

Essays for Introductory Humanities Courses

The Open University (UK) AA 100 The Arts Past and Present

And

The New Zealand Open Polytechnic 74104 Introducing Humanities
and Arts and 74105 Tradition and Dissent

Copyright Graham Mc Cready

ISBN: 978-0-9876627-0-5

Publication date: 3 February 2012

The publisher, Computers for Schools Charitable Trust Board is a New Zealand Registered Charity Number: CC41779.

Contact: PO Box 15290 Miramar, Wellington New Zealand 6243

Email: nzsbacfs05@gmail.com

Tel: 011 644 380 8611

Over 900 Computers have been donated to New Zealand Schools since April 2004 through the Computers for Schools Program.

We thank you for your support. Enjoy the book.

Index

- Essay 1 Part 1 Reputations of Sir Robert Muldoon and David Lange
 Two Alcoholic New Zealand Prime Ministers
- Part 2 The Reputation of Cleopatra
- Essay 2 Part 1 The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe and Art analysis
 Part 2 Cezanne's *Jug and Fruit* and Zurbaran's *Still Life with
 Lemons, Oranges and a Rose*
- Essay 3 Comparison of the Reputations of Stalin and Michael Faraday
- Essay 4 Part 1 "According to Plato and Socrates, what is courage?"
 Part 2 Reading Poetry: *The Faber Book of Beasts*.
- Essay 5 Tradition and Dissent in English Christianity
- Essay 6 Tradition and Dissent in Music:
 Dmitri Shostakovich

Essay 1
Assignment One
Introducing Humanities and Arts
74104

Grade 75% A-

Acknowledgements

In picking two New Zealand historical figures two stood out that I had personal contact with and had a strong influence in my life.

Sir Robert Muldoon and I had a conflict over the “Growth Strategy” or “Think Bid Projects” of the late 1970’s and early 1980’s and my allegations of corruption in the State Services Commission tendering process for Government Computers.

Sir Robert responded in typical fashion to my public criticism by having me banned from holding any Government position for life. This was a demonstration of the exercise of “unbridled power” (Palmer) held by Muldoon.

It was David Lange in 1982 as deputy Leader of the Labour Party who received my 22 pages of hand written questions to ask the Minister of State Services about the Government Computer Systems. To my surprise he didn’t throw the untidy pile of paper into the rubbish. Instead he had Michael Cullen ask the questions in Parliament every day for a month.

Lange’s Office provided me with the written answers. Using these I drafted more questions. Brendon Burns then a reporter for the Sunday Times wrote the stories.

The final questions were:

“Mr. Minister, are you aware the commissioning report for the power supply for the Wanganui Police Computer System is written in Swedish untranslated on the project file. Would the Minister please have it translated so this House can understand if it actually meets the project specification and if the Minister correctly paid \$1,000,000 for it when he cannot know if it actually works?”

I acknowledge the insight of my daughter Heather Katherine Mc Cready, then five. Sir Robert came on National TV in early 1981 just before the election and stated “Social Credit is like the Tooth Fairy. It is just a myth and does not really exist.”

Heather as usual was watching the news. She turned to me and said “If the Prime Minister does not believe in the Tooth Fairy, he is like an ice cream and is about to be licked.”

I phoned the Evening Post and they photographed Heather licking an ice cream. She went on to earn a Masters degree in Political Science and a double Law degree from McMaster University in Montreal.

My response was to send my “Tooth Fairy” telegram to Muldoon and all media that read, “Mr. Prime Minister. Having run out of ways to divide the new Zealand

population you are now picking on blue eyed blonde pig tail five year old girls. Your Government is like a turkey at Canadian Thanksgiving. It is overweight, clucks, struts and is about to loose its head.”

This assignment is written with the above background.

After thirty years I have enjoyed revisiting and researching these two political giants. They had many differences but in the end many similarities as flawed human beings.

I acknowledge the assistance of the staff of Wellington Public library and the Open Polytechnic Library for their assistance in obtaining source material for this assignment.

Part 1 Two Historical New Zealand Figures

This essay examines the reputations of Sir Robert David Muldoon (1921-1992), (Grant, 2003, page152) and David Russell Lange (1942 -2005) (Grant, 2003, page 159) and (Bassett, 2008, page 549). Both were famous as New Zealand Prime Ministers but had different reputations of political and leadership style. In the end they were both lonely men, flawed human beings with health problems and alcoholism.

Muldoon was seen “swaying down the corridor from his caucus room an inebriate Prime Minister” (Basset, 2008, page 95) as he appeared to the press to announce the snap election on 14 June 1984. Lange joined Alcoholics Anonymous after he resigned as Prime Minister. “I went to my first AA meeting in a Baptist church hall.” (Lange, 2005, page285). Bassett in the Lange biography said, “He turned to alcohol” (Bassett, 2008, page 12).

Muldoon was the last Prime Minister born just after the WW1 who went through the depression of the 1930's. and served in the NZ Army in WW2. (Gustafson, 2000, page 6) His studies as an accountant were part time by correspondence. (Gustafson, 2000, page 31). He is of my mother's generation.

Lange was of my generation, born during WW2, never going to war and enjoying the benefits of zero fees University Education. He earned an LLB and a Master of Laws from Auckland University. He was the first Prime Minister of the post war generation.

Both came from poor backgrounds. Muldoon's father was confined to a mental institution from his service in WW1 (Gustafson, 2000, page 20-21). His mother sewed curtains and garments to make ends meet. Lange's father was a GP in South Auckland who provided medical services to disadvantaged patients in that area. It was not a way to become wealthy.

Both had weight and eating problems. “Muldoon for the rest of his life ate the wrong foods...” (Gustafson, 2000, page 22). Lange was morbidly obese and suffered from diabetes when he entered Parliament as MP for Mangere. He was famous for having a stomach stapling operation. Neither were the physically strong athletic outdoor males synonymous of “Kiwi blokes” such as Jack Lovelock, Sir Edmond Hillary and Wilson Winneray of their era.

Muldoon had a reputation for concentration and abuse of power as Prime Minister and Finance Minister, “Muldoon had too much power” (Gustafson, 2000, page 9) and “.. the concentration of power is overwhelming”, (Palmer .1987, page 67).

Lange was active in Civil Liberties and an advocate for the underdog taking on hopeless cases in the Criminal Courts in Auckland. He challenged the power of the police and the state.

Both were effective orators but had different styles. Muldoon was abrasive and sarcastic relying on fear to win the argument. "He did not cultivate a 'nice guy' image". (Gustafson, 2000, page 15) Lange had a devastating wit and was the first Labour MP who was more than a match for Muldoon. The TV debates during the 1984 election campaign were won by Lange. He is also famous for the Oxford Union debate in 1985.

"And I'm going to give it to you if you hold your breath just for a moment..... I can smell the uranium on it as you lean forward!" (Lange, 2005, page 208).

While Muldoon had strong political views Lange had none. "He never possessed more than the haziest of political philosophy". (Bassett, 2008, page 10).

To the end Muldoon thought he could maintain the status quo Keynesian economics (Gustafson, 2000, page 4) by tinkering and controlling the economy, borrowing large amounts of money to invest in his Growth Strategy program. That strategy was doomed to failure due to the lack of national Quality Assurance Standards. (Mc Cready, 1982. pages 1-12)

Gustafson quotes Professor Gary Hawks who described Muldoon "as an inveterate meddler" (Gustafson, 2000, page 110) Lange was the salesman for the extreme right wing Rogernomics that opened up the New Zealand economy and sold off assets to reduce debt. When Rodger Douglas went too far Lange abandoned his Government.

Muldoon as Prime Minister awarded himself a knighthood while still in office. (Lange, 2005, page 161-162). This was contrary to convention where it is up to a successor to make such awards. From this act Muldoon earned the reputation as self seeking. Lange refused a knighthood offered by Geoffrey Palmer his successor. (Lange, 2005, page 273). Just before his death he finally accepted the Order of New Zealand on 1 August 2003. (Basset, 2008, page 548).

Both reputations evolved as public figures. They were earned by their public acts in the public eye. As quoted by Gustafson Eric Olsen noted in 1984 that politicians have a vested interest in projecting a public persona." (Gustafson, 2000, page 14). It is often that public face that comes through in the research. I found that to get the private face an autobiography is useful. Both groomed their public face for TV. That media itself has its own spin and bias.

I disagree with Bassett that Lange's relationship with Margaret Pope was the prime source of the disintegration of his Government. I agree with Gustafson that alcoholism played a significant part in Muldoon's decision making. The same

applies to Lange. The difference was that Lange sought help whereas Muldoon apparently did not

“History is written by victors and survivors. Muldoon became every ones scapegoat” (Gustafson, 2000, page 8)

As quoted by Gustafson, Muldoon had the potential to go down in New Zealand’s history as a great prime minister but fell short because of flaws in his personality” (Gustafson, 2000, page 7)

In my view for all his flaws Lange remains the ordinary mans hero. His reputation has suffered from spin from Douglas who continues to blame Lange for not allowing him to complete his monetarist policies.

Part Two - Cleopatra

This essay analyses Plutarch's view of the effect of Cleopatra on Mark Anthony and its relationship with the wider Roman perspective on Cleopatra and Egypt.

The passage infers that Cleopatra had such an effect on Anthony that she was able to "carry him off to Alexandria" where he wasted his time and talents "in amusements and diversions".

Plutarch's account is based on what his grandfather told him of what Philotas the physician told his grandfather about what one of the royal cooks had said about the royal banquets. In other words a chain of what lawyers would call "hearsay" and we normal mortals would call gossip. It was written years after the event and is a recital of the story according to Octavia who defeated Anthony and Cleopatra.

The inference is that it was all about sex. This is a myth. Research reveals it was most likely about the money. Anthony needed money to finance his wars against enemies of the eastern Roman empire he ruled and his ongoing disputes with Octavius who ruled the western empire. He travelled to Alexandria with Cleopatra to raise money for those wars. "Military expeditions require lavish funding... Anthony .. resolved to draw on the wealth of Egypt. (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page 20).

Cleopatra and Anthony were a natural military alliance. The combination of Egyptian money and materials with Anthony's military skills made the combination a force to be reckoned with.

Cleopatra's reputation with Rome was that she used her sexual talents to undermine Anthony's duty as a Roman consul and general. This sexual conduct was part of her many sexual partners. The evidence is more likely she had only two intimate relationships. (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page 22).The first with Julius Caesar who she had a child with (Fletcher, 2008,121) and Anthony who she has two sons and a daughter.

There is a double standard operating. As a woman seeking interment relationships she is labeled a temptress. For a man such as Caesar to do the same thing was seen as normal behavior for soldier and world traveler. "Promiscuity was indulged in a man", (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page 55).

As stated by Fletcher of Caesar in her in depth research into Cleopatra, "his affairs with woman are commonly described as numerous and extravagant" and the ditty his soldiers sang as they returned to Rome:

“Home we bring our bold whoremonger,
Romans lock your wives away!
All the bags of gold you lent him went to his Gallic tarts to pay! (Fletcher, 2008,111). Huges-Hallet quotes the same script.

Again it is all about the money.

Profit from waging war = Booty less entertainment expenses.

“According to Octavia’s story, Anthony’s love for Cleopatra reduced and degraded him” (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page55).

Octavius used a poet Virgil to write and circulate his version of Cleopatra. In his Aenied made public in 19 BC provides a myth about Cleopatra’s reputation that was acceptable in Roman eyes. It does not mention Cleopatra directly just by inference. (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page59-61).

Another poet who put the Roman spin on the Cleopatra story was Horace

“.. while the mad queen with her contaminated flock of men diseased by vice, was preparing the ruin of the Capital..” (Open University, 2000, page 28).

Roman spin on Cleopatra’s reputation was that she wasted the wealth of Egypt on opulent parties such as the banquet described in Plutarch’s account. The research suggests she was very skillful in restoring Egypt’s finances after her father had borrowed 6,000 talents from a Roman money lender to pay to the Roman’s to ensure they recognized his right to his throne.

“This prodigal hospitality is indecorous, uneconomic and self-indulgent that Octavius leveled against Cleopatra”. (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page 65). However in Hughes-Hallett’s account “She appears to have been a tactful and efficient ruler, a tough negotiator and a thrifty manager”. (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page 23).

Queen Cleopatra opened the seaway to India bypassing the agents and middlemen of the land route securing wealth for Egypt by trading. It was all about the money.

A series of Roman consoles came to Egypt to ask for aid in their various wars and civil wars. Again it was all about the money.

Queen Cleopatra VII was the ruler of Egypt by right of birth but ruled by permission of Rome. As her power and wealth increased the Roman’s were

erks by the title. They had rid themselves of their kings. Now they had a woman who had built up a fleet that could challenge Rome itself. (Open University, 2000, page 13).

The Roman view of Cleopatra was she was depraved like the rest of Egypt for the incestuous marriage to her brother. But it was Julius Caesar who forced that marriage and decreed she would rule jointly with her brother and husband.

It was Octavius the victor in his war against Cleopatra that created the reputation of Cleopatra as a temptress.

"It was her opponent, Octavius, who in his campaign to discredit and defeat her, ascribed to her persona of a beautiful and ingenious temptress) and "It is the story of a great but flawed hero undone by his passion for a cunning queen" (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page 38).

Cleopatra was the victim of a vicious propaganda campaign" (Open University, 2000, page 7).

"The Cleopatra of the story, by contrast, is cunning and manipulative. She knows a thousand kinds of flattery. She is a deceiver whose every apparent ambition is feigned for a purpose" (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page 41).

"Octavius and his allies suggested that Cleopatra's court was a site of barbarism, where a depraved subhuman race worshipped grotesque gods" (Huges-Hallet, 1990, page 71).

It is this reputation that that is the myth of Hollywood films.

Octavius as victor carried away the spoils of war back to Rome.

"Cleopatra's vast wealth and funerary equipment were displayed in a parade".. Again it was all about the money.

It was all about the money with a bit of "hot" entertainment on the side.

References

- Bassett, M, (2008). *Working with David: Inside the Lange Cabinet*. Auckland New Zealand, Hachette Livre.
- Chambers, E and Northedge, A, (2008). *The Arts Good Study Guide, 2nd ed*). Milton Keynes, England, The Open University.
- Fletcher, J. ((2008). *Cleopatra the Great: The Woman behind the Legend*, London, England, Hodder and Strougham.
- Grant, I.F. (2003). *Public Lives: New Zealand's Premiers and Prime Ministers 1856-2003*, Wellington, New Zealand, New Zealand Cartoon Archive, Alexander Turnbull Library.
- Gustafson, B, (2000) *His Way: a biography of Robert Muldoon*, Auckland, New Zealand, Auckland University Press
- Huges-Hallett, J. (1990) *Cleopatra: Histories, Dreams and Distortions*, Fome and London, England: Butler and Tanner
- . Lange, D, (2005). *My life*. Auckland, New Zealand, The Penguin Group
- Mc Cready, G, (1982). *GEM1 On QA*. Wellington New Zealand. Self Published.
- Mc Cready, G, (2010). *My Name is Graham and I am and Alcoholic*. Unpublished, part of Advanced Diploma in Creative Writing Non Fiction, Whitireia Community Polytechnic, 2010.
- The Open University. (2008). *The Arts Past and Present: Book One Reputations*. Milton Keynes, England.
- Palmer, G, (1987). *Unbridled Power, (2nd ed)*. Oxford, England, Oxford University Press.

Essay 2
Assignment Two
Introducing Humanities and Arts
74104

The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe and Art analysis
Grade 74% B+

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the collection of material in the Wellington Public Library. Through this collection I was able to research in depth the subject material for this essay. Some of the reference books were very badly written with paragraphs that go on for more than a page. Reading this poorly written material as a writer I was dismayed at the poor writing.

The assignment was for me one of the most difficult but most interesting academic exercises I have ever attempted. I came from a back ground of narrow technical education with no classical studies before I was compelled to take a Social Science and a Humanities course at age 48 as part of a degree in management at York University I Toronto Canada in 1992. I obtained the magnificent grade of 35% in School Cert English.

It was the compulsory arts course that gained my interest in liberal arts education. I acknowledge the encouragement of my tutors at York University for that interest. It was Learning Support at York University who diagnosed my mild to sometimes severe form of dyslexia.

I found the language in the plays difficult at first by kept at it. Hopefully the result will come up to standard.

I identify with the reputation of Marlowe. Today he would be labeled as having a "checkered history". This parallels my own eventual life. The assignment has increased the understanding of my own career that included activity similar to Marlowe in going undercover for the RCMP in Canada to gather evidence in Software Piracy cases. The requirement is to go undercover, earn the trust and confidence of t he target and turn them in to the authorities.

I acknowledge the teaching of John Drawbridge who taught art at Thorndon Primary School. He encouraged my attempts at landscapes and a copy of a still art master.

Assignment Two
Part One
The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe
Play write, Poet, alleged criminal and spy.

This essay examines the literary reputation of Christopher Marlowe and describes how that reputation has been shaped by the play Doctor Faustus. The argument is that while the first part of Dr Faustus follows the style of a morality play with good competing with evil, it develops into a tragedy with the protagonist failing to realize his aims from making a pact with the devil and loses everything. It is stated by Dame Helen Gardner as Marlowe's greatest play. (Farnham page 2) In Farnham's work, Richard Sewall states it is the first major Elizabethan tragedy (Farnham page 60)

As a poet Marlowe was the first to use blank or unrhymed verse of ten syllables. The early reputation was clouded by allegations of atheism/heresy and criminal activity by detractors and his role as a spy. (Wraight and Stern page 69), (Steane page 12).

"..the pious moralism of his survivors who saw God's avenging hand in his tragic end." (*Masinton page i4*)

Modern research focusing on the works of literature reveals a genius. In writing Dr Faustus Marlowe is influenced by his own role as a humanist (Farnham page 61) that is:

"A person holding a secular ideology which espouses reason, ethics, and justice, whilst specifically rejecting supernatural and religious dogma as a basis of morality and decision-making." (Wilkapedia).

As such he sees religion as a constraint on the development of human beings.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

