

## The French Revolution and the Old Regime

History 730  
Tues 4:10-6:55

Fall 2013  
Sarah Curtis

The French Revolution remains one of the most important events in world history, a catalyst for change throughout Europe and beyond. When asked what its impact had been, in 1972 Chinese premier Zhou En-lai reportedly replied “It’s too soon to tell.” For over 200 years, since the publication of Edmond Burke’s “quickie” book on the Revolution, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, in 1790, its meaning has been analyzed and debated. This seminar will examine the history and the historiography of the French Revolution with a retrospective look at the Old Regime as it influenced the outbreak of revolution and a brief look ahead to the Napoleonic period and beyond. It is not intended to be a survey of events but an examination of the historical debates and historical literature surrounding the Revolution and the development of modern political culture.

### Prerequisites:

This is a graduate history seminar. Graduate standing in history or permission of the instructor is required for enrollment. In most cases, it is expected that students will have already taken History 700.

### Readings:

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore.

Paul Hanson, *Contesting the French Revolution* (ISBN 9781405160841)

Gary Kates, *The French Revolution: Recent Debates and New Controversies*, 2d ed. (ISBN 9780415358330)

Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (ISBN 9780674536579)

Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The Causes Célèbres of Prerevolutionary France* (ISBN 9780520201637)

R. R. Palmer, *Twelve Who Ruled* (ISBN 9780691121871)

Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (ISBN 9780520241565)

Olwen Hufton, *Women and the Limits of Citizenship in the French Revolution* (ISBN 9780802068378)

Jeremy Popkin, *You Are All Free: The Haitian Revolution and the Abolition of Slavery* (ISBN 9780521731942)

David Bell, *The First Total War: Napoleon’s Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It* (ISBN 9780618919819)

Juan Cole, *Napoleon’s Egypt: Invading the Middle East* (ISBN 9780230606036)

### Office hours and contact information:

Tuesday 11-12, Thursday 2-4, and by appointment

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**Additional Reading:**

Some of the readings are on electronic reserves at the library, which is available to you through the iLearn page for this course (click on button in lower right-hand corner). These readings are indicated on the schedule with the abbreviation ER. Journal articles are available directly on one of the electronic databases in the SFSU Library (JSTOR, Project Muse, etc.). If you do not know how to use these resources, please consult a reference librarian.

The Hanson book (*Contesting the French Revolution*) is intended to give you an narrative overview of the Revolution and Napoleonic periods with some historiographic perspective. I have not outlined specific assignments from it on the syllabus; you should read when it is helpful to you.

**Course requirements:**

Attendance at seminar sessions is required. If you have to miss a class, please inform me *in advance* of the meeting by telephone or e-mail. More than one absence will affect your grade. This is primarily a reading seminar, so you should come to class prepared to discuss that week's reading. I expect every student to participate in every class.

There will be four short papers (5-7 pp.) based on the interpretive issues raised by the previous weeks' readings; suggested topics will be handed out in class. These papers will be due September 24, October 22, November 12, and December 17.

In addition to the papers, each student will be assigned as an "expert witness" for one week of the seminar. This means that you will have a deeper understanding of the material under discussion, obtained by consulting the reviews of the assigned book (when appropriate) and doing some additional reading. You should meet with me at least two weeks before your assigned session to discuss what kinds of materials you should be consulting. You should prepare a short written review of the additional material and sources to hand out to the rest of the class as well as presenting it orally. You should also come to that class with 2-3 questions to start off our discussion.

**Grading:**

Grades will be determined as follows: participation 25%, four papers 60 % (15% each), review and presentation 15%. If you are unable to complete the course requirements by the end of semester, it is your responsibility to withdraw from the course. I will issue no instructor-initiated withdrawals or incompletes. Student-initiated incompletes are reserved for serious medical excuses (with documentation) or other natural disasters within the last three weeks of the semester. The last day to drop a course without a "W" is September 9, and the last day to withdraw with a "W" (except for "serious and compelling reasons") is November 22.

Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice/TTY 415-338-2472) or by email (dprc@sfsu.edu).

## **Schedule:**

**August 27**

### **Introduction**

**September 3**

### **High and Low Culture**

#### Reading for discussion:

Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (entire)

Roger Chartier, "The Public Sphere and Public Opinion," in *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution* (ER)

#### Further reading:

Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*

Robert Darnton, "An Early Information Society: News and the Media in Eighteenth-Century Paris," *American Historical Review* 105 (2000): 1-35.

Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*

Carla Hesse, *The Other Enlightenment: How French Women Became Modern*

Daniel Roche, *A History of Everyday Things: The Birth of Consumption in France, 1600-1800*

Jeremy Popkin, ed., *Panorama of Paris: Selections from Le Tableau de Paris by Louis-Sebastien Mercier*

**September 10**

### **The Crisis of the Old Regime**

#### Reading for discussion:

Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs* (entire)

#### Further reading:

Dena Goodman, ed., *Marie-Antoinette: Writings on the Body of a Queen*

Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France*

Arlette Farge and Jacques Revel, *The Vanishing Children of Paris: Rumor and Politics before the French Revolution*

Dale Van Kley, *The Damiens Affair and the Unraveling of the Ancien Régime, 1750-1770*

Dale Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution: From Calvin to the Civil Constitution, 1560-1791*

Keith Michael Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century*

Keith Michael Baker, ed., *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, 4 vols. (covers entire Revolution)

## **September 17**

### **The Bourgeois Revolution?**

#### Reading for discussion:

In Kates, *French Revolution*:

Albert Soboul, "The French Revolution in the History of the Contemporary World"

Colin Lucas, "Nobles, Bourgeois, and the Origins of the French Revolution"

François Furet, "The French Revolution Revisited"

Keith Baker, "Constitution"

Colin Jones, "Bourgeois Revolution Revivified: 1789 and Social Change"

Sarah Maza, "Why There Was No Middle-Class Consciousness in Prerevolutionary France"

Timothy Tackett, "Nobles and Third Estate in the Revolutionary Dynamic of the National Assembly, 1789-90"

#### Further reading:

Georges Lefebvre, *The Coming of the French Revolution*

George Rudé, *The French Revolution*

Albert Soboul, *A Short History of the French Revolution*

François Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution*

François Furet, *Marx and the French Revolution*

William Doyle, *Origins of the French Revolution*

George C. Comminel, *Rethinking the French Revolution: Marxism and the Revisionist Challenge*

William Sewall, *A Rhetoric of Bourgeois Revolution: The Abbé Sieyès and What is the Third Estate?*

Timothy Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary: The Deputies of the French National Assembly and the Emergence of a Revolutionary Culture*

Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*

John McManners, "The Historiography of the French Revolution," in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. 8

## **September 24**

### **Popular Revolution**

#### **Paper due**

#### Reading for discussion:

John Markoff, "Violence, Emancipation, and Democracy: The Countryside in the French Revolution," in Kates, *French Revolution*

Georges Lefebvre, *The Great Fear of 1789*, pp. 59-74, 122-33, 137-42, 148-55, 202-11 (ER)

Timothy Tackett, "Collective Panics in the Early French Revolution, 1789-1791: A Comparative Perspective," *French History* 17 (2003): 149-71

#### Further reading:

Michael Fitzsimmons, *The Night the Old Regime Ended: August 4, 1789 and the French Revolution*

John Markoff, *The Abolition of Feudalism*

Peter Jones, *The Peasantry in the French Revolution*

Colin Lucas, "The Crowd and Politics between *Ancien Régime* and Revolution in France,"  
*Journal of Modern History* 60 (1988): 421-57  
George Rudé, *The Crowd in the French Revolution*  
Alan Forrest, *The French Revolution and the Poor*  
David Andress, *Massacre at the Champ de Mars: Popular Dissent and Political Culture in the  
French Revolution*  
Albert Soboul, *The Sans-Culottes*  
Ted Margadant, *Urban Rivalries in the French Revolution*

## **October 1**

### **The Terror**

#### Reading for discussion:

R. R. Palmer, *Twelve Who Ruled* (entire)

#### Further reading:

David Andress, *Terror: The Merciless War for Freedom in Revolutionary France*  
Norman Hampson, *Prelude to Terror: The Constituent Assembly and the Failure of Consensus,  
1789-1791*  
David Jordan, *The King's Trial: The French Revolution vs. Louis XVI*  
Michael Walzer, *Regicide and Revolution: Speeches at the Trial of Louis XVI*  
Norman Hampson, *The Terror in the French Revolution*  
Dan Edelstein, *The Terror of Natural Right: Republicanism, the Cult of Nature, and the French  
Revolution*  
Timothy Tackett, "Conspiracy Obsession in a Time of Revolution: French Elites and the Origins  
of the Terror, 1789-1792," *American Historical Review* 105 (2000): 691-713  
Marisa Linton, *Choosing Terror: Virtue, Friendship and Authenticity in the French Revolution*  
Mona Ozouf, "War and Terror in French Revolutionary Discourse (1792-1794)," *Journal of  
Modern History* 56 (December 1984): 579-97  
Richard Cobb, *The People's Armies: The Armées Révolutionnaires, Instrument of the Terror in  
the Departments, April 1793 to Floreal Year II*  
Gwynne Lewis and Colin Lucas, *Beyond the Terror: Essays in French Regional and Social  
History, 1794-1815*  
Arlo J. Mayer, *The Furies: Violence and Terror in the French and Russian Revolutions*  
Patrice Higonnet, *Goodness Beyond Virtue: Jacobins During the French Revolution*  
R.R. Palmer, *The World of the French Revolution*

## **October 8**

### **Revolution in Political Culture**

#### Reading for discussion:

Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*, read Part I and conclusion,  
skim Part II  
Mona Ozouf, "The Revolutionary Festival: A Transfer of Sacrality" (ER)  
Dan Edelstein, "The Case of the Missing Constitution," in *The Terror of Natural Right* (ER)

Further reading:

Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*

Emmet Kennedy, *A Cultural History of the French Revolution*

Jeremy Popkin, *Revolutionary News*

Daniel Roche and Robert Darnton, eds., *Revolution in Print*

Carla Hesse, *Publishing and Cultural Politics in Revolutionary Paris, 1789-1810*

Laura Mason, *Singing the French Revolution*

**October 15**

**Film: Danton**

Reading for discussion:

Robert Darnton, "Danton and Double Entendre," in *The Kiss of Lamourette*, pp. 37-52 (ER; also available on Google Books)

Jane Kramer, "Letter from Europe," *The New Yorker*, February 28, 1983, pp. 104-15 (ER)

**October 22**

**Women and Revolution**

**Paper due**

Reading for discussion:

Olwen Hufton, *Women and the Limits of Citizenship in the French Revolution*, chaps. 1-2

Olympe de Gouges, "The Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Citizen"

(<http://www.library.csi.cuny.edu/dept/americanstudies/lavender/decwom2.html>)

Joan Wallach Scott, "The Uses of Imagination: Olympe de Gouges in the French Revolution" in *Only Paradoxes to Offer* (ER)

Lynn Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie Antoinette," in Kates, *French Revolution*

Suzanne Desan, "'War between Brothers and Sisters': Inheritance Law and Gender Politics in Revolutionary France," in Kates, *French Revolution*

Further reading:

Jane Abray, "Feminism in the French Revolution," *American Historical Review* 80 (1975) : 43-72

Sara E. Melzer and Leslie W. Rabine, eds., *Rebel Daughters: Women and the French Revolution*

Dominique Godineau, *The Women of Paris and Their French Revolution*

Darline Gay Levy, Harriet Applewhite, and Mary Johnson, *Women in Revolutionary Paris, 1789-1795: Selected Documents Translated with Notes and Commentary*

Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*

Joan Landes, *Visualizing the Nation: Gender, Representation, and Revolution in Eighteenth-Century France*

Madelyn Gutwirth, *The Twilight of the Goddesses: Women and Representation in the French Revolutionary Era*

Suzanne Desan, *The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France*

Jennifer Ngairé Heuer, *The Family and the Nation: Gender and Citizenship in Revolutionary France, 1789-1830*

Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*

## October 29

### Counterrevolution

#### Reading for discussion:

Olwen Hufton, *Women and the Limits of Citizenship in the French Revolution*, chaps. 3-4

Timothy Tackett, "The West in France in 1789: The Religious Factor in the Origins of the Counterrevolution," *Journal of Modern History* 54 (December 1982): 715-45

Suzanne Desan, "Redefining Revolutionary Liberty: The Rhetoric of Religious Revival during the French Revolution," *Journal of Modern History* 60 (March 1988): 1-27

Bill Edmonds, "'Federalism' and Urban Revolt in France in 1793," *Journal of Modern History* 55 (March 1983): 22-53

#### Further reading:

Jacques Godechot, *The Counter-Revolution: Doctrine and Action, 1789-1804*

John McManners, *The French Revolution and the Church*

Timothy Tackett, *Religion, Revolution, and Regional Culture in Eighteenth-Century France: The Ecclesiastical Oath of 1791*

Suzanne Desan, *Reclaiming the Sacred: Lay Religion and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France*

Raymond Jonas, *France and the Cult of the Sacred Heart*

Gwynne Lewis, *The Second Vendée: The Continuity of Counter-Revolution in the Department of the Gard, 1789-1815*

Donald Sutherland, *The Chouans: The Social Origins of Popular Counter-Revolution in Upper Brittany, 1770-1796*

Jeremy Popkin, *The Right-Wing Press in France, 1792-1800*

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

## November 5

### The Revolution in the Colonies

#### Reading for discussion:

Jeremy Popkin, *You Are All Free: The Haitian Revolution and the Abolition of Slavery* (entire)

Laurent Dubois, "The Price of Liberty" in Kates, *French Revolution*

#### Further reading:

Sue Peabody, "*There Are No Slaves In France*": *The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Regime*

C.R.L. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint l'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*

Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution and Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804*

Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*

Jeremy Popkin, *Facing Racial Revolution: Eyewitness Accounts of the Haitian Insurrection*

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "An Unthinkable History: The Haitian Revolution as a Non-Event," in *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, 70-107

Alyssa Sepinwall, *The Abbé Grégoire and the French Revolution*

## **November 12**

### **Ending the Revolution?**

#### **Paper due**

#### Reading for discussion:

Lynn Hunt, David Lansky, and Paul Hanson, "The Failure of the Liberal Republic in France, 1795-1799: The Road to Brumaire," *Journal of Modern History* 51 (December 1979): 734-59

Martyn Lyons, *Napoleon Bonaparte and the Legacy of the French Revolution*, chaps. 1-4 (ER)

#### Further reading:

Bronislaw Baczko, *Ending the Terror: The French Revolution after Robespierre*

Howard Brown, *Ending the French Revolution: Violence, Justice, and Repression: From the Terror to Napoleon*

Martyn Lyons, *France under the Directory*

David Jordan, *Napoleon and the Revolution*

Isser Woloch, *Napoleon and His Collaborators: The Making of a Dictatorship*

Louis Bergeron, *France under Napoleon*

Alan Schom, *Napoleon Bonaparte*

## **November 19**

### **Revolutionary and Napoleonic Warfare**

#### Reading for discussion:

David Bell, *The First Total War* (entire)

#### Further reading:

T.C.W. Blanning, *Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars*

John A. Lynn, *The Bayonets of the Republic: Motivation and Tactics in the Army of Revolutionary France, 1791-4*

Alan Forrest, *The Soldiers of the French Revolution*

Alan Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters: The Army and French Society during the Revolution and Empire*

Owen Connelly, *Blundering to Glory: Napoleon's Military Campaigns*

J.P. Bertaud, *The Army of the French Revolution: From Citizen-Soldiers to Instrument of Power*

## **November 26**

### **Thanksgiving Break**



### **December 3**

#### **Imperial France**

##### Reading for discussion:

Juan Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt* (entire)

##### Further reading:

Paul Strathern, *Napoleon in Egypt*

Edward Said, *Orientalism*

*Napoleon in Egypt: AlJabarti's Chronicle of the French Occupation, 1798*

### **December 10**

#### **Legacies**

##### Reading for discussion:

Jennifer Heuer, "Did Everything Change? Rethinking Revolutionary Legacies," in *The Oxford Handbook of the French Revolution* (forthcoming, on iLearn later in semester)

Robert Gildea, "Revolution," "The Cults of Napoleon," and "Catholicism," in *The Past in French History* (ER)

Peter Fritzsche, "The French Revolution and the Evidence of History," in *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (ER)

Dan Edelstein, "Legacies of the Terror," in *The Terror of Natural Right* (ER)

Nikki R. Keddie, "The French Revolution and the Middle East," in *The Global Ramifications of the French Revolution*

##### Further reading:

Revolutionary Moments blog: [http://hnn.us/blogs/revolutionary\\_moments.html](http://hnn.us/blogs/revolutionary_moments.html)

David Laven and Lucy Riall, eds., *Napoleon's Legacy: Problems of Government in Restoration Europe*

Robert Gildea, *Children of the Revolution: The French, 1799-1914*

Isser Woloch, *The New Regime: Transformations of the French Civic Order, 1789-1820s*

Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle: Republican Imagery and Symbolism in France, 1789-1880*

Alan Forrest, *The Legacy of the French Revolutionary Wars: The Nation-in-Arms in French Republican Memory*

Steven Kaplan, *Farewell, Revolution, France 1789-1989* (vol. 1, *Disputed Legacies*, vol. 2, *The Historians' Feud*)

E. J. Hobsbawm, *Echoes of the Marseillaise: Two Centuries Look Back on the French Revolution*

Haydn Trevor Mason and William Doyle, *The Impact of the French Revolution on European Consciousness*

Joseph Klaitz and Michael H. Haltzel, eds., *The Global Ramifications of the French Revolution*

### **December 17**

**Paper due by 4:10 p.m.**