

Professor Warner
Spring 2013
Roosevelt University
ACP 110-99 (Honors), Primary Texts

Course Description

What should be most important for us to understand is perhaps more than anything else most shrouded in darkness, namely, what it means to be human. It seems as if the matter is straightforward enough: just look within. However, the fundamental character of our humanity proves very difficult to catch even a glimpse of. One mark of a book of the utmost importance is its capacity, in the face of grave difficulties, to make us think deeply about what it means to be human, to excite our sense of wonder, to unsettle and disturb us by challenging our natural complacency, and even—in the best of all worlds—to reveal something profound about the human condition. Hoping that the importance of such an understanding is apparent, we will be reading a variety of books that many have thought are among the greatest books ever written. Their greatness becomes visible only if one is willing to read both very carefully and very critically—otherwise they will seem no different from any common book. In one way or another, the books we will be reading concern two difficulties: the problem of coming to know the world; and the problem of coming to know oneself. These are not the only issues we will be canvassing, but they usually will be lurking around most of our corners.

Books

Sophocles, *Antigone, Women of Trachis, Philoctetes, Oedipus at Colonus* (Harvard University Press)

West and West (translators), *Four Texts on Socrates* (Cornell University Press)

Robert Alter (translator), *The Wisdom Books* (W.W. Norton & Company)

Shakespeare, *King Lear* (Arden Shakespeare)

Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (Focus Publishing)

Reading Assignments and Due Dates for Writing Assignments

January 14	<i>Antigone</i> , 1-331 (lines)
January 16	<i>Antigone</i> , 332-630
January 23	<i>Antigone</i> , 631-987
January 28	<i>Antigone</i> , 988-1353
January 30	<i>Apology of Socrates</i> , 17a-20e (Stephanus pagination)
February 4	<i>Apology of Socrates</i> , 21a-27d

February 6	<i>Apology of Socrates, 27e-35d</i>
February 11	<i>Apology of Socrates, 35e-42a</i>
February 13	<i>Book of Job, 1-14 (chapters)</i>
February 18	<i>Book of Job, 15-26</i>
February 20	<i>Book of Job, 27-42</i>
February 25	<i>King Lear, Act I</i>
February 27	<i>King Lear, Act II</i>
March 4	<i>King Lear, Act III</i>
March 6	<i>King Lear, Act III and Act IV</i>
March 11	<i>King Lear, Act IV</i>
March 13	<i>King Lear, Act V</i>
March 25	Descartes, Part 1
March 25	Last day to withdraw from class with a grade of "W"
March 27	Descartes, Part 1
April 1	Descartes, Part 2
April 8	Descartes, Part 2
April 10	Descartes, Part 3
April 15	Descartes, Part 3
April 17	Descartes, Part 4
April 22	Descartes, Part 4 and Part 5
April 24	Descartes, Part 6