

History 159

The French Revolution

Note: This syllabus is subject to change

T, Th 3:00-4:15 PM
Professor Elizabeth Foster
East Hall 106
elizabeth.foster@tufts.edu (email is the best way to reach me)
Office hours: M, W 3-4 PM and by appointment

Course Description

This course examines the French Revolution, one of the most extraordinary upheavals in European history. Topics include the literary world of eighteenth century France, the crisis of the Old Regime, revolutionary politics and culture, the radicalization of the revolution, slave revolts in Saint-Domingue (Haiti), as well as legacies and historical interpretations of the revolution. The course draws on both primary source readings and the wealth of imaginative historical inquiry that the revolution has prompted.

Structure

This class meets twice a week and combines lecture and discussion of the readings. Students are expected to come prepared to participate in discussion every day. Readings are due on the day they are listed on the syllabus. Students will also write two papers and take a final examination.

Requirements

- Attendance and informed participation in class.
- Short quizzes on revolutionary events
- 5-7 page essay
- 10-15 page paper
- Final examination

All students are expected to be respectful of one another and the instructor at all times and to do their own work. Any incidence of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in a zero on the assignment, possible failure of the course, and disciplinary action. Late assignments will be docked 1/3 grade per day late.

Students requesting an accommodation as a result of a documented disability must register with the Disability Services Office at the beginning of the semester. To do so, call the Student Services Desk at 617-627-2000 to arrange an appointment with Sandra Baer, Program Director of Disability Services. I cannot make accommodations without notification from the DSO.

Grading

- Active and informed participation in class discussion and activities 15%
- Short quizzes on revolutionary events 5%
- 5-7 page essay 20%
- 10-15 page paper 30%
- Final examination 30%

Readings

Unless otherwise noted, the assigned books are available at the bookstore and on reserve at Tisch library. All other class readings are available on the course Blackboard site.

Books available for purchase (all are in paperback):

- Keith Baker, ed. *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization: The Old Regime and the French Revolution* Vol. 7. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987)
- Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982)
- William Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, 2e (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 2003.
- Jeremy Popkin, *Facing Racial Revolution: Eyewitness Accounts of the Haitian Insurrection* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007)
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* G. D. H. Cole, trans. (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2003)
- Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* Stuart Gilbert, trans. (New York: Anchor Books, 1983)

Readings available on Blackboard:

- Keith Baker, “On the Problem of the Ideological Origins of the French Revolution” in *Inventing the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 12-27
- Lynn Hunt, “The Imagery of Radicalism” in *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 87-119
- Mona Ozouf, “The Festival of the Federation: Model and Reality” in *Festivals and the French Revolution* Alan Sheridan, trans. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 33-60

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Week 1: Introduction

1/21: The French Revolution and the Modern Era

Week 2: Old Regime Institutions and Society

1/26: Society and Politics Under the Old Regime

Read: Loyseau, "A Treatise on Orders" and Bossuet "Politics Derived from the Words of Holy Scripture" in Baker, *UCRWC*, 13-47

1/28: Louis XVI's France

Read: "Protests of the Parlement of Paris" in Baker, *UCRWC*, 118-123; Doyle, 1-43

Week 3: The Enlightenment & Political Thought in 18th Century France

2/2: Enlightenment and Public Opinion

Read: Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, Books 1 & 2; Doyle, *French Revolution*, 44-65

2/4: New Trends in Political Thought

Read: Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, Book 3

Week 4: The Literary World of the Old Regime

2/9: Beyond the *Philosophes*

Read: Darnton, *Literary Underground*, 1-41, 122-147

2/11: Do books cause Revolutions?

Read: Darnton, *Literary Underground*, 167-208

Week 5: The Crisis of the Old Regime

2/16: A Royal Mess

Read: "Proceedings of the Assembly of Notables" and "Parliamentary Opposition" in Baker, *UCRWC*, 124-142; Doyle, *French Revolution*, 66-85

Week 6: 1789

2/23: The Estates General

Read: Sieyès, "What is the Third Estate?" in Baker, *UCRWC*, 154-179; Doyle, *French Revolution*, 86-111

2/25: Dismantling Privilege

Read: "Peasant Grievances", "Decrees of the National Assembly 10-11 August 1789," and "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen" in Baker, *UCRWC*, 208-216; 226-230; 237-239; Doyle, *French Revolution*, 112-135

*****Essay 1 Due this Week*****

Week 7: The "Liberal" Phase, 1789-91

3/2: The Revolution and the Church

Read: "The Civil Constitution of the Clergy," "The Constitution of 1791" in Baker, *UCRWC*, 239-241, 249-260; Doyle, 136-158

3/4: Politics and Imagery

Read: Ozouf, "The Festival of Federation: Model and Reality," 33-60

*****Quiz 1 on 1789-1791 this Week*****

Week 8: Radicalization and War

3/9: Republican Revolution and Popular Violence

Read: Hunt, "The Imagery of Radicalism," 87-119; Doyle, 174-195

3/11: War in Europe

Read: Doyle, 159-173, 197-219

Week 9: Terror

3/16: Counterrevolution

Read: Doyle, 220-246, 297-317

3/18: The Reign of Terror

Read: Terror Selections in Baker, *UCRWC*, 330-391; Doyle, 247-271

*****Quiz 2 on 1791-1794*****

Week 10: Reaction

3/30: Thermidor

Read: Doyle, 272-296

4/1: The Directory

Read: “Manifesto of the Directors” and “The Conspiracy of Equals” in Baker, *UCRWC*, 392-403; Doyle, 318-340

Week 11: The Rise of Bonaparte

4/6: Bonaparte Seizes Power

Read: “The Coup of 18 Brumaire 1799” in Baker, *UCRWC*, 405-427; Doyle 369-390

4/8: The Imperial Regime: Revolutionary or Not?

Read: “Napoleonic Ideas” in Baker, *UCRWC*, 416-427

Week 12: Revolution in Saint-Domingue

4/13: A Slave Uprising

Read: Popkin, TBA

4/15: Race and Revolutionary Ideals

Read Popkin, TBA

Week 13: Interpreting the French Revolution: the Example of de Tocqueville

4/20: de Tocqueville’s Analysis

Read: de Tocqueville, *Old Regime and Revolution*, 1-96

4/22: Continuity and Change

Read: de Tocqueville, *Old Regime and Revolution*, 97-211

Week 14: Reflections

4/27: Gender in the French Revolution

Read: “Declaration of the Rights of Woman” in Baker, *UCRWC*, 261-268; Selections on women’s political clubs in Hunt, *French Revolution and Human Rights*, 132-139

4/29: The French Revolution and the History of Ideas

Read: Baker, “On the Problem of the Ideological Origins of the French Revolution”, 12-27; Selections, Karl Marx and the French Revolution, TBA

*****Paper due this Week*****

Final Exam TBA