

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History
Semester I, 2016-2017

History 201: The Historian's Craft
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Prof. Suzanne Desan

Prof. Office Hours: Tues. 3:30-4:30; Thurs. 1:30-2:30

T.A.: Grace Allen

T.A. Office Hours: Tues. 1-3

Office: 5120 Humanities

smdesan@wisc.edu

geallen@wisc.edu

T.A. Office: 4272 Humanities

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 analysis and 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:

Peter McPhee, The French Revolution, 1789-1799

Timothy Tackett, When the King Took Flight

Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 8th ed.

Course Packet of primary and secondary 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. There is also a 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. This course packet contains all the readings listed below that do not have an asterisk. The reader is required. Students will have the opportunity to discuss in the readings in lecture and/or in weekly discussion sections the following Monday.

Requirements: Course grades will be based as follows: 30% 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 participation in Robespierre’s mock trial; 5% for peer review of final papers. 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.) Any absences beyond those three will reduce your grade. Lively participation in class will increase your enjoyment, your learning, and your grade.

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:

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 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

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. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, here are two sources: <http://www.plagiarism.org>; and <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html>. These sites also have useful tips on paraphrasing and quoting from others' work.

¹ 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.

UNIT I. THE OUTBREAK OF REVOLUTION

WEEK 1 (Sept. 6-8): INTRODUCTION: OLD REGIME MONARCHY & SOCIETY

Reading: *Peter McPhee, The French Revolution, 1789-1799 (NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002), 4-23
Jack R Censer & Lynn Hunt, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: The French Revolution, 1-25

WEEK 2 (Sept. 13-15): CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION

Reading: *McPhee, French Revolution, 24-63

“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, 8th ed. (NY, 2015), 1-38

**ASSIGNMENT #1, due Monday, Sept. 19 at section: 1-page paper analyzing primary source, Sieyès, “What is the Third Estate?”

WEEK 3 (Sept. 20-22): REVOLUTION BREAKS OUT in 1789

Reading: 3 Secondary Accounts 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, 38-81

**ASSIGNMENT #2: due Monday, Sept. 26 at section: 2-page paper comparing & assessing two secondary source interpretations

UNIT II: RIGHTS & REVOLUTION

WEEK 4 (Sept. 27-29): THE ISSUE OF RIGHTS

Reading: 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: The Old Regime and the Declaration of Rights of 1789, ed. Dale Van Kley (Stanford, 1994), 114-53

Documents on Rights in Lynn Hunt, ed., The French Revolution and Human Rights 77-79 (Declaration of Rights); 83 (Robespierre on men without property); 93-101 (Jews); 119-131 (women)

**Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 111-154

WEEK 5 (Oct. 4-6): PEOPLE OF PARIS, THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS, & THE KING

Reading: Sample Paper: "Masculinity in Colonial New England"

Olwen Hufton, Women and the Limits of Citizenship in the French Revolution, 4-18, 156-159

Evelyne Lever, Marie-Antoinette: The Last Queen of France, 223-232

Primary source accounts: 1) Marquise de La Tour du Pin-Gouvernet, Memoirs, 124-35

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

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

4) Testimony by Jeanne Martin & Françoise Rolin, in Dawson, The French Revolution, 59-62 & 63-6

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

****ASSIGNMENT #3:** due Monday, Oct. 10 at section. 5-page paper on using primary sources to analyze secondary source accounts of the October Days

WEEK 6 (Oct. 11-13): RIGHTS & REACTIONS ABROAD

On Tuesday, Oct. 11, we will meet in Memorial Library, Room 231.

Reading: Edmund Burke, "Reflections on the Revolution in France," and Thomas Paine, "The Rights of Man" in The Impact of the French Revolution: Texts from Britain in the 1790s, ed. Iain Hampsher-Monk, 56-66, 75-87, 102-03 (Burke); 132-143, 156-65 (Paine)

**** ASSIGNMENT #4:** Library Exercise due Tuesday, Oct. 18 at class

WEEK 7 (Oct. 18-20): RIGHTS & THE REVOLUTION IN THE COLONIES

Reading: Censer & Hunt, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: The French Revolution, 115-138

Jeremy Popkin, ed., Facing Racial Revolution: Eyewitness Accounts of the Haitian Insurrection, 59-92

****ASSIGNMENT #5:** due Friday, Oct. 28 in Grace's box for unit on rights: 5-p. document paper

UNIT III: THE REVOLUTION RADICALIZES

WEEK 8 (Oct. 25-27): FROM CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY TO THE REPUBLIC

Reading: * McPhee, The French Revolution, 64-88

Marie Antoinette, "Ending the French Revolution," in Paul Beik, ed. The French Revolution, 176-185

*Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 82-110

You may want to start reading *Timothy Tackett, When the King Took Flight, see pages below

WEEK 9 (Nov. 1-3): REMAKING CULTURE & SOCIETY

Reading: *Timothy Tackett, When the King Took Flight, 1-56, 83-118, 137-155, 165-198, 219-223

* McPhee, The French Revolution, 89-108

"Dechristianization" in Paul Beik, ed. The French Revolution, 266-271

WEEK 10 (Nov. 8-10): REVOLUTION IN CRISIS: THE TERROR

Reading: * McPhee, The French Revolution, 109-153

Marissa Linton, "Robespierre and the Terror," History Today 56 (August 2006): 23-29

Robespierre speeches: "On Revolutionary Government" in Rudé, ed., Robespierre; "On the Moral and Political Principles of Domestic Policy" in Dawson, ed., French Revolution, 129-137

** ASSIGNMENT #6: dues Thurs., Nov. 17 at lecture: Annotated Bibliography for final paper

WEEK 11 (Nov. 15-17): THE PROBLEM OF THE TERROR

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

** ASSIGNMENT #7: Monday, Nov 21 in section: Robespierre on Trial – oral arguments

UNIT IV: HOW CAN YOU END A REVOLUTION?

WEEK 12 (Nov. 22): ROBESPIERRE ON TRIAL

Robespierre on Trial at section

No lecture: Professor Desan will hold extended office hours for final papers

No reading – work on your revolutionary experience paper

Thanksgiving break

**ASSIGNMENT #8: Draft of 8-10 p. final paper (imaginative research project), due Thurs., Dec. 1

WEEK 13 (Nov. 29-Dec. 1): ENDING THE REVOLUTION: THERMIDOR TO NAPOLEON

Reading: Your fellow students' paper drafts

** ASSIGNMENT #9: Peer review of fellow students' paper, due in Section, Mon. Dec. 5

WEEK 14 (Dec. 6-8): NAPOLEON: POLITICS & EMPIRE-BUILDING

Reading: Rafe Blaufarb, ed., Napoleon: Symbol for an Age (Boston, 2008), 1-29, 212-13

David Jordan, "Napoleon as Revolutionary" in Dwyer and Forrest, ed., Napoleon and his Empire, 29-43

WEEK 15 (Dec. 13-15): NAPOLEON'S FALL & LEGACIES OF REVOLUTIONARY ERA

No Reading

** ASSIGNMENT #10: Final Papers due Friday, Dec. 16