History 707: THE OLD REGIME AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

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Humanities 5124

This course will focus on the social, cultural, and political history of France from the late sixteenth century through the French Revolution. We will pay particular attention to recent historiographical debates over method. We will study the Annales school, Marxist interpretations, the recent interest in political culture and gender, and various approaches to social history.

All books marked with an asterisk should be available at People's Bookstore on Gilman Street. There is also a packet of articles and documents available in the Humanities Copy Center.

Each student will write three medium-length papers (c. 9-10 pages) which will analyze and critique historiographical or methodological issues raised by the readings. If it is appropriate, one paper may be a research proposal on a topic chosen by the student. Students will also be responsible for leading the discussions in certain weeks.

WEEK 1 (January 25): INTRODUCTION

Those students who do not have much background in early modern French history may wish to use this period to read a survey such as Robin Briggs, Early Modern France.

WEEK 2 (Feb 1): THE WARS OF RELIGION

*Barbara Diefendorf, Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris.


Week 3 (Feb 8): THE PEASANTRY: THE ANNALES APPROACH


Roland Mousnier, "The Role of the Peasants in the French Revolts as a Whole between 1624 and 1648," in his Peasant Uprisings in Seventeenth-Century France, Russia, and China, 32-52.

Recommended (if not now in your life, then later):

Week 4 (Feb 15): LOUIS XIV: THE MONARCHY & ABSOLUTIST STATE

**PAPER DUE (9-10 pages), Friday, Feb 19 (Box #5031)

WEEK 5: (Feb 22) THE FAMILY AND PRIVATE LIFE

WEEK 6 (Mar 1): ARTISAN WORLDS: AUTOBIOGRAPHY, TRADITION, AND GENDER
*Robert Darnton, "Workers' Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre," from The Great Cat Massacre, 75-104

WEEK 7 (Mar 15): SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT
Isser Woloch, Eighteenth-Century Europe, 231-64
*Darnton, Great Cat Massacre, 145-263
Margaret Jacobs, Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe, ch. 8

WEEK 8 (Mar 22): ENLIGHTENMENT: ROUSSEAU
*Carol Blum, Rousseau and the Republic of Virtue, 13-132

WEEK 9 (Mar 29): ORIGINS OF REVOLUTION 1: IDEOLOGY

** PAPER DUE (9-10 pages) on Fri. April 2
Week 10 (Apr 5): ORIGINS OF REV 2: MARXISTS vs. REVISIONISTS

Week 11 (Apr 12): POPULAR POLITICS IN PARIS
*Albert Soboul, The Sans-Culottes, 1-134

Week 12 (Apr 19): REVOLUTION IN CULTURE
François Furet, "The Revolution is Over," from his Interpreting the French Revolution, 1-79 (ON RESERVE in HC White)
*Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution, 1-119

Week 13 (April 26): GENDER & THE REVOLUTION
*Joan Landes, Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution, 1-167, 201-206
*Blum, Rousseau and the Republic of Virtue, 204-15

Week 14 (May 3): THE TERROR
*Soboul, Sans-Culottes, 158-223, 251-65
*Blum, Rousseau and the Republic of Virtue, 153-168, skim 169-203, 216-282

** Final PAPER DUE (9-10 pages) Friday, May 7.