

**Jefferson County / Bard College Clemente Course, 2007:
“We the People: Democracy and Landscape”**

Moral Philosophy

Instructor: Sydney Keegan

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All quotations are from the Declaration of Independence, with the exception of “We the people” (Preamble to the Constitution), and “Children of One Family” (*Common Sense* by Thomas Paine).

Reason and Revolution is the title of Herbert Marcuse’s classic study of Hegel and Marx.

Between Past and Future is the title of a collection of essays by Hannah Arendt on political philosophy.

Part I: In the Beginning

Class 1: “We the people”

Date: 02/01/07

Readings:

The Declaration of Independence

Preamble to the Constitution of the United States

Thomas Paine; *Common Sense*, excerpt

Class 2: “Nature and Nature’s God”

Date: 02/06/07

Readings:

The Bible, Genesis, chs. 1-4

Michael Pollan; “Second Nature,” in *Our Land, Ourselves: Readings on People and Place*

Music; Franz Joseph Haydn, *The Creation*, Introduction (“Representation of Chaos”), and Angelic Narrative

Class 3: “To establish justice”

Date: 02/08/07

Readings:

Hesiod; *Works and Days*, excerpt

Plato; *Protagoras*, excerpt

Interlude: Contemporary Commentary

Class 4: “He has plundered our seas”

Date: 02/15/07

Reading:

Wendell Berry; “The Gift of Good Land” (essay), from *The Gift of Good Land: Further Essays Cultural and Agricultural*

Part II: Reason and Revolution

Class 5: "A long train of abuses"

Date: 03/13/07

Readings:

Sir Thomas More; *Utopia*, excerpts

Wendell Berry; "What are People For?" (essay), from *What are People For?*

Class 6: "Certain inalienable rights"

Date: 03/15/07

Reading:

John Locke; *Second Treatise of Civil Government*, chapter V, "Of Property"

Class 7: "In every stage of these oppressions"

Date: 03/22/07

Readings:

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels; *The Communist Manifesto* (excerpts)

Simone Weil; "Uprootedness" and "The Needs of the Soul" (excerpts), from *The Need for Roots*

Part III: Between Past and Future

Class 8: "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"

Date: 04/12/07

Reading:

Wendell Berry; "Feminism, the Body, and the Machine" (essay), from *What are People For?*

Class 9: "Children of the same family"

Date: 04/17/07

Readings:

Henry David Thoreau; *Walden*, ch. XVII, "Spring" (excerpt)

Annie Dillard; "Sojourner," from *Teaching a Stone to Talk*