

This course is part of the national Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program and meets weekly at the Oregon State Penitentiary. Instructor interview required. Enrollment limited to 12 inside and 12 outside students. Transportation is provided.

Michael Corleone asks his mother in *The Godfather Part 2*: "In being strong for your family, can you lose it?" His mother has no idea what he means, but the audience may.

The relation between the claims of the individual and of family, as against those of society, laws and the gods, is a common theme in narrative. Considering works of film and literature as varied as *The Oresteia*, Kafka's novel and Orson Welles's film *The Trial*, and the *Godfather* films, the members of this class will discuss whether and how works of narrative art (especially but not only tragedies) can enrich our ethics.

Plato said throw the lying poets out of the Republic, but Aristotle emphasized the personal and social rewards of catharsis. Can we learn more about right and wrong from the complexities and ambiguities of art than from direct argument, or does a novel or film that shows something bad, for instance violence, always endorse, just by showing it, what it may claim to condemn?

Considering these issues will inevitably mean raising also large questions such as art versus entertainment ("It's only a movie"), judgment versus identification ("I always side with the hero"), and interpretation versus personal response ("It reminds me of my grandmother"). The different perspectives of inside and outside students as we work on these together, with some helpful readings by philosophers such as Paul Ricoeur and Martha Nussbaum, should be rewarding.

No exams. Written work will be weekly reaction papers (commented on but ungraded), a midterm paper of 3 pages and a final paper of 5-7 pages. A main goal of the course is to help all the students with organizing, drafting and polishing essays, as well as (and as a result of) sharing our thoughts and responses about this fascinating material.