

UCSD Revelle in Rome

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HUM 3GS: Renaissance, Reformation, and Early Modern Europe

Through the vehicle of literature, we can catch sight of how certain critical social roles were constructed in the period of the Renaissance, which witnessed enormous change in culture and society. The roles were important because they represented the new ambitions and ideals of the individuals and society of the time. This was the period in which the field of secular learning was fundamentally recalibrated, new definitions were offered of politics and the political, the concept of the artist was profoundly enhanced, and the natural world opened to new forms of engagement. The course will treat each of these areas, with appropriate and illuminating readings of primary texts and secondary literature. There are required readings in addition to class attendance, a paper and a final examination. The weekly readings are available through electronic reserves at Geisel Library.

What is a humanist?

Topics include Petrarch and the definition of antiquity; Petrarchismo; the notion of a poet laureate; the development of archaeology; textual criticism; Dante; natural history; Galileo

What is a courtier?

Topics include Machiavelli; the rise of secular courts; medieval traditions

What is an artist?

Topics include Vasari and the role of the individual creator; making/creating: craft to art; the development of tools; the role of theory

Readings:

Petrarch, *Ascent of Mt. Ventoux*

Letters

Machiavelli, *The Courtier*

Vasari, *Lives of the artists*

Galileo, *Siderius nuncius*

Dante, *Paradiso*

David Freedberg, *The eye of the lynx. Galileo, his friends and the beginnings of modern natural history*

Paper: On one of the above questions, taking the discussion and analysis beyond what we covered in class.