IDENTITY AND CULTURE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPE & COLONIES

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Course Description:

This “Historian’s Craft” course explores how historians probe, interpret, analyze, and narrate the past. At the same time, we will pose a fundamental question: how did people living in Europe and its colonies imagine their identities in the eighteenth century? And how did discussions of identity interact with new calls for equality and rights in the eighteenth century? In this era, Europe and its colonies all had deeply unequal and hierarchical societies. Tradition and social structures supported the view that aristocrats should hold power over peasants, Christians over Jews, men over women, masters over slaves, and Europeans over non-Europeans. But the Enlightenment, the major cultural movement of the 1700s, produced debate on inequality and “natural human rights.” Ordinary individuals began to see their identities in a new light, question power hierarchies, and imagine a different future. We will look at how all sorts of women and men, from slaves to aristocrats, reflected on their position in society, their sense of self, and perceptions of injustice. Europe’s increasing global empire also played a pivotal role in this story. It both produced European self-questioning and generated devastating power systems, such as plantation slavery. To get inside the thinking and aspirations of all kinds of actors, we will read excerpts from autobiographies, travel narratives, letters, and one novel. At the very end of the course, we will briefly examine the longer-term significance of the debates of this Enlightenment era by looking at the French and Haitian Revolutions.

While we pose these pivotal questions, we will pay close attention to questions of historical method. Students will analyze different types of sources, learn how to ferret out and assess evidence, and develop their own research, writing, and speaking skills.

Reading:
*Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 9th ed. (Boston: Bedford-Saint-Martin’s, 2018) [NB that I give section numbers below in case you are using 7th or 8th ed.]
*** Course Packet of primary and secondary sources. **All reading without an asterisk is in this course packet, including reading from internet sources.**
Reading: The above books have been ordered and should be available at the University Bookstore and on reserve in H. C. White library. They are marked with an asterisk (*) in the assignments below. The READER (or course packet) of xeroxed articles and documents is available at the Copy Center at 6120 Sewell Hall (the Social Sciences Building) and on reserve. The reader is required. Students will have the opportunity to discuss in the readings in lecture and/or in weekly discussion sections on Thursday.

Requirements: Course grades will be based as follows: 25% participation in section and lecture; 20% final paper; 15% each for two 5-page papers; 5% each for two very short papers; 5% for your oral report and initial proposal with bibliography; 5% for your participation in Louis Mandrin’s mock trial; 5% for peer review of final papers. The Assignment Sheet offers a more detailed list of assignments, percentages, and due dates. Grades are weighted in this way: A 95; AB 90; B 85; BC 80; C 75; CD 70; D 65; F 60 points. You are required to attend both lecture and discussion, although you will be allowed three missed classes (one freebie and two excused classes if necessary.) Any absences beyond those three will reduce your grade. Many students feel anxious about speaking up in class, but active and lively participation will increase your enjoyment, your learning, and your grade. The T.A. and I will work toward creating welcoming classrooms. If you still feel uncomfortable or shy, come to office hours and we will discuss strategies for overcoming those reservations.

Credit Hours & Work Load: This 4-credit course has 4 hours of group meetings per week (each 50 minute segment of lecture and discussion counts as one hour according to UW-Madison's credit hour policy). The course also carries the expectation that you will spend an average of at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, researching, writing, preparing for discussions, doing peer review, and/or preparing for your oral presentation or the Louis Mandrin trial.

Electronic Devices: Although technology can be incredibly useful, recent research suggests that laptop use in classrooms does not improve student learning and often actually hinders it. One study at York University found that students who took notes by laptop scored “11% worse on comprehension tests” than those who did not; students who were continually distracted by neighbors’ computer screens earned grades 17% lower than those who were not. Stunning results: that makes one to two letter grades lower on their test scores. The researchers interpreted these results as evidence of our tendency to overestimate our ability to multi-task. In addition, a study done at UCLA and Princeton determined that taking notes by hand caused students to focus their attention more sharply and to reformulate and process the material as they listened. As a result, the students tended to remember and understand the material more fully.¹ We are all interested in promoting the most effective student learning, so laptop and phone use will not be allowed during class.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes:

To improve writing and oral communication skills and to hone critical thinking by exploring unexpected historical events and diverse human reactions
To develop research skills and the ability to read difficult, unfamiliar texts
To fuse creative thinking with intensive writing skills
To build the ability to assess sources critically in both print and internet sources
To analyze and reflect on deep-rooted and varied human issues, still present today, such as:
- How do individuals forge identities and construct a sense of self?
- How do “authenticity” and “performance” interact when individuals present themselves?
- How does writing interact with identity-construction?
- Likewise, how do various categories of identity – such as gender, nationality, class, religion, status, etc. – inform individual behavior and life trajectory?
- How does studying individuals shed light on broader social or cultural questions about a historical time and place?
To debate and make concrete & understandable various core interpretive concepts, such as “agency”, “identity”, “contingency”, “structure”, “ideology”, etc.
To gain greater understanding of the dynamics of eighteenth-century Europe, the Enlightenment, and colonization

History Lab: The History Lab is a writing center run by History PhD students who can help you at any stage of the writing process: drafting your imaginative research question, outlining a paper, composing a thesis statement, or revising a draft. Book an appointment online for a one on one appointment: http://go.wisc.edu/hlab.

Plagiarism: The UW Writing Center offers this definition of plagiarism from the Merriam Webster Dictionary: "to steal and pass off (the ideas and words of another) as one's own" or to "present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source." Plagiarized work constitutes a serious offense and will receive an F. Students must produce all of their own work without borrowing any sentences or sentence fragments from the web, books, or articles. All quotations should be put into quotation marks and cited. For information about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, here are two sources: http://www.plagiarism.org; http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html. These sites also have useful tips on paraphrasing and quoting from others' work.

UNIT I: EUROPEAN SOCIETY, THE ENLIGHTENMENT, RIGHTS, & IDENTITY

Week 1 (Sept. 4) INTRODUCTION
Reading: Smith and Watson, Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives, 2nd ed., 1-20, 103-126 [In this chapter focus on 103-04, 109-121, 124-125 & skim intervening pages]
Isser Woloch & Gregory S. Brown, Eighteenth-Century Europe, 2nd ed., 89-112

** ASSIGNMENT #1, due at section, Thurs., Sept.12, 2-pg. paper analyzing a primary source
**Week 2** (Sept. 9-11) EUROPEAN SOCIETY, FAMILY, & IDENTITY
Reading: Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography*, 232-55
Casanova de Seingalt, from the *The Story of My Life*, Table of Contents, 203-209, 234-41, and his “Escapes from Prison,” in *Confessions and Self-Portraits*, 115-124

**Week 3** (Sept. 16-18): ENLIGHTENMENT, READING, & WRITING
Reading: Margaret Jacob, *The Secular Enlightenment*, 6-32
Voltaire, “Equality” from his *Philosophical Dictionary*, in *Social Thought*, 23-26

**ASSIGNMENT #2:** due Thursday, Sept. 26 at section: 2-page paper assessing Hunt’s argument

**Week 4** (Sept. 23-25) ENLIGHTENMENT II: INVENTING HUMAN RIGHTS
Reading: *Lynn Hunt, Inventing Human Rights*, 15-112
Sample Papers on colonial New England and on Toussaint Louverture
* Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 42-45 & 52-82 [sections 3d & 4a-4g]

**ASSIGNMENT #3:** at section on Thurs, Oct. 3: Oral assignment: Put Louis Mandrin on trial

**Week 5** (Sept. 30-Oct. 2) CRIMINAL JUSTICE, SMUGGLING, & POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The Political Testament of Louis Mandrin, Generalissime of the Troops of Smugglers, written by his own hand in Prison, 7th ed. (Geneva, 1755), 2 pages of translation in typescript
[Louis Mandrin, allegedly]. Authentic memoirs of the remarkable life and surprising exploits of Mandrin, captain-general of the French smugglers, who for the space of nine months resolutely stood in defiance of the whole army of France. Printed for M. Cooper [etc.], 1755, 1-15, 18-20, 26-34, 38-39. [http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/9geHv0](http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/9geHv0)

**UNIT II: GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS AND VARIED IDENTITIES**

**ASSIGNMENT #4:** due Thursday, Oct. 10 at section. 5-page paper analyzing the fictional autobiography of Françoise de Graffigny

**Week 6** (Oct. 7-9): GENDER, EXOTICISM, AND FICTIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY
Reading: *Françoise de Graffigny, Letters from a Peruvian Woman*, trans. David Kornacker (MLA, 1993), read 3-29, skim 29-46 (chaps. 3-8), read 47-174
Week 7 (Oct. 14-16): TRAVEL NARRATIVES & LETTERS: WINDOWS ON IDENTITY
Susan E. Whyman, The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers, 1660-1800, 19-30, 258-261
Emily Clark, ed., Voices from an Early American Convent: Marie Madelaine Hachard and the New Orleans Ursulines, 1727-1760, 36-63, 72-91

Week 8 (Oct. 21-23): GLOBALIZATION, SLAVERY, AND SLAVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

**ASSIGNMENT #5, due Thurs., Oct 31 at section: 5-page paper analyzing the contest over interpreting identity issues in Equiano

Week 9 (Oct. 28-30): ABOLITIONISM, EQUIANO, AND DEBATING IDENTITY
Reading: Vincent Carretta, Equiano, the African: Biography of a Self-Made Man, xi-xix, 1-16

Week 10 (Nov. 4-6) SELF-QUESTIONING AND THE NEW WORLD
Sankar Muthu, Enlightenment against Empire, 244-51
Baron de Lahontan, A Dialogue between the Author and Adario, part of New Voyages to North-America, 517-35, 549-50, 570-89, 605-18

UNIT III: TOWARD REVOLUTIONS AND RESEARCH PAPERS

Week 11 (Nov. 11-13) JUDAISM, RIGHTS, & RESEARCH PAPER
Sample Paper on Identity: “On the “Throne of Hairdressing”: Hairdos and Heroics in the Memoirs of Léonard Autié” (Marie-Antoinette’s hairdresser), used anonymously with student’s permission
* Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 83-119 [sections 5,6, & 7a-7b]

ASSIGNMENT #6: due Thurs., Nov. 21 at section: Brief Oral Report on final paper topic

Week 12 (Nov. 18-20): AUTOBIOGRAPHY, POLITICAL THOUGHT, & INEQUALITY
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, from Discourse on the Origins of Inequality in Social Thought, 39-45
Rousseau, from The Social Contract, from Internet Modern History Sourcebook, 1-4 typescript
**ASSIGNMENT #7: Draft of final paper, due Mon., Nov. 25 in lecture

Week 13 (Nov. 25-27): TOWARD THE REVOLUTIONS
No section, No Wed. lecture here.
Reading: Your fellow students’ drafts of final papers

** ASSIGNMENT #8: Peer review of fellow students’ papers, due in Section, Thurs., Dec. 5

Week 14 (Dec. 2-4) DECLARING RIGHTS: REVOLUTION IN FRANCE
Section: Peer Review of Drafts
Reading: ** Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights*, 113-175

** ASSIGNMENT #10: Final Papers due Thursday, Dec. 12

Week 15 (Dec. 9-11) SEIZING LIBERTY: REVOLUTION IN HAITI
No Reading