

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
Department of History  
Semester II, 2018-2019

HISTORY 600: Identity & Autobiography in Eighteenth-Century Europe

Tuesday 1:20-3:20

Office hours: Tuesday 3:20-5:20 pm

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How did various Europeans conceptualize their personal identities in the eighteenth century? How did they imagine and write about their life trajectories? Some historians have argued that modern European notions of “selfhood” and “individual identity” emerged in this era. To debate and explore these questions, we will read autobiographies, letters, and fictional accounts by diverse individuals from Europe and its colonies. These men and women come from widely different walks of life. We will read their words in conjunction with secondary sources which probe the nature of identity and the genre of life narratives.

The major purpose of the seminar is to offer students the opportunity to do a primary-source research paper on any issue to do with identity and sense of self in eighteenth-century Europe and the Atlantic World. Students can write on diverse topics, including issues not raised in our collective reading. Paper topics will probably focus on a single eighteenth-century individual (or possibly two individuals) who left behind sources that facilitate exploring the writer’s identity, self-presentation, and relationships to other people and issues of the time period. Possible sources include diaries or memoirs; personal letters; travelogues; novels or other literary sources in autobiographical format. 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:** Two most important requirements: 1/ lively participation in seminar discussion; and 2/ producing an original research paper (c. 20-25 pp.) on some historical aspect of eighteenth-century identity. 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; an oral presentation of topics. Rough drafts of the final paper are due on April 16 and will be shared & discussed by groups of your fellow students. Final paper is due April 30.

**READING:** We will use a course packet of excerpts from primary and secondary sources. This course packet is available at the Copy Center at 6120 Sewell Hall (the Social Sciences Building). I have ordered only one book, the novel by Françoise de Graffigny, Letters from a Peruvian Woman. It will also be on 2-hour reserve at H. C. White.

**CREDIT HOURS & WORK LOAD:** The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course’s learning activities (at

least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes most weeks), reading, research, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Develop research skills and the ability to read difficult, unfamiliar texts  
Improve written and oral communication skills and hone critical thinking skills by exploring unexpected historical events and diverse human reactions  
Assess, interpret, and integrate diverse primary sources for a major research project  
Craft an original argument in dialogue with existing secondary work  
Conceptualize and compose a lengthy research paper  
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?  
Debate and make concrete & understandable various core interpretive concepts, such as “agency”, “identity”, “contingency”, “structure”, “ideology”, etc.  
Gain greater understanding of the dynamics of eighteenth-century Europe, the Enlightenment, and colonization

### 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>.

### NOTE-TAKING STYLE

For the papers and bibliography, use the “Chicago-Turabian Style” as outlined on the UW Writing Center website: <https://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocChicago.html>. That website gives examples of how to cite various sources. You can use either endnotes or footnotes. Here is a basic footnote<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup>Louis Gottschalk and Margaret Maddox, *Lafayette in the French Revolution, through the October Days* (Chicago, 1969), 231-235.

Here is the same text as a bibliography entry:

Gottschalk, Louis and Margaret Maddox. *Lafayette in the French Revolution, through the October Days*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969.

Week 1: (Jan. 22) INTRODUCTION

Week 2: (Jan. 29) AUTOBIOGRAPHY: ADVENTUROUS & PHILOSOPHICAL SELVES

Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives, 1-20, 103-126, 232-55, 297-358

Casanova de Seingalt, The Story of My Life, Table of Contents, 203-209, 234-41, and his "Escapes from Prison," in Confessions and Self-Portraits: 4600 Years of Autobiography, ed. Saul K. Padover, 115-124

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, from The Confessions in Enlightenment Thought: An Anthology of Sources, ed. Margaret L. King, 195-197

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Reveries of the Solitary Walker, trans. Russell Goulbourne (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011), 11-19, 49-58

Week 3: (Feb. 5) INTERPRETING IDENTITY: COMING OF AGE, COURTSHIP, & RELIGION

Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'," Theory and Society 29 (2000): 1-47

Marie-Jeanne Roland, The Memoirs of Madame Roland: A Heroine of the French Revolution, ed. Evelyn Shuckburgh, 125-127, 168-178, 198-208, 242-252

Solomon Maimon, Solomon Maimon: An Autobiography, trans. J. Clark Murray, ix-xix, 59-80, 187-196

Week 4: (Feb. 12) TRAVEL & THE OTHER

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in Before their Time: Six Women Writers of the Eighteenth Century, ed. Katharine M. Rogers, 48-51, & in Selected Letters, ed. Robert Halsband, 90-97

Emily Clark, ed., Voices from an Early American Convent: Marie Madelaine Hachard and the New Orleans Ursulines, 1727-1760, 36-63, 72-91

Brissot de Warville, New Travels in the United States of America (1788, ed. from 1791), 3p. <http://americainclass.org/sources/makingrevolution/independence/text7/warvillnewtravels.pdf>

Elizabeth Justice, A Voyage to Russia (London, 1736), v-viii, 3-5, 12-18

\*\*\* SHORT PAPER DUE, Thursday, Feb. 14 by 5pm: 5-page document analysis

Week 5: (Feb. 19) INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

No class. We will have individually scheduled meetings to discuss writing issues and possible topics.

Week 6: (Feb. 26) SLAVERY, DIASPORA, & IDENTITY

NOTE: you may want to intersperse reading part of the primary source by Equiano with reading the secondary-source debate between Carretta and Sweet.

Vincent Carretta, Equiano, the African: Biography of a Self-Made Man, xi-xix, 1-16

Vincent Carretta, "Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa: New Light on an Eighteenth-

Century Question of Identity" Slavery and Abolition 20 (1999): 96-105.  
Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, ed. Robert Allison, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 41-73, 114-129, 166 bottom-179  
James H. Sweet, "Olaudah Equiano, Domingo Álvares, and the Methodological Challenges of Studying the African Diaspora," American Historical Review 114 (2009): 279-306

Week 7: (March 5) A FICTIONAL SELF: WRITING, GENDER, & TRANSATLANTIC SELF

\* Françoise de Graffigny, Letters from a Peruvian Woman, trans. David Kornacker, 1-174

Week 8: (March 12) INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

\*\*\* 2 PAGE PROPOSAL = description of topic, key primary sources, and central questions, due at your meeting with me.

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: (March 26) WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER

Sample Student Paper: "The Making of Madame de Staël: The Daughter, the Scholar, the Mistress", used anonymously with student's permission

We will have a discussion with a Writing Lab Instructor.

\*\*\* BIBLIOGRAPHY of primary and secondary sources due Thursday, March 28.

Week 10: (April 2) INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

\*\*\* OUTLINE due at your meeting with me.

Week 11: (April 9) ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Sample Student introductions

Week 12: (April 16) EXCHANGE OF DRAFTS

\*\*\* Rough drafts due at class.

Week 13: (April 23) DISCUSSION OF ROUGH DRAFTS & CONCLUSIONS

Reading = Drafts of 3 Fellow Students' Research Papers & Sample Student conclusions.

\*\*\*Peer Review of each other's drafts

In addition to our meetings to discuss drafts early in the week, I will hold extensive office hours for individual meetings.

Week 14: (April 30) WRAP UP CLASS

\*\*\* Final Paper due on April 30.