

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History
Semester II, 2008-2009

History 707: THE OLD REGIME AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

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5124 Humanities (262-8694)

This course will focus on the social, cultural, and political history of France from the seventeenth century through the French Revolution. We will pay particular attention to recent historiographical debates over method. We will study the Annales school, various approaches to the French Revolution, and recent work on popular culture, state-building, colonization, the Enlightenment and public sphere, gender, and political culture.

All books marked with an asterisk should be available at the University Bookstore. All of the books are on reserve in HC White. There is also a packet of articles and documents available in the Humanities Copy Center at 1650 Humanities. Several articles are online.

Each student will choose between two different options for the course's written work: 1/ write three medium-length papers (c. 10 pages) which will analyze and critique historiographical or methodological issues raised by the readings; OR 2/ write two short (5-6 p.) reviews or think pieces on method, and one long final paper (c. 20 p.) on a pertinent historiographical or methodological issue. In either of these options, 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 (Jan. 21): INTRODUCTION

Those students who do not have much background in early modern French history may wish to use this period to read in surveys, such as selected essays in William Doyle, ed. Old Regime France; Robin Briggs, Early Modern France (survey, mainly 17th c.); James Collins, The State in Early Modern France; Alfred Cobban, History of Modern France, 1715-1799, vol. 1 (mainly 18th c. political history); or Colin Jones, The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon (lively history).

Week 2 (Jan. 28): THE ANNALISTE APPROACH

Lynn Hunt, "French History in the Last Twenty Years: The Rise and Fall of the Annales Paradigm," Journal of Contemporary History 21 (1986): 209-224 (online)

Fernand Braudel, Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, 3 volumes, trans. Siân Reynolds (NY, 1981-84, orig. ed. 1979). I, The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible, table of contents, 23-29, 70-92; II, The Wheels of Commerce, table of contents, 21-23, 458-522, 537-555, 600-601; III, The Perspective of the World, table of contents, 17-20, 351-51, 619-632

NB: you should know about Histories: French Constructions of the Past, ed. Jacques Revel and Lynn Hunt. This book has a long intro on the evolution of French History, including the Annales school, and has many useful excerpts. (On reserve)

WEEK 3 (Feb. 4): ABSOLUTISM & LOUIS XIV

William Beik, "A Social Interpretation of the Reign of Louis XIV," in L'état ou le roi: Les fondations de la modernité monarchique en France (XIVe-XVIIe siècles), ed. Neithard Bulst et al. (Paris, 1996), 145-160

** William Beik, ed. Louis XIV and Absolutism: A Brief Study with Documents (Boston: Bedford-Saint-Martin's, 2000), 1-35, 40-58, 63-69, 78-96, 121-37, 166-78, 183-88, 219-22

WEEK 4 (Feb. 11): NOBLES, COMMONERS, JUSTICE, & IDENTITY: A MICROHISTORY

** Jeffrey Ravel, The Would-Be Commoner: A Tale of Deception, Murder, and Justice in Seventeenth-Century France (Boston, 2008)

Jacques Revel, "Microanalysis and the Construction of the Social" in Histories: French Constructions of the Past, ed. Jacques Revel and Lynn Hunt (NY, 1995), 492-502

Week 5 (Feb. 18): PARISIAN CULTURE & CONSUMPTION

** David Garrioch, The Making of Revolutionary Paris (Berkeley, 2002), read 1-83, skim 84-141, read 142-282

Michael Kwass, "Big Hair: A Wig History of Consumption in Eighteenth-Century France," American Historical Review 111 (2006): 631-59 (online)

WEEK 6 (Feb. 25): COLONIZATION AND RACE: FOCUS ON LOUISIANA

If you need background, read Sylvia Marzagalli, "The French Atlantic," Itinerario 23 (1999): 70-83 (in packet)

Guillaume Aubert, "'The Blood of France': Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World." William and Mary Quarterly 61 (2004): 439-78 (online)

Shannon Lee Dawdy, Building the Devil's Empire: French Colonial New Orleans (Chicago, 2008), 1-23, 139-188, 219-246

Khalil Saadani, "Gift Exchange between the French and Native Americans in Louisiana," & James Taylor Carson, "Sacred Circles and Dangerous Peoples: Native Cosmology and the French Settlement of Louisiana," both in French Colonial Louisiana and the Atlantic World, ed. Bradley G. Bond (Baton Rouge, 2005), 43-82

WEEK 7 (Mar. 4): ENLIGHTENMENT, PUBLIC SPHERE, & GENDER

**Dena Goodman, The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment (Ithaca, N.Y., 1996), 1-52, skim 53-89, read 90-182, 233-280

Robert Darnton, "The Forbidden Best-sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France," in The French Revolution: The Essential Readings, ed. Ronald Schechter (Oxford, 2001), 106-137

Roger Chartier, "Do Books Make Revolutions?" from his The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution, reprinted in Peter Jones, ed., The French Revolution in Social and Political Perspective (London, 1996), 166-88

**PAPER DUE, Friday, March 6 (Box #5031)

WEEK 8 (Mar. 11):: THE ORIGINS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION I

** Georges Lefebvre, The Coming of the French Revolution, trans. R. R. Palmer (Princeton, 2005, orig. ed. 1939), entire (If you absolutely need to skim, skim chaps. 12-15, but don't tell Katie if you skim the October Days chapter. Be sure to read Conclusion.)

TCW Blanning, The French Revolution: Class War or Culture War (N.Y., 1998), 1-75

WEEK 9 (Mar. 25): THE ORIGINS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION II

Colin Jones, "The Bourgeois Revolution Revivified: 1789 and Social Change," in Rewriting the French Revolution, ed. Colin Lucas; reprinted in Jones, ed. The French Revolution, 72-99

Keith M. Baker, "On the Problem of the Ideological Origins of the French Revolution," & "Public Opinion as Political Invention," from his Inventing the French Revolution, reprinted respectively in The French Revolution: The Essential Readings, ed. Ronald Schechter (Oxford, 2001), 52-74, and in Jones, ed., The French Revolution, 128-66

Jay M. Smith, Nobility Reimagined: The Patriotic Nation in Eighteenth-Century France (Ithaca, NY, 2005), 1-26, 143-181, 222-79

Week 10 (April 1) OVERVIEW OF REVOLUTION: CONTRASTING PERSPECTIVES

** William Doyle, The French Revolution: A Very Short Introduction (London & N.Y., 2001), 1-18, 37-108

** Peter McPhee, Living the French Revolution, 1789-90 (London & N.Y., 2006), 1-131

Week 11 (April 8): INTERPRETING THE REVOLUTION via BIOGRAPHY: ROBESPIERRE

** Ruth Scurr, Fatal Purity: Robespierre and the French Revolution (N.Y., 2006). This is a long book, so skim as necessary. Better to skim in early chapters (e.g. chaps. 3 & 5). Be sure to read Part V (chaps. 9 & 10) because interpreting Robespierre always means also interpreting the Terror.

Lynn Hunt, Review of David Andress, The Terror and Ruth Scurr, Fatal Purity: Robespierre and the French Revolution in The Nation (to be sent via email)

Antoine de Baecque, Glory and Terror: Seven Deaths under the French Revolution (N.Y. & London, 2001, orig. ed. 1997), 121-142

** PAPER DUE on Fri., April 10

Week 12 (April 15): REVOLUTION IN SOCIETY AND CULTURE

** Peter McPhee, Living the French Revolution, 1789-90, 132-228

Joseph Clarke, Commemorating the Dead in Revolutionary France: Revolution and Remembrance, 1789-1799 (Cambridge, Eng., 2007), 1-9, 170-215

Mona Ozouf, Festivals and the French Revolution, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, Mass., 1998, orig. ed. 1976), 159-196

Week 13 (April 22) : INTERPRETING THE TERROR

Patrice Higonnet, "Terror, Trauma, and the 'Young Marx' Explanation of Jacobin Politics," Past and Present 191 (2006): 121-164 (online)

Albert Mathiez, "A Realistic Necessity," Richard Cobb, "A Mentality Shaped by Circumstance," and Georges Lefebvre, "A Synthesis," in The French Revolution: Conflicting Interpretations, ed. Frank A. Kafker and James M. Laux (N.Y., 1968), 228-249, 269-278

François Furet, Interpreting the French Revolution (N.Y., 1981, orig ed. 1978), 1-79

Arno Mayer, The Furies: Violence and Terror in the French and Russian Revolutions (Princeton, NJ, 2000), 3-44

Week 14 (April 29): POLITICS, CULTURE, AND GENDER

Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution (Berkeley, 1984), 87-119

Lynn Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie-Antoinette: Political Pornography and the Problem of the Feminine in the French Revolution," reprinted in Peter Jones, ed. The French Revolution in Social and Political Perspective (London, 1996), 268-84

Carla Hesse, The Other Enlightenment: How French Women Became Modern (Princeton, 2001), 31-55

Lisa DiCaprio, The Origins of the Welfare State: Women, Work, and the French Revolution (Champaign, Il., 2007), ix- xiii, 45-92

Week 15 (May 6): REVOLUTION BEYOND THE HEXAGON

David Bell, The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It (Boston, 2007), 84-119

Andrew Jainchill, Reimagining Politics after the Terror: The Republican Origins of French Liberalism (Ithaca, NY, 2008), 1-25, 141-196

Robin Blackburn, "Haiti, Slavery, and the Age of the Democratic Revolution" William and Mary Quarterly 63 (2006): 643-674 (online)

Nick Nesbitt, Universal Emancipation: The Haitian Revolution and the Radical Enlightenment (Charlottesville, Va., 2008), 1-40

** Final PAPER DUE on Monday, May 11