

Humanities 6: Great People, Great Ages

Dr. Dean Pickard
Pierce College, Fall 1998

Office: FO 3008, Ph: 710-4398
Hrs: T/Th 3-4 & by appt

COURSE DESCRIPTION: *General description:* An interdisciplinary course which covers leading figures and major cultural developments in an historical period, such as the Greek playwrights and 5th century Athens; Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and the Renaissance; Descartes to Kant and the Enlightenment, Hegel, Marx and the 19th century, etc.

Title and Description of Fall 1998 course: The Age of Augustine 354-430 AD

Saint Augustine was one of those towering figures who so dominated his age that the age itself bears his name. The Age of Augustine was a time of transition, and Augustine was a genius of such stature that, according to Christopher Dawson, "he was, to a far greater degree than any emperor or general or barbarian war-lord, a maker of history and a builder of the bridge which was to lead him from the old world to the new." Augustine was born in the Roman province of Numidia, North Africa, in 354. His father was a pagan and his mother, Monica, a Christian who was later to be proclaimed a saint. He received the classical education of the young pagan gentleman and became a teacher of rhetoric, first in North Africa and later in Milan. During those years he acquired a mistress, a son, and an interest in the religious teachings of the Persian prophet Mani, who was all the rage at the time. But after nine years Manicheism proved sterile and he became a Catholic. His exceptional talents were recognized and he was consecrated Bishop of Hippo, North Africa, in 395. His remaining thirty-five years were a torrent of activity. He was the ablest religious thinker and controversialist at a period when theological controversy reached a level of intellectual refinement never achieved before or since. He was a tireless preacher. And he wrote 118 treatises, including the most famous spiritual autobiography of all time, *The Confessions*. Of all these works, the one most prized by Augustine was his *City of God*—a veritable encyclopedia of information on the lives, thoughts and aspirations of ancient and early Christian man. (Introduction from *St. Augustine: City of God*), Image Books, 1958.)

TEXTS:

- Primary Readings:** 1. Augustine, *Confessions*, Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1991. (A)
2. Gaarder, Jostein, *That Same Flower - Floria Aemilia's Letter to St. Augustine*. Farrar, 1998. (G)
- Secondary Reading:** 3. Brown, Peter, *Augustine of Hippo*. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1967. (B)

GRADING: 1) Three or four essay Exams 3-5 standard typed pages, 100 pts. each. 2) A journal of collected favorite passages from your reading of Augustine briefly saying why each passage was particularly meaningful for you. 3) Possible scantron 882 true-false/multiple choice quizzes or exams. Late exams are not graded until the end of the semester. Thoughtful, informed class participation can raise the grade.

Assignments will be announced in class:

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment DUE</u>
8/19	Introduction	
8/26	Historical/Biographical Background	A Intro, B 9-45
9/2	Childhood, Adolescence, Student	A Bk 1-3
9/9	Manichee and Astrologer	A Bk 4, B 46-53
9/16	Carthage, Rome, and Milan	A Bk 5, B 53-65
9/23	Secular Ambitions	A Bk 6, B 54-65
9/30	Neoplatonism	A Bk 7, B 66-88
FIRST ESSAY/JOURNALS DUE 9/30		
10/7	Conversion	A Bk 8, B 89-114
10/14	Cassiciacum, Monica's Death	A Bk 9, B 115-132
10/21	Bishop	B 138-184
10/28	Memory	A Bk 10, B 185-258
11/4	Time and Eternity	A Bk 11, B 259-286
11/11	Time and Eternity	A Bk 11, B 287-329
SECOND ESSAY/JOURNALS DUE 11/11		
11/18	Interpretation and Truth	A Bk 11-12, B 330-386
11/25	Interpretation and Truth	A Bk 11-12, B 387-430
12/2	That Same Flower	G All
12/9	Concluding Discussion	
THIRD ESSAY/JOURNALS DUE 12/9		