Conversations of the West
Antiquity and Modernity
From The Iliad to Star Wars
Prof. Joan Breton Connelly
Spring 2004

Homer
The Iliad
The Odyssey

The Bible
Book of Job
Book of Jonah

Aeschylus
The Agamemnon

Sophocles
The Ajax

Euripides
The Helen

Vergil
The Aeneid

Petronius
Satyricon: Trimalchio’s Feast

St. Augustine
Confessions

Joyce
Ulysses

Fitzgerald
The Great Gatsby

Hemingway
The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber

Greene
The Power and the Glory, Loser Takes All

O’Hara
Appointment at Samara

Cheever
Reunion, The Country Husband

Lucas
Star Wars
Winning is a central obsession of modern life. Contemporary understanding of what it means to be a winner or a loser is influenced by a long tradition that stretches back to antiquity. This course examines the ways in which texts influence and reflect how we define and think about success and the value that western culture has placed upon it throughout the ages. It will consider the relationship of the individual to God, “the gods” or a higher force, superstition, luck, destiny, free will and choice in the experience of success and failure. Emphasis will be placed on apparent winners who are losers and on apparent losers who are, in fact, winners. Readings: Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, *The Book of Job* and *The Book of Jonah*, Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, Sophocles’ *Ajax*, Euripides’ *Helen*, Vergil’s *Aeneid*, Petronius’ *Satyricon: Trimalchio’s Feast*, St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, Hemingway’s *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*, Greene’s *The Power and the Glory* and *Loser Takes All*, O’Hara’s *Appointment at Samara*, Cheever’s *Reunion* and *The Country Husband* and George Lucas’ *Star Wars*. 