

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
Department of History  
Semester I, 2021-2022

**History 201: The Historian's Craft**  
**THE FRENCH REVOLUTION**

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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 delve into one of the most exciting and crucial moments in modern European history: the French Revolution. Course units focus on four pivotal questions. Why and how does Revolution break out in the ancient and powerful monarchy of France? When the revolutionaries suddenly try to create “equal rights” and destroy the old ways, how do these innovations transform the everyday lives of individuals – including aristocrats, slaves, working men and women, peasants, and religious minorities? Third, how do the revolutionaries attempt to invent democracy and why is it so difficult and so violent? And finally, how can the French possibly end their Revolution? 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:

Timothy Tackett, When the King Took Flight  
Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 8<sup>th</sup> ed.  
Course Packet of primary and secondary sources [at L & S Copy Center: 6120 Sewell Hall]

Reading: Students will have the opportunity to discuss in the readings in lecture and/or in weekly discussion sections on Monday. Complete the reading each week for the following Monday. 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 asterisks (\*\*) in the assignments below. There is also a very important READER (a course packet) of xeroxed articles and documents available at the Copy Center at 6120 Sewell Hall (the Social Sciences Building) and on reserve at HC White. The reader is required. To save you money, I have put chapters from different textbooks into the course reader. The textbooks are listed below as “useful overviews.” The McPhee book is online via the library website.

Useful Short Overviews

Peter McPhee, The French Revolution, 1789-1799 (He has several more detailed accounts also)  
<https://search.library.wisc.edu/catalog/9913311228302121>

Jack R Censer & Lynn Hunt, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: The French Revolution

Lynn Hunt & Jack R Censer, The French Revolution and Napoleon: Crucible of the Modern World

Jeremy D. Popkin, A Short History of the French Revolution, multiple editions available.

If you are seeking a more detailed survey on some aspect of the Revolution, please ask me.

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 Robespierre’s mock trial; 5% for peer review of final papers. All written assignments should be turned in as hard copy on paper. The Assignment Sheet offers a more detailed list of assignments, percentages, and due dates. 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, with adaptations for Covid.) Any absences beyond those three will reduce your grade, unless you come by very ill. 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 getting over 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 Robespierre 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.<sup>1</sup> We are all interested in promoting the most effective student learning, so laptop and phone use will not be allowed during class.

#### Course Goals:

To analyze and reflect on deep-rooted and varied human issues, still present today, such as:

Why is so difficult to create democracy and equality?

Is violence ever justified to overcome oppression or injustice?

Why and how do certain individuals forge power so effectively (or so dangerously!) in any given context?

To develop research skills and the ability to read difficult, unfamiliar texts

To improve writing and oral communication skills and to hone critical thinking by exploring unexpected historical events and diverse human reactions

To fuse creative thinking with deep research and intensive writing skills

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<sup>1</sup> Faria Sana, Tina Weston, and Nicholas J. Cepeda, “Laptop multitasking hinders classroom learning for both users and nearby peers,” *Computers & Education*, March 2013, Volume 62: 24-31; Pam Mueller and Daniel Oppenheimer, “The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking,” *Psychological Science*, April 2014, (25) 6: 1159-1168. With thanks to Katie Jarvis for these references.

To conceptualize and imagine how different social groups have dealt with cataclysmic change, utopian euphoria, unexpected hardships, and so on  
To evaluate the impact of vast grassroots, social movements on historical change  
To gain greater understanding of the dynamics of revolutionary era and assess its many impacts on the emerging modern world, both in Europe and beyond

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.

COVID-19: This course meets in person. To protect one another, we will all follow UW-Madison policy on masking indoors in buildings and classrooms. Office hours for the moment will happen via Zoom, but I hope to change that. If anyone falls ill or needs to quarantine, the TA and I will set up computers in our classrooms to facilitate class participation from quarantine via Zoom. We will make adjustments in assignments and due dates for any student who becomes ill and needs flexibility.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you need instructional accommodations, the TA and I will work with you in coordination with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Please reach out the McBurney Center at the very beginning of the semester and let me know as well. [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#). Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

**UNIT I. THE ORIGINS OF REVOLUTION**

**WEEK 1 (Sept. 9): INTRODUCTION: OLD REGIME MONARCHY & SOCIETY**

Reading for next Monday: Jack R Censer & Lynn Hunt, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: The French Revolution, 1-25

Peter McPhee, The French Revolution, 1789-1799, 4-23

**WEEK 2 (Sept. 13-16) ORIGINS OF THE REVOLUTION**

Reading for next Monday: Jeremy D. Popkin, A Short History of the French Revolution, Chapter 2

“Memoir of the Princes of the Blood” in Dwyer & McPhee, The French Revolution & Napoleon, 2-3

Isabelle de Charrière, “The Nobleman,” in Mason & Rizzo, eds, The French Revolution, 36-38

Emmanuel Sieyès, "What is the Third Estate?" in Hunt, French Revolution and Human Rights, 63-70

\*\*Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, Chapters 1, 2, 3 sections a-c; In 9<sup>th</sup> ed. =

pages 1-25 & 33-42

\*\*ASSIGNMENT #1, due Monday, Sept. 20 at section: 2-page paper analyzing primary source, Sieyès, "What is the Third Estate?"

## **UNIT II. THE OUTBREAK OF REVOLUTION**

### **WEEK 3 (Sept. 20-23) 1789: REVOLUTION BREAKS OUT**

Reading for next Monday: 3 versions of the Popular Activism in 1789

Peter McPhee "A Social Revolution?: Rethinking Popular Activism in 1789" in The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution (Oxford, Eng., 2015), 164-179

Simon Schama, Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution (N.Y., 1989), xiii-xvi & 399-406

Micah Alpaugh, "The Politics of Escalation in French Revolutionary Protest: Political Demonstrations, Non-violence and Violence in the Grandes Journées of 1789" French History 23 (2009): 336-359

\*\*Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, Chapters 3d, 4; in 9<sup>th</sup> ed. = pages 42-45 & 52-82

\*\*ASSIGNMENT #2: due Monday, Sept. 27 at section: 2-page paper comparing & assessing two secondary source interpretations

### **WEEK 4 (Sept. 27-30) SOCIAL REVOLUTION BEGINS: ATTACKING INEQUALITY**

No Thursday lecture: Instead watch two 30" lectures online via Canvas on "Paris Commands its King (on Oct. Days)" and "Political Apprenticeship in Democracy"

Reading for next Monday: Jeremy D. Popkin, A Short History of the French Revolution, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., 35-51

Antoine de Baecque, "The Citizen in Caricature: Past and Present," in The French Revolution and the Meaning of Citizenship, ed. René Waldinger, Philip Dawson, and Isser Woloch (Westport, Conn., 1993), 59-79

Sample Papers: 1/ "Masculinity in Colonial New England"; 2/ "Toussaint-Louverture" (for Tues. 8/5)

### **WEEK 5 (Oct. 4-7) WRITING ISSUES & REVOLUTION**

Reading for next Monday: Primary Sources on the October Days

1) Marquise de La Tour du Pin-Gouvernet, Memoirs, 124-35

2) Marquis de Ferrières, Memoirs, in The French Revolution, ed. Pernoud and Flaissier, 61-66

3) Stanislaus Maillard in Women in Revolutionary Paris: 1789-1795, ed. Levy et al., 36-42

4) Testimony by Jeanne Martin & Françoise Rolin in French Revolution, ed. Dawson, 59-62 and 63-66

5) Letters by two British diplomats, Mr. Garlike and Lord Fitzgerald, in English Witnesses, 66-72

\*\*Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, Chapters 5 & 6, In 9<sup>th</sup> ed. = pages 83-111

NB that I have placed two SAMPLE SECONDARY ACCOUNTS of the Oct. Days on CANVAS:  
1/ focusing on women by O. Hufton; 2/ focusing on Queen Marie-Antoinette by E. Lever

ASSIGNMENT #3: due Monday, Oct. 11 at section. 5-page paper ON USING PRIMARY SOURCES to create an interpretation of the October Days. For further help with your writing, read

\*\*Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, Chapters 5 & 6, In 9<sup>th</sup> ed. = pages 83-111

### **UNIT III: RIGHTS & REVOLUTION**

#### **WEEK 6 (Oct. 11-14): ISSUE OF RIGHTS: Women and Religious Minorities**

Reading for next Monday: Lynn Hunt, The Invention of Human Rights (N.Y. 2007), 146-175, 254-257  
Shanti Singham, “Betwixt Cattle and Men: Jews, Blacks, and Women, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen,” in The French Idea of Freedom, ed. Dale Van Kley 114-53  
Documents on Rights in Lynn Hunt, ed., The French Revolution and Human Rights, 77-79  
(Declaration), 83 (men without property), 93-101 (Jews), 119-131 (women for this Tues. 8/14)  
\*\*Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, Chapter 7, In 9<sup>th</sup> ed. = pages 112-151

#### **WEEK 7 (Oct. 18-21): RIGHTS, SLAVERY, & THE REVOLUTION IN THE COLONIES**

Reading for next Monday: Jack R Censer & Lynn Hunt, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, 115-138  
J. Popkin, ed, Facing Racial Revolution: Eyewitness Accounts of the Haitian Insurrection, 59-92, 245-51  
Documents on Free People of Color in Geggus, ed. The Haitian Revolution, 44-47; & in Rafe Blaufarb, ed., The Revolutionary Atlantic: Republican Visions, 1760-1830, 331-335

\*\*ASSIGNMENT #4: due Thursday, Oct. 28 at lecture for unit on rights: 5-p. document paper

### **UNIT IV: THE REVOLUTION RADICALIZES**

#### **WEEK 8 (Oct. 25-28): FROM CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY TO THE REPUBLIC**

THURS., 10/28: We will meet in Memorial Library for a session with the European History Librarian.

Reading for next Monday: \*Timothy Tackett, When the King Took Flight, 1-56, 83-118, 137-155, 165-198, 219-223  
Marie Antoinette, Memoir to her brother, Emperor Leopold on “Ending the French Revolution,” Sept. 8, 1791, in Paul Beik, ed. The French Revolution, 176-185 (for Tuesday lecture 11/2)

\*\* ASSIGNMENT #5: LIBRARY EXERCISE due Thursday, Nov. 4, at lecture

#### **WEEK 9 (Nov. 1-4): WAR & MAKING A REPUBLIC**

Reading for next Monday: McPhee, The French Revolution, 89-130  
2 sample Netflix Papers: 1/ “Louis Philippe: Prince Equality”; 2/ “Marie: Creole Slave and Revolutionary”  
Lynn Hunt, “Hercules and the Radical Image in the French Revolution,” in Jack R Censer, ed., The French Revolution and Intellectual History (Chicago, 1989), 166-185

#### **WEEK 10 (Nov. 8-11): THE REVOLUTION HEATS UP: CRISIS & CREATIVITY**

Reading for next Tues.: Lynn Hunt & Jack R Censer, The French Revolution and Napoleon: Crucible of the Modern World, 77-113  
“Dechristianization” in Paul Beik, ed. The French Revolution, 266-271

\*\* Note: this week’s reading is light to give you time to work hard on finding sources and beginning your paper.

## **UNIT V: THE TERROR**

### **WEEK 11 (Nov. 15-18): THE TERROR**

No Section: Francisco will hold additional office hours to discuss paper topics

Reading for next Monday: Marisa Linton, “Robespierre and the Terror,” History Today 56 (2006): 23-29

Marisa Linton, “The Terror and Politics,” in The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution, ed. David Andress, 471-486.

Robespierre speeches: from “On Revolutionary Government” in Rudé, Robespierre, & “On the Moral and Political Principles of Domestic Policy” in Philip Dawson, ed., French Revolution, 129-137

ASSIGNMENT #6: due Mon., Nov. 22 at section: Brief Oral Report, Short Proposal and Annotated Bibliography for final paper.

### **WEEK 12 (Nov. 22-23): THE TERROR II**

Reading for next Monday: George Rudé, ed., Robespierre, 147-152 (historian Lefebvre); 170-173 (historian Rudé); 104-112, 115-130 (contemporary attackers & defenders)

NB: For the Trial of Robespierre, there are more readings in Canvas, as noted on the Assignment.

ASSIGNMENT #7: Monday., Nov 29 in section: Robespierre on Trial – oral arguments

## **UNIT VI: HOW CAN YOU END A REVOLUTION?**

### **WEEK 13 (Nov. 29-Dec. 2): ENDING THE REVOLUTION: THERMIDOR TO NAPOLEON**

No Reading: Work on your Drafts

\*\*ASSIGNMENT #8: Draft of final paper, due Mon., Dec. 6 in section

### **WEEK 14 (Dec. 6-9) NAPOLEON’S EMPIRE**

Reading for next Monday: Your fellow students’ paper drafts

\*\* ASSIGNMENT #9: Peer review of fellow students’ papers, due in Section, Mon. Dec. 13

### **WEEK 15 (Dec. 13-14) NAPOLEON’S FALL & LEGACIES OF REVOLUTIONARY ERA**

No Reading

\*\* ASSIGNMENT #10: Final Papers due Friday, Dec. 17