

**\*\*Draft Syllabus Specific Dates Subject to  
Change\*\***

History 510:333

## **France, Old Regime and Revolution**

Professor Jennifer M. Jones

Spring 2018

Rutgers University

Office: 109 Van Dyck Hall,

### **Purpose of Course**

Few events in history have had such a profound impact on Western society and culture and have generated such intense debate among historians as the French Revolution. In this course we will consider the causes, meanings, and consequences of the French Revolution by examining French society and culture in the “long century” between the reign of King Louis XIV (1660) and the end of Napoleon Bonaparte’s empire (1815). Our sources will range from novels and memoirs to Enlightenment treatises to scandalous revolutionary pamphlets attacking Queen Marie-Antoinette. In addition to primary sources, we will encounter a range of conflicting historical interpretations of the Old Regime and Revolution as we try to make sense of a revolution that, in many historians’ eyes gave birth to the modern world. In addition, the course will provide an introduction to the culture of the rich and sparkling century that is fondly known as *le siècle des lumières*.

### **Course Learning Goals:**

1. Develop a clear understanding of the basic chronology of French history from 1715 to 1815, with a focus on the crucial events and turning points.
2. Understand the importance of the key individuals who shaped the politics and culture of eighteenth-century France.
3. Learn about the key institutions of eighteenth-century France: the court, the *parlement*, the Catholic church, the salon, the artisan’s workshop, the press, the political club, the National Assembly, the Committee of Public Safety, the army, etc.
4. Understand the tensions within pre-revolutionary society: class tensions between the aristocracy, bourgeoisie, working class, and peasantry; tensions within the aristocracy; and regional tensions between Paris and the provinces.
5. Reflect on a set of classic historical questions such as: What was the connection of the Enlightenment to the French Revolution? Why did the Revolution keep moving radicalizing? Was the Terror inevitable? Did

Napoleon 'save' or 'end' the Revolution? How was France in 1815 different from France in 1715? Was the French Revolution necessary to reform French society and politics?

6. Engage and discuss a range of interpretations of the French Revolution, from Alexis de Tocqueville's in the 19th century to François Furet's in the 20th century.

7. Understand the key vocabulary and concepts historians use to interpret the Old Regime and Revolution, such as the Public Sphere, 'desacralization,' centralization, radicalization, the gender ideology of Republicanism, and the Terror.

8. Read and analyze primary sources, including novels, memoirs, newspapers, royal proclamations, political tracts, and eyewitness accounts (in translation).

9. Read and analyze secondary historical articles and books written by major historians.

10. Write a major interpretive essay on the causes and consequences of the French Revolution.



### **SAS Core Curriculum:**

This course fulfills the goal: Writing and Communication in a Discipline (WCd)

### **Books available at the Rutgers University Bookstore**

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Confessions*.
- Mme de Lafayette, *The Princesse de Clèves*.
- Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*.
- Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon*.
- David Bell, *The First Total War*.
- Additional primary sources and secondary articles, available on Sakai.

### **Requirements and Grading**

- Active participation in class discussions (10%)
- 5- to 6-page paper on Rousseau's *Confessions*, submitted to turnitin.com through SAKAI (20%) **Due Feb. 22.**
- In-class reading quiz on *The Princesse de Clèves* (5%) **On Feb. 1.**
- Two reading quizzes on *The First Total War* (2.5% each; 5% total)
- 1st midterm exam, based on identifications and short answers (15%) **On Feb. 29.**
- 2nd midterm exam, based on short answers and chronology (15%) **On April 14.**
- 10-page, take-home final essay (30%) **Due May 5.**
- Failure to complete any assignment will result in failure for the course.
- It is expected that you will attend all classes. Missed classes will significantly affect your performance in the class and your final grade.

## Weekly Schedule

### Week 1

January 21      **Introduction: 18th-century France**

#### Readings:

Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, all of Part I, chapters 1-5

Consult any European history textbook for background on 18th-century Europe  
(if you need the review)

Begin reading the novel, *The Princesse de Clèves*

(Study questions for the novel will be posted on Sakai)

### Week 2

January 25      **Peasants and Rural Society**

#### Readings:

Alexis de Tocqueville, Part II, chapters 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12

“Puss and Boots” (Sakai)

January 28      **Absolutism from Louis XIV to Louis XVI**

#### Readings:

Alexis de Tocqueville, Part II, chapters 2-6

Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, intro and chapters 1 and 2

Virtual tour of Versailles (web link on Sakai)

### Week 3

February 1      **Aristocracy and Court Society**  
**Discussion/reading quiz: *The Princesse de Clèves***

#### Readings:

Mme de Lafayette, *The Princesse de Clèves*

Study guide/reading questions for the novel (Sakai)

February 4      **From Rococo to Neoclassicism**

#### Readings:

Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, chapters 3.

Virtual tour of Fragonard and Boucher rooms at the Frick Museum, NYC  
(weblink on Sakai)

Thomas Kaiser, "Mme de Pompadour" (Sakai)

Begin reading Rousseau's *Confessions*

## **Week 4**

February 8 **Urban Life**

### Readings:

Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, chapter 4.  
Robert Darnton, "The Great Cat Massacre" (Sakai)

February 11 **The Enlightenment and the Public Sphere**

### Readings:

Alexis de Tocqueville, Part III, all chapters 1 and 3-8  
Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, chapter 5.  
David A. Bell, *The First Total War*, chapters 1 and 2  
The *Encyclopedie* of Diderot and d'Alembert, a collaborative translation project (Sakai weblink)  
Continue reading Rousseau's *Confessions*, books 1-6

## **Week 5**

February 15 **Jansenism, the *Parlementaires*, and Desacralization**

### Readings:

Tocqueville, Part III, chapter 2  
Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, chapter 6

February 18 **Do Books Make Revolutions? Discussion**

### Readings:

Roger Chartier, "Do Books Make Revolutions?" (Sakai)  
Continue reading Rousseau's *Confessions*.

## **Week 6**

February 22 **Rousseau – Discussion**

### Readings:

Rousseau, *The Confessions*, books 1-6.

**\*\*\* Rousseau paper due in class February 22 \*\*\***

February 25 **Fiscal Crisis, Reform and the Diamond Necklace Affair**

### Readings:

Document on Sakai: "A Royal Tongue-lashing"  
("The Session of the Scourging," 1766)  
Lynn Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette" (Sakai)  
Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, chapter 7 and 8.

**Week 7**

February 29      **First midterm exam**

March 3            **Interpreting the Revolution**

Readings:

Darnton, "What was so Revolutionary about the French Revolution?" (Sakai)  
Browse the website, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" (weblink on Sakai)

**Week 8**

March 7            **1788 to 1789: The Estates General to the Rights of Man**

Readings:

Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, chapter 9  
Documents on Sakai: Abbé Sieyès, What is the Third Estate?; *Cahiers de Doléances*; The Tennis Court Oath; Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen

March 10          **The "Bourgeois, Liberal" Revolution, 1789-1791**

Readings:

David A. Bell, *The First Total War*, chapter 3  
Philipp Ziesche, "Exporting American Revolutions" (Sakai)  
Documents on Sakai: Civil Constitution of the Clergy (July 12, 1790)

**Spring Break: March 18 and 21 -- no class**

**Week 9**

March 21          **The Fall of the Bourgeois, Liberal Revolution**

Readings:

Graham Robb on Marie Antoinette [Sakai]  
Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, chapter 10  
David A. Bell, *The First Total War*, chapter 4

March 24          **Popular revolution and Sans Culottes**

Readings:

Bell, *The First Total War*, chapter 5  
Camille Desmoulins, on "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" website

## Week 10

March 28            **Making Sense of the Terror**

### Readings:

François Furet, "On Terror" (Sakai)

March 31            **The Terror -- discussion**

### Readings:

Documents on Sakai: Robespierre, "Report on the Principles of Political Morality"; The Law on Suspects; Law of 22 Prairial Year II

## Week 11

April 4             **Film: *Danton***

### Readings:

R.R. Palmer, *Twelve Who Ruled: The Year of the Terror in the French Revolution*. (selections on Sakai)

Robert Darnton, "Danton and Double-Entendre," *The New York Review of Books* (Feb. 16, 1984) (Sakai)

April 7             **Film: *Danton* (continued)**

## Week 12

April 11            **Revolutionary Women**

### Readings:

Documents on Sakai: Olympe de Gouges, "The Declaration of the Rights of Woman"; National Convention Outlaws Women's Clubs

April 14            **Second midterm exam**

## Week 13

April 18            **The French Revolution and the Haitian Revolution**

April 21            ***Thermidor* and Directory**

### Readings

Colin Jones, *The Great Nation*, chapter 11  
Bell, *The First Total War*, chapter 6

**Week 14**

April 25

**Napoleon: the most absolutist monarch?**

Readings:

Documents on Sakai: The Imperial Religious Settlement; The French Civil Code

April 28

**Napoleon: bringing the Revolution to Europe**

Readings:

Bell, *The First Total War*, chapters, 7, 8 and Epilogue

**Week 15**

May 2

**France, 1815, a new regime**

**Final Take Home Exam**

Take-home essay due **Wednesday, May 5, 6 p.m.**

Please submit your paper **as an attachment** to the assignments page on our Sakai website. Do not submit your paper via your Sakai drop box.