

Political Science 87
Professor Kaare Strøm
Social Science Bldg 107
Office Hours: T 2-3, W 3:30-4:30, and by app't
Phone: (858) 534-0793

Fall Quarter 2011
Mon 1 - 2:50
September 26 – October 31
Office: 384 Social Science
E-mail: kstrom@ucsd.edu

POWER IN FICTION

Objectives

Power is a crucial aspect of politics. Indeed, many political scientists define their discipline as the study of power. Many individuals and groups seek power, and power can be pursued, used, and abused in various ways. This course will explore four prominent works of fiction, set in different societies and times. The objective of the course is through reading and discussion of these books to develop a better understanding of the pursuit, uses, and abuses of power.

Approach

This is a freshman seminar, with prerequisites. There will be five seminar meetings. Class attendance is required, and except for the first day of class you should come to class prepared to discuss the literature assigned for that day. During our initial meeting we shall explore the nature of power and its uses and abuses. The remaining seminar meetings will explore four works of fiction. You will have to write a brief discussion paper (1000 words or more) on one of these readings. The generic paper topic is: "How this book/play helps me understand the pursuit, use, and abuse of power." Papers are due no later than 9am the day (Monday) we discuss the book in class, or preferably earlier. They should be handed in or left in an envelope outside my office (SSB 384). You may wish to revise your paper after the class meeting, and final papers are due by Monday, November 7. All dates and class schedules are subject to change through announcement in class. **NOTE: There will be no class meeting on October 17.**

Books and Materials

The following books have been ordered by the bookstore:

Chinua Achebe, *A Man of the People*

Henrik Ibsen, *An Enemy of the People*

C. P. Snow, *The Masters*

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*

Paperback editions are available through the bookstore, but you should feel free to use any edition you can find. All readings will also be placed on library reserve.

Calendar

September 26: INTRODUCTION: POWER, POLITICS, AND FICTION

Readings:

Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*. Prentice-Hall 1963, ch. 5 ("Power and Influence").

John Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness*. University of Illinois Press 1982, ch. 1 ("Power and Participation").

October 3: SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

Reading: Ibsen

October 10: CHALLENGING POWER

Reading: Achebe

NOTE: No class on October 17.

October 24: ABUSE AND POWERLESSNESS

Reading: Solzhenitsyn

October 31: SEEKING POWER THROUGH BARGAINING AND PERSUASION

Reading: Snow