

The Ravaging Tide:
Additional Questions for Discussion
LSIC 179, Fall 2008
Dr. Downes

Greetings!

I'm looking forward to learning with you in our LSIC 179 class. Our first meeting will be TUESDAY, AUG. 19, at 9:25 AM in KH (Karpen Hall) 241.

UNCA's classes are small so you can add your thoughts and concerns to class discussions; a large part of why I love teaching is that I enjoy learning from you in those discussions. So be prepared for me to regularly invite you to share your ideas!

After reading Mike Tidwell's *The Ravaging Tide*, we'll have plenty to talk about. For starters, think about the five questions that are on the bookmark provided to you with the book. I'm quite interested in getting your thoughts on the questions below, too—so ponder these, please, before we get together:

1. The 179 course is "Writing Intensive": you'll write several papers. But it's also most instructive to think about how professional authors write—and discuss *why* they write the way they do. We'll analyze Tidwell's writing for this. Thinking about *his* writing (or any other author's) will really help you to be more conscious of *your own* choices in writing!

Who is he writing to, do you think? How can you tell? How does he arrange his arguments, and his evidence? What kind of evidence does he provide? (Look at his list of sources.) What kind of sentences does he use—long, short, complicated, simple, a mixture? Vocabulary? (etc., etc., etc.) Why does he make these particular choices, do you think?

In one of Tidwell's paragraphs, find lots of examples of Tidwell's *style*, his *rhetoric* (the art of his *prose*). How might he have written that particular paragraph if he were writing to a different audience? What's the effect of his writing style on you—and why so?

2. UNCA offers you a "liberal arts education." What is this? In what ways does *The Ravaging Tide* help you to get this kind of education? (Note: "liberal arts" isn't the same as "liberal politics," though the two may share some characteristics. We'll talk about this.)

3. Critical Thinking is a central goal of a liberal arts education. Part of that goal is helping you to thoughtfully and openly consider several (often contradictory) sides to intensely complex issues—and to think these through carefully in order to develop a more mature perspective. Does Tidwell practice good critical thinking? Can you find some examples?

4. One of UNCA's strengths—and a focus of our particular section of 179—is interdisciplinary study. You might, in fact, decide to pursue an **interdisciplinary degree** here at the university. Most students, however, **major in a discipline** in a particular department (for example, Sociology, Literature, Chemistry...). What particular disciplines, or academic areas of study, does Tidwell include in his investigations? (There are at least 10—see what you can list!)

Complex issues and problems are highly likely to be dealt with *interdisciplinarily*. We'll talk about this in our class, and view some films that exemplify this approach to learning. (One film is entitled, "What Is Love?"—a very interesting and complex question!)