

Spring 2007

History of Philanthropy in the West
History H415 (26105)/History H509 (26106)

Time: Wednesdays: 6:00-8:40 p.m.
Place: CA 217

Instructor: Dr. Kevin C. Robbins
Associate Professor, History
Office: 503Q Cavanaugh Hall
Office Phone: 317-274-5819
FAX: 317-278-7800
E-Mail: krobbin1@iupui.edu
Office Hours: T/Th. 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.
(and By Appointment.)

Course Description: This seminar will investigate the socio-economic, socio-political, and socio-cultural dimensions of philanthropic activity within the context of Western Civilization from the ancient world to early modern times (circa 1900). This course seeks to question constantly what meanings historic actors assigned to the term "philanthropy" and how the changing conceptions of this term shaped regimes of charitable action over time. We will constantly explore the overt and covert connections between philanthropic activity, social status hierarchies, power structures, ethical norms, and the agencies of government and police across time. Students will be encouraged to investigate historic incidences of philanthropy as equally capable of fostering and impeding what might be termed "positive" or "progressive" change. "Philanthropy's" modes run the gamut from subversive to coercive, liberating to debilitating., empowering to dis-empowering.

The class will also examine both the history and the historiography of philanthropy, what types of charitable or voluntary service occurred in past time and what sources of information and methods of analysis historians apply to comprehend and critique past regimes of philanthropy. Identifying such "regimes" or distinct systems of philanthropic activity over time and the points or forces of transition between them will be among our key objectives. Vital catalytic forces manifest in historic philanthropy and requiring close attention in this class include: rationalism, nationalism, and capitalism. Studying the ramifications of rationalized, nationalized, and capitalized charity or philanthropy will be crucial here. Students must work diligently to track and comprehend the development of "scientific philanthropy," an early modern mutation of European and American conceptions of charity that remains to this day the reigning or hegemonic conception of the subject. Students, as "scientific philanthropists" in training, need absolutely to know the origins of the historic philanthropic regime that molds their current training and essentially determines their future working existence. Thus, students should never conceive of this class as some mere embellishment or historical "add-on" to the university curriculum in philanthropic studies--a class somehow useless or inapplicable to the "professional" practice of philanthropy today. It would be a gross error to construe this course as somehow unrelated or inconsequential to the modern, "professional" practice of philanthropy. The course is precisely intended to show attentive students where that modern regime of philanthropy originated. Students will learn what the costs and benefits of that development have been, especially with regard to the ancient regimes of philanthropy eclipsed or totally destroyed by

the determined advocates of a rationalized, nationalized, and capitalized "science" of philanthropy.

From the outset of this course, all students should regard all definitions of "charity" or "philanthropy" as open and provisional, subject to deconstruction and revision in light of each reading assigned. **Students should firmly put aside all modern definitions and preconceived notions of what "philanthropy" can or should mean (modern definitions of the term tend to be extremely limited, mutilated, truncated, and ahistorical). It is essential to watch for shifting historic meanings for "philanthropy" and all related terms in course readings.** The historic repertoire of "philanthropies" is very diverse. An initial working definition of "philanthropy" for this course (subject to continual criticism and revision) might be: "Individual or collective action, imposed, incumbent, or voluntary on the part of donors, intended to enhance public order." We will work together to investigate the full social, political, and cultural implications of this formulation of "philanthropy."

Regular course meetings will be divided into brief lectures by the instructor and extensive class discussions of the assigned readings. All students are expected to complete all readings **by the date on which the readings are listed** in the Course Outline and Assignments shown below. Students must come to class fully prepared to share their informed opinions about the readings they have accomplished. The instructor will regularly question and call upon individual students to give their opinions about readings and themes of analysis encountered. **Be Prepared! And Don't be Shy! Speak Up!** Class discussions will focus on the sources, methods of argument, main contentions, and conclusions of the authors read.

Course Readings: Readings for this seminar will be taken from a mixture of texts for purchase in the IUPUI bookstore (or from other bookshops and online book dealers) and sources to be distributed to students by the instructor in advance and in class. **Sources to be distributed in class are marked below in the course outline with two asterisks (**).** Students are also expected to have their own scholarly edition of the Bible for the readings assigned. The Standard Revised Edition from Oxford University Press is strongly recommended but not required. This reading list, that combines both original historic sources and secondary or interpretive works, is designed to familiarize students interested in philanthropy with the wide array of historical materials bearing on and illuminating the subject and its human repercussions, ancient and modern. Readings for the course this year include one of the greatest original Roman treatises on the politics, psychology, and morality of giving (Seneca) and such curious historic philanthropic artifacts as eighteenth-century French public and private condemnations of all endowed foundations. Students should be constantly alert to the variety of media, textual and otherwise, through which "philanthropy" has been historically defined, debated, attacked, and reformed. **Class texts for sale** and in order of use are:

Seneca. *Moral Essays*, Vol. III, "On Benefits." Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1989 [1935]. ISBN: 0-674-99343

Brown, Peter. *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*. University Press of New England, 2002. ISBN: 1-58465-146-6

- Cavallo, Sandra. *Charity and Power in early Modern Italy: Benefactors and Their Motives in Turin 1541-1789*. Cambridge University Press, 1995. ISBN: 0-521-48333-6.
- Lindberg, Carter. *Beyond Charity: Reformation Initiatives for the Poor*. Fortress Press, 1993. ISBN: 0-8006-2569-2.
- Starobinski, Jean. *Largesse*. University of Chicago Press, 1997. ISBN: 0-226-77136-9.
- Himmelfarb, Gertrude. *Poverty and Compassion: The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians*. Vintage Books, 1991. ISBN: 0-679-74173-9.

All students should have their own copies of all class texts. Students purchasing books online should get exactly the copies and editions mentioned above and get them at once..

Requirements: Undergraduates: Regular class attendance (two unexcused absences will lower your final mark by an entire grade). Thorough completion of all reading assignments by the date they are due. Informed participation in all class discussions. Two papers of medium length (8 to 10 pages) on topics assigned by the instructor and drawn from class readings assignments. **Graduate Students:** As above, except that in place of the second paper all graduate students will prepare a research paper (20 pages minimum) on a specific document or source addressing the history of philanthropy and approved in advance by the instructor. This document or documents will be analyzed and evaluated in relation to the major themes and problems developed by the course. American conceptions of “philanthropy” being exceptionally ethnocentric, nationalistic, and historically ignorant, United States’ sources are **not** acceptable for this exercise. The instructor will provide graduate students with a sample list of acceptable possible documents including both great works of literature, philosophy, and the social sciences (e.g. Cicero's *On Duties*) and original source materials such as the British serial publication all about philanthropy and "modern" charity: *Transactions of the Society for the Promotion of Social Science*. In preparation for this research paper, each graduate student will also complete an annotated bibliography on the topic to include no fewer than twenty (20) items. This collection may only include works that the student has actually read and can intelligently comment upon and will cite for factual or methodological additions to his or her research paper. Annotations should address both the value of the historic information the text conveys and the especially helpful methods of analysis or patterns of questions it contains useful in the student’s own research work and writing. Students unfamiliar with the exact format of an annotated bibliography should consult the instructor.

Grading: Undergraduates: first paper 25% of final grade, Second paper 55% of final grade. Course participation, 20% of final grade. **Graduate Students:** First paper 15% of final mark, annotated bibliography 20% of final grade, research paper 45% of final grade, class participation 20% of final mark. No exams are scheduled for this course.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments
(N.B. All Readings to be Completed by the Date Assigned.)

Wed. 1/10 Course Introduction. Distribution and discussion of syllabus. What is the history of philanthropy? How can it be done? Organization and distribution of the Veyne reading.

- Wed. 1/17 Readings: (**) Paul Veyne, *Bread and Circuses: The Historical Sociology of Political Pluralism*, Introduction and Chapters 1-2, pp. vii-xxii and 1-156. Lecture/Discussion: Philanthropy (euergetism) in the society, politics, and culture of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Philanthropy as a "trap" of voluntarism and compulsion in which donors are "caught."
- Wed. 1/ 24 Readings: (**) Paul Veyne, *Bread and Circuses*, Chapter 3, pp. 201-291. Discussion: Innovations in Roman philanthropic practices and the politics of benevolence (or why giving gladiators is a charitable act).
Graduate Research Paper Topics Must be Confirmed by this Date.
- Wed. 1/31 Readings: Seneca, *Moral Essays*, Vol. III, *De beneficiis* ("On Benefits"). Books I-IV, pp. 3-289 (N.B. This is an interleaved translation with Latin and English on facing pages. Reading assignment in English is thus one-half of the full page amount shown above. Discussion: The Political, Moral, and Psychological Economies of Roman Benevolence (or why ancient philanthropy is a head game in which donors must scrutinize all charitable acts and recipients).
- Wed. 2/7 Readings: Bible, Book of Deuteronomy, Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, Acts of the Apostles, Epistles of Paul to the Romans, 1st Epistle to Corinthians, and 1st Epistle to Timothy. Lecture/Discussion: The Jewish law of charity and the radical indoctrination of an early Christian charitable ethic.
First Paper Topics to be Distributed in Class.
Readings for Feb. 14 to be Distributed in Class.
- Wed. 2/14 Readings: (**) Clement of Alexandria: "The Rich Man's Salvation," Saint Cyprian, "Works and Almsgiving," and Saint John Chrysostom, "A Sermon on Almsgiving." Lecture/Discussion: Another late antique Christian doctrine of charity and the selfish empowerment of donors (or What Would Jesus Do??).
- Wed. 2/21 Readings: Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire*, Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-112. Lecture/Discussion: Christian bishops and their philanthropico-power-political motives for loving the poor (or what do big boy donors with serious inferiority complexes and major power-envy really want their philanthropy to accomplish?)
First Paper Due Back in Class. No Exceptions.
Readings for Feb. 28 to be Distributed in Class.
- Wed. 2/28 Readings: (**) Ronald Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence*, Chaps. 1-2, pp. ix-xii and 1-105. Lecture/Discussion: The lay confraternity as the supreme vehicle of popular piety and charity in late medieval times. The psycho-social benefits of voluntary service in male confraternities.
- Wed. 3/7 Readings: Snadra Cavallo, *Charity and Power in Early Modern Italy*. Introduction and Chaps. 1-3, pp. 1-152. Lecture/Discussion: The culture and politics of urban philanthropy in early modern Europe. Conspicuous philanthropy and elite status wars.

Spring Break. Spring Break. (3/12-3/18) No Class. No Class. No Class.

Wed. 3/21 Readings: Sandra Cavallo, *Charity and Power in Early Modern Italy*. Chaps. 4-6, pp. 153-257.

Lecture/Discussion: civic culture, municipal power politics, and the roles of women's philanthropy in the early modern metropolis. Charitable institutions and the socio-economic empowerment of female donors. The history of philanthropy richly informs the history of women.

Wed. 3/28 Readings: Carter Lindberg, *Beyond Charity: Reformation Initiatives for the Poor*, Introduction and Chapters 1-2, Chapter 3 to page 145 only, and Chapter 4, pp. 1-145 and pp. 161-169. Consult also select documents in Part Two.

Lecture/Discussion: What does Protestantism do to philanthropy? (Are Lutherans uncharitable? Do Calvinists care less? You decide.)

**Undergraduate Second Paper Topic to be Confirmed by This Date.
Graduate Annotated Bibliographies Due in Class. No Exceptions.**

Wed. 4/4 Readings: Jean Starobinski, *Largesse*. Chapters 1-6, pp. 1-160 and "Texts on the Gift," pp. 161-173. Lecture/Discussion: the European visual culture of philanthropy and picturing the sentiment of care. The visible emotions of charity.

Readings for April 11 and 18 to be distributed in class.

Wed. 4/11 Readings: (**) Donna Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police: London Charity in the Eighteenth Century*, Introduction and Chapters 1-3, pp. 3-97.

Lecture/Discussion: Intensive debate on and the institutional forms of charity in the modern commercial metropolis (or the embourgeoisement of modern charity). How "philanthropy" became police for Anglo-Saxons. What are the ideas and the costs of "philanthropy" in the English-speaking world?

Wed. 4/19 Readings: (**) Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police*, Chapters 4-6 and Conclusion, pp. 98-202. Lecture/Discussion: The power-political dimensions of Nationalizing, Imperializing, and Capitalizing "Charity." The dynamisms of the English philanthropic world (or, in this world, you've got to be cruel to be kind).

Wed. 4/26 Readings: Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Poverty and Compassion: The Moral Imagination of the Late Victorians*. Introduction, Book 1, Sections 1, 2, 4; Book Two, Sections, 6-9 and 12; and Book Three, Section 13, pp. 3-39, 54-67, 77-134, and 169-206. Lecture/Discussion: What is "Scientific Philanthropy" and why you are it!

Monday, April 30, 2007, 5:00 p.m.

**Undergraduate and Graduate Final Research Papers Due to
Instructor's Mailbox, CA 504M. No Exceptions! Late Papers Fail!**