

SYLLABUS 6ST609 C.S. Lewis

Dr. Art Lindsley
RTS Washington DC
Spring 2011

Dates: May 24, 25, 26

Times: 9:00am -4:00pm

Location: RTS DC Campus, McLean Presbyterian Church, McLean VA

Professor: Dr. Art Lindsley, an Adjunct Professor for RTS DC, has been a Scholar-in-Residence at the C.S. Lewis Institute in Annandale, Virginia since 1987. He holds a B.A. degree from Seattle Pacific University, a M.Div. Degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. He is co-author of *Classical Apologetics* with R.C. Sproul and has written a number of other books. He teaches preparation classes for Young Life each year and speaks at conferences throughout the United States and the world. This class on C.S. Lewis was taught in Oxford in the summer of 2006.

Lectures:

- The Importance of Imagination
- Reason, Imagination and You
- Faith and Reason
- C.S. Lewis on Postmodernism
- Abolition of Man
- Relativism, Death and Immortality
- C.S. Lewis and Freud
- Argument from Desire
- Other Religions

Required Reading:

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
Art Lindsley, *C.S. Lewis' Case for Christ*

Read one of these three:

C. S. Lewis, *Abolition of Man*
C. S. Lewis, *Problem of Pain*
C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*

Reading Reports: A one page reading report will be required on each book read.

Essay: Write a 10-15 page essay. You may use on the suggested essay topics below or come up with one on your own. All essay topics must be approved by the professor.

SUGGESTED ESSAY TOPICS (Pick One):

1. Critics of Lewis

There are many critics of Lewis's thought and person. Some such as John Beverslius critique his thought and others such as A.N. Wilson assault his person. Many have attacked Lewis for being (in

their eyes) a racist, sexist or having an affair with Mrs. Moore. Recent articles in the New York Times and the New Yorker magazine (Nov 2005) as well as critiques by Philip Pullman are anti-Lewis and anti-Narnia. The purpose of this essay is to unearth some of these criticisms and find solid answers to them.

a. Ideas

- I. You could take a book like Beversliu or Wilson and find reviews and critiques and give a thorough evaluation
- II. Review the New York Times and the New Yorker article and find good answers
- III. Look at Philip Pullman's critique of Lewis and Narnia
- IV. Review new books on Lewis and show how they help answer these criticisms
- V. Create your own approach

b. Sources

- I. cslewisinstitute.org: Book reviews and essays
- II. Veith, Gene. *The Soul of the Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*
- III. Jacobs, Alan. *The Narnian*
- IV. Downing, David. *Planets in Peril*

2. Imagination and Reason

Lewis maintained that "Reason is the natural order of truth; but imagination is the organ of meaning." Show how C.S. Lewis addressed reason and imagination in his works.

a. Ideas

- I. Address Lewis's essays in his collection *On Stories*
- II. Explore how he communicates the same ideas in both reason (prose) and imagination (fiction)
- III. Discuss how Lewis would answer charges such as that his fiction is childish or escapist
- IV. Create your own approach

b. Sources

- I. Lindsley, Art. *C. S. Lewis's Case for Christ*
- II. Camell, Corbin Scott. *Bright Shadow of Reality*

3. Relativism

C.S. Lewis thought that *Abolition of Man* was his most important work. Explore his thoughts on relativism there and/or elsewhere.

a. Ideas

- I. Explore the relationship between *Abolition of Man* and *That Hideous Strength*
- II. Study his various essays on the subject in *God in the Dock* and *Christian Reflections*
- III. Create your own approach

b. Sources

- I. Aeschliman, Michael. *The Restitution of Man*
- II. Lindsley, Art. *C.S. Lewis's Case for Christ*
- III. Johnson, Paul. *Modern Times*

4. Immortals

Walter Hooper maintains that Lewis's central theme in his writing is that all men are "immortals." Develop this theme in both reason (prose) and imagination (fiction).

a. Ideas

- i. Focus on death and immortality in the Narnia Chronicles (especially *The Last Battle*)
- ii. Look at attitudes towards life and death in *Out of the Silent Planet* and *Perelandra*
- iii. Discuss death and immortality in Lewis's prose starting with the sermon "Weight of Glory" and finding other sources
- iv. Discuss Lewis's views on Heaven and Hell
- v. Create your own approach

b. Sources

- i. Start by reading the appropriate chapter in C.S. Lewis's *Case for Christ* (Art Lindsley) and branch out from there
- ii. Read *Weight of Glory* in *Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*