

Leadership in Cinema



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE FIRST CENTURY – EPISODE 1 – ORDER FROM CHAOS

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Director: Margaret Koval & Lyn goldfarb
Studio: PBS Released: 2001
Genre: Documentary Audience Rating: Not rated
Runtime: 55 minutes

Materials

The Roman Empire in the First Century – Episode 1: Order from Chaos video (first of a four-part series), Leading in the Wildland Fire Service (one per student), notepads, and writing utensils

Objective

The objective of this lesson is for students to watch The Roman Empire in the First Century – Episode: Order from Chaos and participate in group discussion regarding transformational leadership.

Basic Plot

The Roman Empire in the First Century – Episode 1: Order from Chaos is an in-depth look at the leadership legacy of Augustus Caesar.

Cast of Main Characters

Narrator	Sigourney Weaver
Expert Historian	Professor Keith Bradley
Expert Historian	The Rev. Dr. Allen Callahan
Expert Historian	Dr. Elaine Fantham
Expert Historian	Professor Karl Galinshky
Expert Historian	Professor Erich Gruen
Expert Historian	Professor Judith Hallett
Expert Historian	Professor Karen King
Expert Historian	Professor Diana E. E. Kleiner
Expert Historian	Professor Ronald Mellor
Expert Historian	Professor Richard Saller
Expert Historian	Professor Jo-Ann Shelton
Expert Historian	Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill

Facilitator Notes

- [Leading in the Wildland Fire Service](#)
- The Roman Empire in the First Century – Episode 1: Order from Chaos is the first of a four-part series on the Roman Empire and is available [online through YouTube](#) or available for purchase on the [PBS website](#).

Facilitation Tips

1. Organize a group of students to participate in a discussion about the leadership legacy of Augustus Caesar.
2. Have students, individually or as a group, watch The Roman Empire in the First Century – Episode 1: Order from Chaos. Facilitators may choose to show the video in segments or in its entirety.
 - Segment 1: Introduction
 - Segment 2: Order from Chaos (3:13)
 - Segment 3: Frivolous Inspirations (15:33)
 - Segment 4: An Innocent Face (28:30)
 - Segment 5: Give Me Back My Legions (37:12)

- Segment 6: Dancing in the Dark (46:38)
3. Conduct a guided discussion using some or all of the associated resources (handout and possible comments provided). Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their role in wildland fire suppression. Facilitate discussion in groups that have difficulty.

References

Facilitators are encouraged to review the links below in order to obtain information that may be helpful during group/classroom discussions and for continued leadership development.

- [The Roman Empire in the First Century – Episode 1: Order from Chaos video transcript](#)
- [PBS companion website](#) (includes website links and suggested reading)
- [Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program](#) (WFLDP)
- [Augustus](#)
- [The History Guide – Augustus Caesar and the Pax Romana](#) (Lecture 12) can be printed from.
- Ancient History Sourcebook, Suetonius (c.69-after 122 CE): [The Divine Augustus](#).

Leadership Challenge

As part of this lesson, facilitators are encouraged to challenge students to read the following selections:

- [“Moral Courage in Healthcare: Acting Ethically Even in the Presence of Risk.”](#) Murray, John S. The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing. September 30, 2010.
- “What is Transformational Leadership?” The John Maxwell Team. [Online podcast](#) (with handouts) by leadership expert John Maxwell regarding transformational leadership.

The Roman Empire In The First Century

Episode 1: Order from Chaos

Guided Discussion with Possible Answers

1. Read “The Authority to Lead versus the Decision to Lead” in *Leading in the Wildland Fire Service* (pp. 5-12).

There is great debate as to whether leaders are born or made. Discuss whether you believe Augustus was a born or made leader. What is the wildland fire service’s perspective on the born versus made debate? Discuss how our leadership framework prepares fire leaders to bring order to chaos.

- **Answers will vary but may include:**
 - **Hereditary rule: Octavian was born into the family as Julius Caesar’s nephew and ultimate heir.**
 - **Augustus was “made” through the lessons learned from his uncle’s leadership failures.**
 - **“Our perspective is that leaders are made, not born.” (See page 60)**
 - **Answers will vary. Promote respectful debate.**
2. What barriers and challenges did Augustus face during his leadership journey?
 - **Early in his life, he lost his mentors: his father and great uncle, Julius Caesar.**
 - **He assumed leadership at a very young age (19).**
 - **He led during a time of great change: conversion from an ailing Republic to an empire.**
 - **Bringing about peace following some of the bloodiest wars in Roman history.**
 - **His own daughter Julia defied him.**
 3. Give an example of where Augustus may have encountered the following excerpt from *Leading in the Wildland Fire Service* (p. 10):

“Leaders balance the risks against the potential gains of any decision and action. Because of the inherent complexity of this world, many times they face morally difficult decisions—with high-stakes consequences—alone unable to receive guidance from a chain of command.”

- **The alliance between Marc Antony and Augustus wanes. Augustus overtakes Egypt.**
- **Augustus wanted to avoid being seen as seeking absolute power. Julius Caesar had “declared himself master of Rome and ruler of an empire still**

aspiring to greatness.” This action threatened a few of Caesar’s small circle of advisors who ultimately killed him.

- **“...a series of disasters convinced the people that Augustus needed not less, but more power.”**

4. What is moral courage? How do wildland fire leaders demonstrate moral courage? Give an example Augustus exhibiting moral courage. How does culture affect moral courage?

- **“Moral courage is a highly esteemed trait displayed by individuals, who, despite adversity and personal risk, decide to act upon their ethical values to help others during difficult ethical dilemmas. (Lachman, 2009; Sekerka & Bagozzi, 2007)” (Murray, 2010)**
- **“Wildland fire leaders demonstrate moral courage by adhering to high ethical standards and choosing the difficult right over the easy wrong. We avoid ethical dilemmas by directing team members to operate in ways that are consistent with our professional standards and by directing them only to actions they can achieve ethically.” (Leading in the Wildland Fire Service, p. 63)**
- **People begging to spare Julie. Roman law called for children to obey. Augustus banishes her.**
- **The moral framework of a culture varies by the ethical values it supports. What Ovid and Julia found acceptable was not acceptable to Augustus. Varied customs, principles, and views can provide members of the group a different perspective to a situation.**

5. Why was Ovid’s poetry a threat to Augustus’ leadership?

- **Ovid’s poetry represented a different value system than Augustus wanted under his leadership.**
- **Augustus’ daughter Julia would defy him.**
- **Augustus allowed this threat to consume him.**
- **Augustus chose his position of leader over father when his daughter failed to follow his commands.**

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