in Exodus. How might the differences reflect the different attitudes and experiences of the authors?
2. What ideas of 'justice' do you find in Yahweh's actions, and in the exchanges Job has with his three - no, four - friends. Try working out a brief summary of each of Job's friends' reproofs or encouragements - and of Job's replies to each of them.

If you can, use this format [a syllogism] for your summaries;

"All cats are black.	Example: God is just
This creature is a cat.	Job is suffering
Therefore it is black."	Therefore Job is guilty.

(P.S. The phrase "Job's comforters" has come down in English; its usual connotation is 'not very comforting'. Why do you think this meaning may have persisted in our daily speech?)

3. At the conclusion of Job's conversation with his friends, he calls on God to answer him. What, in your own words, is Job's question? How does God answer? ('how' can have several different meanings.)
4. Would it be possible to understand the book Job as a portrait not of one man's misfortunes but as a portrait of a nation's misfortunes? What might such a portrait be conveying? what issues might it be working out? Afterthought: From what you know of the Greeks, would the Athenians have written the book of Job during [for example] the time of the Peloponnesian War?

**The Gospel of John complete**  
**(Nov. 19)**

Discussion Questions

1. Compare the opening verses of John's Gospel with the first two chapters of Matthew and the beginning of Genesis. What are some specific differences? What may these differences imply?
2. Are the miracles of Jesus introduced, narrated or interpreted differently in John and Matthew?
3. How would you describe Jesus' "teaching style" in each of these gospels?
4. What textual evidence can you find to suggest that Matthew and John are writing for different audiences? (Consider, for example, the two different openings - or the different treatments of miracles, - or consider what (events, discourses, ideas) you find in John's account but not in Matthew's.
5. As described in the Gospel of John is Pontius Pilate a sympathetic character? Was he in Matthew's Gospel?

**Short Speech**  
**(November 24)**

**Short Speech (due November 24)**

Compare in detail the portrayals of Jesus in Matthew and John. To what degree do these texts agree/disagree concerning the life, teaching style, message, and trial of Jesus?

*Each student will present this topic as a FIVE-SIX minute oral presentation on Wednesday, Nov. 29 in class.*

**\*\*NO CLASS WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 26: Thanksgiving Break\*\***

**Oral Presentation Proposal (due December 1)**

You will need to provide a short one-page proposal on your choice of story for the final oral assignment on December 11.

**Short Essay #3 (due December 3, no rewrite)**

The question for this assignment will be distributed in class.

**The Gospel of Thomas**  
**(December 1)**

Discussion Questions

1. Is the Jesus of Thomas very different from the Jesus of the Canonical Gospels? He tells some of the same stories; do you think the meaning of them is different here?
2. Why should the Apostles "become passersby"?
3. In Thomas 3, Jesus tells the Apostles, "the Kingdom is inside you and outside you. When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you live in poverty and you are poverty." How do people know themselves, according to the author? Is this injunction comparable to the "know thyself" of Plato's Socrates?
4. Why are these "secret sayings"?

**The Gospel of Mary**  
**(December 3)**

Questions on The Gospel of Mary will be distributed in class.

**Wednesday, December 8, 10**  
**In Class Presentation of Oral Speeches**

Failure to present oral speech by this date  
in **complete** form  
will result in a **10 point deduction** for late work

**HON 101 Oral Assignment**  
**(December 13)**

"I don't think it would have got me down if just once in a while--just once in a while--there was at least some polite little perfunctory implication that knowledge should lead to wisdom, and that if it doesn't, it's just a disgusting waste of time. But there never is! You never ever hear any hints dropped on campus that wisdom is supposed to be the goal of knowledge. You hardly ever hear the word "wisdom" mentioned."

-Franny Glass in Salinger's Franny and Zooey

**The Assignment**

Throughout the course of this semester, we have read a variety of texts which were regarded as wisdom stories in their particular cultures. But as you also know from the readings, notions of what wisdom is, and what it entails in terms of the conduct of human lives, vary greatly.

For your oral assignment, we ask you to choose one story among those we have studied and to prepare a ten to fifteen minute talk about why you find this particular story of help in terms of your own search for wisdom. Your talk should specifically examine the concept of wisdom contained in the story, as well as the implications of this concept in terms of your own life.

You will be asked to present your ideas to a group of faculty and students from Honors 101, as well as a few invited guests, and to respond to their questions.

You will be graded on your ability to present a coherent talk, to speak clearly, and to respond to questions from the audience.

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The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 mandates the elimination of discrimination against persons with disabilities.

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of disability, please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities, located in Luther Bonney 242. Phone number 780-4706; TTY 780-4395.