



France, Old Regime and Revolution

History 510:333

Professor Jennifer M. Jones

Rutgers University

Spring 2024

Monday, Thursday

10:20- 11:40 a.m.

Frelinghuysen B4

Professor Jones's office: Van Dyck 109

In-person office hours: Monday, Noon to 1 pm; online office hours by appointment:

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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 (1660-1715) and the end of Napoleon Bonaparte's empire (1815), with our primary focus on the period 1715-1815. Our sources will range from fairy tales, memoirs, and Enlightenment treatises to revolutionary pamphlets. 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 introduce the culture of the rich and sparkling century that is fondly known as *le siècle des lumières*.

SAS Core Curriculum

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

Course Learning Goals

1. Develop a clear understanding of the basic chronology of French history from 1715 to 1815, with a focus on 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, political clubs, 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, urban workers, 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 relationship between the Enlightenment and the French Revolution? Why did the Revolution keep radicalizing? Was the Terror inevitable? Was the French Revolution necessary to reform French society and politics? What role did the French Revolution play in the revolutions of the Atlantic world? Did Napoleon 'save' or 'end' the Revolution? How was France in 1815 different from France in 1715?
6. Engage with 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, terms, and concepts historians use to interpret the Old Regime and Revolution, such as absolutism, the Public Sphere, "desacralization," centralization, radicalization, the gender ideology of Republicanism, Jacobinism, and the Terror.
8. Read and analyze primary sources in translation, including memoirs, newspapers, royal proclamations, political tracts, and eyewitness accounts.
9. Read and analyze secondary historical articles and books written by major historians.
10. Write a major interpretive essay on the French Revolution.

Available at the RU Bookstore	Articles and chapters available as weblinks or pdfs on Canvas
<p>Jean-Jacques Rousseau, <i>The Confessions</i>, translated by Angela Scholar. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) ISBN 9780199540037. REQUIRED.</p>	<p>Gail Bossenga, "Society" Julian Swann, "The State and Political Culture," "Politics: Louis XV"</p>
<p>Jeremy Popkin, <i>A Short History of the French Revolution</i>, 7th edition. (New York: Taylor, 2019) ISBN 9781138557208. The 7th edition is recommended, but any addition will do. REQUIRED.</p>	<p>Munro Price, "Politics: Louis XVI" Thomas Kaiser, "Mme de Pompadour" Robert Darnton, "The Great Cat Massacre"; "What was so Revolutionary?"</p>
<p>David Bell, <i>The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It</i> (Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2007). Also available as an ebook. Note: pdfs will be available on Canvas. RECOMMENDED</p>	<p>Michael Kwass, "The Global Underground: Smuggling, Rebellion, and the Origins of the French Revolution" Roger Chartier, "Do Books Make Revolutions?" Lynn Hunt, "The Global Financial Origins of 1789" R. Palmer, <i>The Twelve Who Ruled</i>, chapters 1</p>
<p>Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>The Old Regime and the French Revolution</i>. (Note all of Tocqueville's book is available online via RU Libraries: https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/lib/rutgers-ebooks/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=691819 Links to an external site.)</p>	<p>François Furet, "On Terror" Thomas Dodman, "Ordinary Radicalization: Becoming a Citizen-Soldier during the French Revolution" Tyler Stovall, "Black Slavery, White Freedom" David Bell, <i>The First Total War</i>, chapters 4-8, epilogue</p>

Requirements and Grading

- Completion of all assigned reading, including primary sources (approximately 30 pages of reading per class)
- Attendance and active participation in class, including group work (10%) [See Canvas rubric]
- Midterm Exam (17%) [**Monday, Feb 26**]
- Final Exam (20%) [**Monday, May 6**]
- 5 (out of 6) graded in-class assignments (10 points total) 10%
- Pre-writing assignment(s), Rousseau's *Confessions* (3%)
- 5-page paper on Rousseau's *Confessions* (first six books) (15%) [**Thursday, Feb 22**]
- Final essay prospectus (5%) [**Thursday, April 4**]
- 10-page, final essay (20%) [**Friday, April 26**]
- 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.

Please review these websites before the first day of class

- The History Department's "Policy on Mutual Responsibilities and Classroom Etiquette": <https://history.rutgers.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/52-academics/undergraduate-program/108-policy-on-mutual-responsibilities-and-classroom-e>[Links to an external site.](#)
- Disability Services at Rutgers: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>[Links to an external site.](#)
- The RU Academic Integrity Policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>[Links to an external site.](#)

Weekly Schedule

The professor reserves the right to modify the schedule (e.g., shortening or eliminating assignments) as warranted by unforeseen events.

Week 1

Thursday, January 18 **Introductions: 18th-century France**

Readings

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, Part I, chapters 1-5 (21 pages)
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Week 2

Monday, January 22 Peasants and Rural Society

Readings

- Gail Bossenga, “Society”
- Alexis de Tocqueville, Part II, chapters 1 and 12
- Primary document: “Puss and Boots”

Thursday, January 25 Absolutism and Court Society from Louis XIV to Louis XVI *Last day to drop/add*

Readings

- Julian Swann, “The State and Political Culture”
- Virtual tour of Versailles (see links on Canvas site)
- Begin reading Rousseau’s *Confessions*, books 1-6 (266 pages in Oxford World Classics edition).

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Week 3

Monday, January 29 From Rococo to Neoclassicism

Readings

- Virtual tour of Fragonard and Boucher rooms at the Frick Museum, NYC
- Thomas Kaiser, "Mme de Pompadour"

Thursday, February 1 Urban Life in 18th-century France

Graded in-class assignment #1

Readings

- Robert Darnton, "The Great Cat Massacre"
- Michael Kwass, “The Global Underground: Smuggling, Rebellion, and the Origins of the French Revolution”
- Continue reading Rousseau’s *Confessions*; read to at least Book 3 by February 5

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Week 4

Monday, February 5 The Enlightenment and the Public Sphere

Readings

- Alexis de Tocqueville, Part III, chapters 1 and 3-8
- Jeremy Popkin, *A Short History of the French Revolution*, chapter 1
- Continue reading Rousseau's *Confessions*, books 1-6; read books 4-5 by February 8.

Thursday, February 8 Do Books Make Revolutions?

Graded in-class assignment #2

Readings

- Roger Chartier, “Do Books Make Revolutions?”
 - Primary source: The *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and d'Alembert, a collaborative translation project
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Week 5

Monday, February 12 King vs. *Parlementaires* and Desacralization

Readings

- Julian Swann, “Politics: Louis XV”
- Tocqueville, Part III, chapter 2
- Primary source: “A Royal Tongue-lashing” (1766)
- Finish reading Rousseau’s *Confessions*; read to end of book 6 by February 15

Thursday, February 15 Jean-Jacques Rousseau -- Discussion

In-class pre-writing assignment: Rousseau’s *Confessions*

Readings

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

Monday, February 19 Fiscal Crisis and the Diamond Necklace Affair

Reading

- Munro Price, “Politics: Louis XVI”
- Lynn Hunt, “The Global Financial Origins of 1789”
- Popkin, chapter 2.

Thursday, February 22 Interpreting the Revolution

Rousseau paper due

Readings

- Darnton, “What was so Revolutionary about the French Revolution?”
 - BBC video, “Tearing up the Revolution”
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Week 7

Monday, February 26 **Midterm Exam**

Thursday, February 29 **Storming the Bastille, 1788-1789**

Readings

- Primary source documents: Abbé Sieyès, “What is the Third Estate?”; *Cahiers de Doléances*; The séance royale; eye witness accounts of the storming of the Bastille

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Week 8

Monday, March 4 **The “Bourgeois” & “Liberal” Revolution, 1789-1791**

Readings

- Popkin, chapter 3
- Primary source documents: Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, Civil Constitution of the Clergy (July 12, 1790); The Constitution of 1791

Thursday, March 7 **The Fall of the Bourgeois, Liberal Revolution, 1790-1791**

Readings

- Popkin, chapter 4
- David A. Bell, *The First Total War*, chapter 4

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Spring Break, No class Monday, March 11, Thursday, March 14

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Week 9

Monday, March 18 **Radicalization**

Graded in-class assignment #3

Readings

- **Thomas Dodman**, “Ordinary Radicalization: Becoming a Citizen-Soldier during the French Revolution”

Thursday, March 21 **Popular Revolution and *Sans Culottes***

Readings

- Popkin, chapter 5
 - Bell, *The First Total War*, chapter 5
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Week 10

Monday, March 25 **Making Sense of the Terror**

Readings

- François Furet, “On Terror”
- R. Palmer, “Twelve Terrorists to Be,” in *Twelve Who Ruled*, chapter 1

Thursday, March 28 **The Terror – Discussion**

Graded in-class assignment #4

Readings

- Primary source documents: Robespierre, “Report on the Principles of Political Morality”; The Law on Suspects; Law of 22 Prairial Year II
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Week 11

Monday, April 1 **Film: *Danton***

Thursday, April 4 **Film: *Danton*; and discussion**

Reading

- Robert Darnton, "Danton and Double-Entendre" (optional)

Prospectus for Final Essay due

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Week 12

Monday, April 8 **Revolutionary Women**

Readings

- Primary documents: Olympe de Gouges, “The Declaration of the Rights of Woman”; National Convention Outlaws Women’s Clubs

Thursday, April 11 The French Revolution and the Haitian Revolution

Graded in-class assignment #5

Readings

- Primary source document: Abbé Grégoire, "Memoir in Favor of the People of Color" (1789)
- Tyler Stovall, "Black Slavery, White Freedom" (skip section on American Rev, pp 112-121)

Week 13

Monday, April 15 *Thermidor* and the Directory

Readings

- Popkin, Chapter 6
- Bell, *The First Total War*, chapter 6

Thursday, April 18 Napoleon: the most absolutist monarch?

Readings

- Popkin, Chapter 7 (Plus, Primary sources related to Napoleon)

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Week 14

Monday, April 22 Napoleon: Bringing the Revolution to Europe?

Readings

- Popkin, chapter 8
- Bell, *The First Total War*, chapters 7

Thursday, April 25 The Fall of Napoleon

Graded in-class assignment #6

Readings

- Popkin, chapter 9
- Bell, *The First Total War*, chapter 8 and epilogue

Final Essay: Due Friday, April 26 by 11:59 p.m.

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Week 15

Monday, April 29 France, 1815: a new regime?

Final Exam: Monday, May 6, 8:00 am to 11 am