This research seminar focuses on British and French attitudes toward people of other lands. While we will define “foreign” broadly, the readings place a particular focus on attitudes toward the Americas, which figured especially prominently in Enlightenment discourse. (To a much lesser extent, we will include writing about Africa, the South Pacific, and the Middle East.) During the Enlightenment and revolutionary era, contact with other countries and peoples encouraged Europeans to debate and write about a wide range of topics, including human nature and sexuality, politics, racial identity, Christianity and religion, slavery, diverse cultural practices, the impact of climate on culture, etc. Since France and England were the dominant colonial powers in the West, their debates played a crucial role in forging long-term European attitudes toward other parts of the world.

The major purpose of the seminar is to offer students the opportunity to do a primary-source research paper on some aspect of French or British attitudes toward the foreign in this era. Students can write on diverse topics, focus on views about any geographic area of the world, and choose from a wide variety of sources for the paper. All sorts of individuals contributed to European debates about foreigners, including authors of travelogues, novels, political theory, personal letters, fantasy literature, caricature and pamphlets, etc. During the first half of the course, we will do some background reading and sample a variety of primary sources. The second half of the course will be devoted to researching and writing your papers, and also discussing each other’s research projects.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: The central requirement of this course is a research paper (c. 20-25 pp.) on a topic related to French or English views of foreigners. Choice of topic and compilation of bibliography will begin early in the semester, and the second half of the semester will focus primarily on the research and writing of the paper. Short assignments earlier in the semester will be oriented toward preparing you for this final paper. These short assignments include: a short 5-page paper analyzing primary material; a two-page proposal; a bibliography; an outline; a group discussion of topics. Rough drafts of the final paper are due on Nov. 22 and will be shared & discussed by groups. Final paper is due Dec. 13. Participation in seminar discussions is also a crucial requirement of the course.

The books marked with an asterisk (*) have been ordered at the University Bookstore and placed on reserve at H.C. White. Other articles and documents are in a packet available at the Copy Center in the basement of the Humanities Building in room 1650 or on reserve in H.C. White.

Week 1: (Sept 6) INTRODUCTION

Week 2: (Sept 13) THE ENLIGHTENMENT & THE “NOBLE SAVAGE”
Dorinda Outram, The Enlightenment (N.Y., 1995), 63-79
Sankar Muthu, Enlightenment against Empire (Princeton, 2003), 244-51
Baron de Lahontan, A Dialogue between the Author and Adario, part of New Voyages to North-America (Chicago, 1905), 517-35, 549-50, 570-89, 605-18 (out of print old delicate book)
If you feel that you need the background, read Jane Sampson, Race and Empire (London, 2005), 26-42

Week 3: (Sept 20): CLIMATE AND RACE
Montesquieu, from The Spirit of the Laws in Selected Political Writings, ed. Melvin Richter (Indianapolis, 1990), 194-200
Week 4: (Sept 27) GENDER, THE NOVEL, & THE AMERICAS
* Françoise de Graffigny, Letters from a Peruvian Woman, 1-174
Brief sections from “America” in Encyclopedia Britannica, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh, 1797). Read the passages between the arrows & look at the maps and illustrations.
* William Kelleher Storey, Writing History: A Guide for Students, 87-111. Read this advice on writing before you write your document paper.

*** SHORT PAPER DUE, Friday, Sept. 30 at 5 pm in my Box #5031 on the 5th floor of Humanities; Document analysis

Week 5: (Oct 4) CUSTOMS, RELIGION, & SEXUALITY

Week 6: (Oct 11) THE FOCUS ON RESEARCH
* Storey, Writing History: A Guide for Students, 1-59
We will meet in the library this week.

Week 7: (Oct 18) RACE AND SLAVERY
Abbe Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, excerpt from Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trades of the Europeans in the East and West Indies (1774), Book XI: 48-61
Olaudah Equiano, Equiano’s Travels, ed. Paul Edwards (NY, 1967), 1-32

Week 8: (Oct 25) INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS
*** 2 PAGE PROPOSAL = description of topic, key primary sources, and central questions, due at your meeting with me.

Week 9: (Nov 1) WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER
Sample Senior Paper: “From Barbary to France: Processions of Redemption and Early Modern Cultural Identity” (unpublished, used anonymously with student’s permission)
* Storey, Writing History: A Guide for Students, 61-86
We will have a visit from a Writing Lab Instructor.

*** BIBLIOGRAPHY of primary and secondary sources due Friday, Nov. 4.

Week 10: (Nov 8) INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS
*** OUTLINE due at your meeting with me.

Week 11: (Nov 15) GROUP MEETING: PRESENTATION OF TOPICS & SOURCES

Week 12: (Nov 22) EXCHANGE OF DRAFTS
*** Rough drafts due at class.

Week 13: (Nov 29) DISCUSSION OF ROUGH DRAFTS

Week 14: (Dec 6) INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Week 15: (Dec 13) FINAL PRESENTATIONS
*** Final Paper due on Dec. 13