

CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

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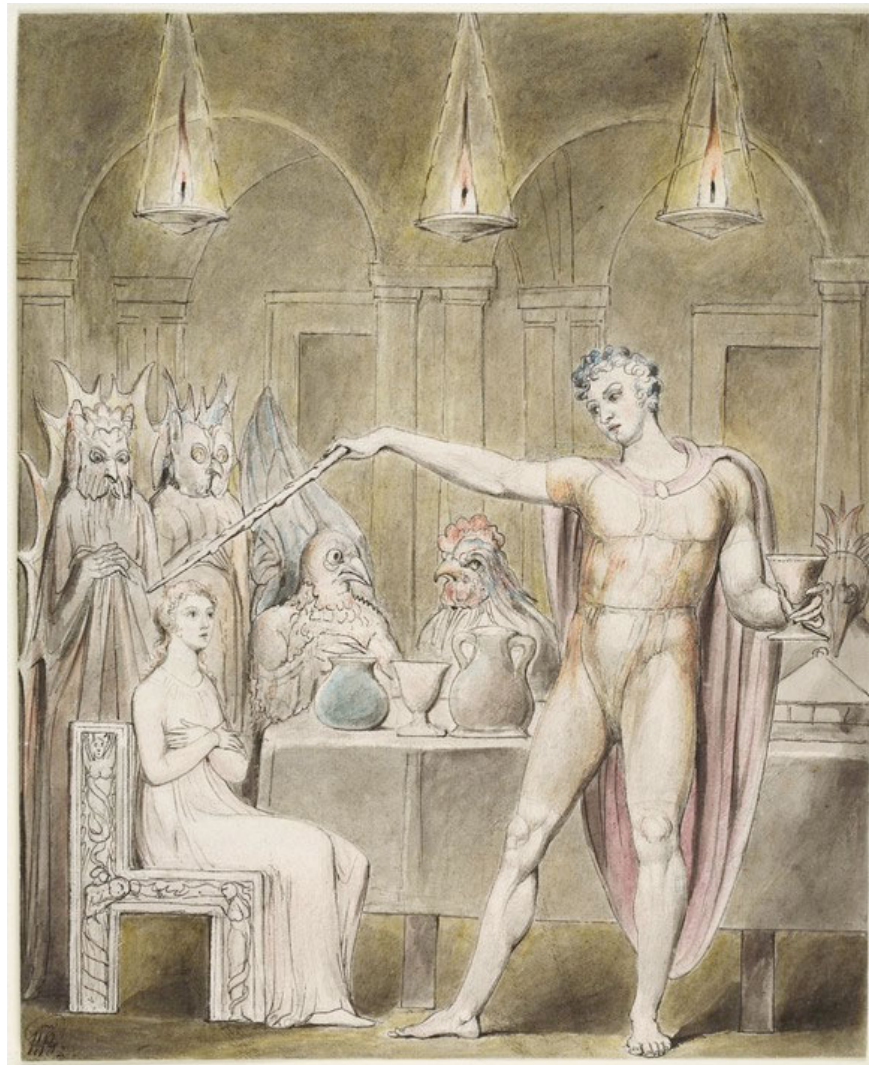
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COURSE SYLLABUS

ECON-ENG-PHIL 357

Interterm 2023

Topics in Humanomics: Inventing the Individual



Catalog Description:

Prerequisites: Permission of instructors.

The modern world tends to think that commerce requires us to be ruthlessly self-interested. Where did the idea of the individual self, distinct from family or clan, come from? And must the self pursue their own interest in commerce ruthlessly? This course dialogically explores the political philosopher Larry Siedentop's *Inventing the Individual*, the economic historian Deirdre McCloskey's *The Bourgeois Virtues*, the anonymous medieval epic poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, John Milton's *Comus*, and Andrej Sapkowski's modern fantasy *The Last Wish* to shape one of the most fundamental concepts of modern human sociality—the Individual. How did the idea of the Individual emerge in the Middle Ages? When the Age of Commerce supplanted the ancient Age of the Aristocracy, how did the bourgeois ethic of the Individual differ from the aristocratic class of virtues? How does art situated at the crux of the old aristocratic order and the new bourgeois age invite us to witness the emergence of the bourgeois Individual? And finally, how does the form of a modern fantasy story embody a bourgeois interpretation of that same chivalric art?

Humanomics classes (like this one) adopt a distinctively interdisciplinary approach. Throughout the term, we will address these questions through the lenses of economics, philosophy, and art. We will not just ask what these disciplines have to say about our topic independently of one another; we will also ask how these disciplines interact, enrich each other, and have unique ways of capturing parts of reality. The overarching idea is that there are many ways of expressing important ideas and that focusing on any one form of expression (social scientific, philosophical, artistic) in isolation is bound to leave important aspects of those ideas unstated, or incompletely expressed. Moreover, by working with media situated in a variety of historical contexts, we will necessarily ask why a set of ideas have been expressed in different ways in different times and places, and how this form of expression affects what's being said.

(Offered Interterm.) 3 credits. (AI, SI, VI)

Artistic Inquiry Learning Outcome

Composes critical or creative works that embody or analyze conceptually an artistic form at a baccalaureate / pre-professional level.

Social Inquiry Learning Outcome

Students identify, frame and analyze social and/or historical structures and institutions in the world today.

Values and Ethics Inquiry Learning Outcome

Students articulate how values and ethics inform human understanding, structures, and behavior.

Program Learning Outcomes (Economics):

- Knowledge of Economics: Each student will demonstrate knowledge of modern microeconomic theory and apply it to analyze economic policies and problems.
- Communication: Each student will be able to communicate clearly, concisely and professionally in both written and oral forms.

Program Learning Outcomes (English):

- Skill in critical reading, or the practice of identifying and interpreting the formal, rhetorical, and stylistic features of a text.
- Skill in crafting a compelling thesis-driven essay, with substantiating evidence.

Program Learning Outcomes (Philosophy):

- Critical Reasoning: Ability to construct and analyze complex arguments and distinguish good reasoning from bad.
- Ethical Reasoning: Ability to reason logically, effectively, and respectfully about ethical matters.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate Siedentop's theory of the emergence of the individual.
2. Explain McCloskey's argument how commerce does not require "screw-you individualism," but instead "nourishes lives of virtue".
3. Analyze critically the medieval poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the masque *Comus*.
4. Integrate Siedentop's concept of the individual and McCloskey's bourgeois ethics into an idea applicable to economics.
5. Compose a creative fantasy story using Siedentop's and McCloskey's ideas.
6. Challenge and deconstruct the perceived tension between economics and the humanities.
7. Ask cogent, thought-provoking questions based upon critical reading of texts across a range of genres—medieval epic poem, modern fantasy story, and philosophical and economic nonfiction.

Required Texts:

Armitage, Simon (translator). *Sir Gawain the Green Knight*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2008. ISBN: 9780393334159.

McCloskey, Deirdre N. *The Bourgeois Virtues: Ethics for an Age of Commerce*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN: 9780226556642.

Milton, John. *Comus and Other Poems*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. ISBN: 9781107492356.

Sapkowski, Andrej. *The Last Wish: Introducing the Witcher*. New York: Orbit, 2017. ISBN: 9780316438964.

Siedentop, Larry. *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2017. ISBN: 9780674979888.

Essential Facility:
Seminar setting

Instructional Methods:

This course uses a combination of hands-on learning in Socratic roundtable discussions of texts, writing workshops, question development, and the discovery of meaning through expository and creative papers.

Evaluation:

1. *Participation in Class Discussions* [20%]

Class discussion provides an opportunity for students to explore questions about exchange and the human condition, challenging the common perception of economics as distinct from the humanities. Through this shared inquiry, students gain experience reading for meaning and communicating complex ideas; thinking reflectively about an interpretive problem; and supporting and testing thoughts through dialogue with peers. Class discussion fosters the flexibility of mind to consider problems from multiple perspectives and the ability to analyze ideas critically. Students must enter the discussion with specific questions generated by all of our texts as well as a desire to probe and reevaluate ideas. It is essential that students bring texts and questions to each class session.

2. *Written Questions* [15%]

Shared inquiry is a process for exploring the central ideas of the course. This means students must read for meaning, identifying possible interpretative problems they would like to address in discussion. For each class period with an assignment, students will word process in advance two questions to be handed in before class starts. Asking a good question is harder than providing a good answer. The student's task is to delve into a claim that doesn't appear correct or consistent with the human condition. Explore with your question why the claim is surprising, unexpected, just plain unsettling. Why is there a clash? Such questions will prepare the student for their daily writing. Due in class Dropbox folder by 9:00 a.m. (sharp) the day of class.

3. *Writer's Workshop* [14%]

Each day for the second hour of the course students will write 250 polished words. For the first two weeks, a daily essay will either (1) analyze the social structures of individualism and virtue in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Siedentop, and McCloskey; (2) analyze critically *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*; or (3) articulate how values and ethics inform our understanding of the Individual. [7 essays @ 2%/essay]

4. *Expository and Creative Writing* [36%]

For the third week, the three daily writings will culminate in an expository essay on individualism and bourgeois ethics using ideas from both Siedentop and McCloskey. [1 essay @ 18%]

For the fourth week the three daily writings will culminate in a creative fantasy story inspired by an argument in Siedentop and McCloskey that embodies the short story form as exemplified by Sapkowski. [1 essay @ 18%]

5. *Oral Final Examination* [15%]

The oral final examination will involve dice. Other details will be discussed in the final week of the course.

Because of the interactive nature of the class, attendance is an essential component. Excessive tardies constitute absences; *three* absences may result in failure (Undergraduate Catalog, “Academic Policies and Procedures”). Please keep this in mind. Missed in-class work cannot be made up.

Academic Integrity Policy

Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the University Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University's policy on Academic Integrity at:

<https://www.chapman.edu/academics/academic-integrity/index.aspx>.

Students with Disabilities Policy

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516–4520 or visit

<https://www.chapman.edu/students/health-and-safety/disability-services/index.aspx> if you have questions regarding this procedure or for information or to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Equity and Diversity Policy

Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy. Please see the full description of this policy at <http://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/eoo.aspx>

Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the dean of students and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.

Prepared by: Katharine Gillespie Moses & Bart J. Wilson, Fall, 2021

Last revised by: Katharine Gillespie Moses & Bart J. Wilson, Fall, 2022

Tentative Course Schedule and Outline

	<i>Inventing the Individual</i>	<i>The Bourgeois Virtues</i>	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>	<i>Comus</i>	<i>The Last Wish</i>
T, 1/3	Prologue, Chs. 1-3	Apology			
W, 1/4	Chs. 4-8		Fits I-II		
R, 1/5	Chs. 9-12	Chs. 1-3, 26, 28, 31			
M, 1/9		Chs. 4-6	Fit III		
T, 1/10	Chs. 13-16	Chs. 7-10			
W, 1/11		Chs. 11-12, 14-15	Fit IV		
R, 1/12	Chs. 17-20	Chs. 16-20			
M, 1/16			MLK Holiday		
T, 1/17	Chs. 21-22, 23-24				
W, 1/18		Chs. 21, 24-25			<i>The Witcher</i> <i>A Grain of Truth</i>
R, 1/19					<i>The Lesser Evil</i> <i>A Question of Price</i>
M, 1/23		Chs. 38-43		Part I	
T, 1/24	Chs. 25, Epilogue			Part II	
W, 1/25					<i>The Edge of the World</i> <i>The Last Wish</i>
R, 1/26			Oral Final Exam		