

DR. ANTHONY STEINHOFF

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Class Hours: TTh 12:15-1:30

Office Hours: TTh 10:50 -12:00
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Historians have long regarded the American and French Revolutions as the main events in a transatlantic "Age of Revolutions." During this tumultuous period, peoples on both sides of the Atlantic radically challenged the existing cultural, social, and political order, unleashing forces that would fundamentally transform the world, old and new, for generations to come. Significantly, the two revolutions were not discrete but rather closely related events. Problems with taxation and dissatisfaction with existing political arrangements helped trigger revolt in both British North America and in France. The French were keen observers of what occurred in the United States in the 1770s and 1780s. They provided key military and financial support for the American cause, support that helped the colonists defeat Britain, but also pushed France towards revolution. When this erupted in 1789, Americans were among those that paid especially close attention to what subsequently transpired.

This seminar will seek to explore and make sense of these two revolutions by investigating key areas of similarity, while also examining important points of divergence. Among the questions we will take up, drawing on contemporary (eighteenth-century) records as well as more recent scholarly accounts, are: Why did the Revolutions break out? Were they avoidable? What roles did ideas play in the two Revolutions? To what extent were these "social" and cultural and not just political uprisings? Might it be fair to call the American Revolution a "success," but the French Revolution a failure? How do the long-term impact of the Revolutions compare—indeed, why have they been so different?

In terms of format, this is seminar-style, discussion course. From time to time, I may give "mini-lectures" to help orient our conversations, but we will devote almost all of our in-class time to talking about the assigned readings and what they can help us understand about the two revolutions.

COURSE READINGS

- Gordon Wood, *The American Revolution* (= Wood in the Course Calendar, below).
- William Doyle, *The French Revolution, A Very Short Introduction* (= Doyle in the Course Calendar).
- Keith Michael Baker, ed. *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (= Baker in the Course Calendar).
- A number of primary and secondary source materials that I will make available via the course website (use the URL listed at the top of this page), Lupton e-reserve, or a link to an e-journal.

COURSE REQUIREMENTSAttendance and Participation (400 points/40%)

- This is a course that will stand (or fall) on your attendance and participation. The texts listed for each class session are those that we will discuss in class on that day. It is essential that you read carefully all of the readings listed, come to class prepared to talk about them, and then participate actively in the class discussion. Moreover, since we will devote most of our class time to discussing the readings, it will be very helpful to have that day's texts with you in class.
- Inasmuch this is a seminar-style course, I will take attendance regularly. You may miss three classes for whatever reason and without penalty. However, if you are going to be absent, please let me know so I can adjust my plans for the day accordingly. For each absence after the third, I will deduct one-half grade from the attendance/participation score. (Thus, a mark of "A" for attendance/participation will become an "A-"; an "A-" a B+, and so on).

Discussion Leadership (150 points/15%)

At least once during the semester, you will serve as the "lead person" for the day's discussion. In that capacity, you will be responsible for delivering a short (5 minute) presentation on the day's readings. You will also have to help keep the discussion going, in part by providing (in advance) a set of questions for the class to consider on that day.

Exams (450 points total/45%)

To encourage you to dig into the readings and think carefully about the broad themes raised in the course, I will ask you to write both the midterm and final exam as take-home papers. I will announce the information for each paper at least one week in advance of its due date. The midterm (worth 200 points) will be due by 12:15 on Tuesday, October 6. The take-home final (worth 250 points) will be due at the time officially scheduled for this class's final exam, namely, no later than 2:00 on Thursday, December 3rd.

In sum, there are a total of 1000 possible points. An "A" grade will require a minimum of 900 points, a "B" 800-899 points, a "C" 700-799 points, and a "D" 600-699 points.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

You must complete all three parts of the course to receive a passing grade. Late assignments will not normally be accepted except under special conditions, which must be approved in advance of the due date. I also reserve the right to alter the means of evaluation if I sense that the class as a whole is not keeping up.

I do not award the grade of "I" (incomplete) for this course except under the most unusual circumstances. Everyone on the official roster receives a grade based on what s/he has earned at the end of the semester.

Your decision to enroll and stay in this course means that you accept the terms of this syllabus. This includes attending class regularly. It is your responsibility to make certain that you do so. I cannot excuse absences for lack of planning or your decision to schedule alternative activities during regular class times. You are also responsible for all information presented in class, whether you are there or not.

I am available during office hours, by phone, or via email to talk with you about any aspect of the course. As necessary, we can also arrange to meet outside of office hours by special appointment.

If you are a student with a disability and think that you might need special assistance or a special accommodation in this class, call the Office for Students with Disabilities at 425-4006 or come by the office, 110 Frist Hall. Examples of disabilities include blindness/low vision, communication disorders, deafness/hearing impairments, emotional/psychological disabilities, learning disabilities, and other health impairments. This list is not exhaustive.

COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK I: SETTING THE SCENE

8/18 *Course Introduction*

8/20 *British North America and France in the Late Eighteenth Century*
Wood xiii-xix and 1-24. Doyle 1-34 and 109-13.

WEEK II: WHY THE REVOLUTION, I

8/25 *Society on the Eve of Revolution*

Documents on Colonial America; Hutchinson, *History of Massachusetts Bay*, excerpts; Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, excerpts; Charles Loyseau, "A Treatise on Orders," Baker 13-31 (esp. Foreword, Ch. 1, 4, 5, 8); Turgot, "Memorandum on Local Government," Baker 97-100, 111-13, 115-18.

8/27 *The Fiscal and Political Crisis of the "Old Regime"*

Stamp Act Crisis Documents. Malesherbes, "Remonstrance of the *Cour des aides*," Baker 51-71; Proceedings of the Assembly of Notables, Baker 124-35.

WEEK III: WHY THE REVOLUTION, II

9/1 *The Crises Worsen*

Wood 30-46. Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress; Massachusettensis vs. Novanglus, excerpts. Calling the Estates General, Baker 143-51, 180-84.

9/3 *Contemplating Action and Creating a "Public"*

The Committees of Correspondence, 1768-74; Galloway, Plan of Union, 1774; Jefferson, "A Summary View of the Rights of British Americans," excerpts. Sieyes, *What is the Third Estate*, Baker 154-66, 171-76; The *Cahiers* (Petitions of Grievance) of 1789, selections.

WEEK IV: THE REVOLUTIONARY MOMENT

9/8 *Breaking from Britain*

Wood 47-90. Declaration of Causes of Taking up Arms, 1775; Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, excerpts; Documents related to the Transition to Independence; US Declaration of Independence.

9/10 *From Old to New Regime*

Doyle 37-64. From Estates General to National Assembly, Baker 184-208; Thomas Jefferson, Letters from Paris, selections; Decrees of the National Assembly, Baker 226-31.

WEEK V: THE BIRTH OF THE NATION

9/15 *Patriots, States, and the National Polity*

John Adams, Thoughts on Government; Virginia Bill of Rights; Constitution of Pennsylvania, excerpts; Constitution of Massachusetts, excerpts; Articles of Confederation, excerpts.

9/17 *Citizens and the Remaking of France*

Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, Baker 237-39; Mounier, Thoughts on Government; Decrees of the National Assembly on Government; The Civil Constitution of the Clergy, Baker 239-42; The Constitution of 1791, Baker 249-61.

WEEK VI: THE COURSE OF REVOLUTION

9/22 *Opposing Change*

Loyalist Documents; The Commons' Examination of Joseph Galloway. Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop of Vienne; Calonne, "Considerations on the Present and Future State of France"; Louis XVI, Declaration of the King, Baker 269-72.

- 9/24 *Taking Stock: 1777 and 1791*
Paine, "The American Crisis," excerpts; Washington to Congress, 1776; Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell; Reports on the Battles of Trenton and Princeton; Decrees on the Emigrés and Non-Juring Clergy; Gouverneur Morris, Correspondence from Europe (selections); Jean-Paul Marat, "What the Revolution Should Have Done."

WEEK VII: TURNING POINTS

- 9/29 *The French Situation Intensifies*
Brissot, Speech to the Jacobin Club and Marseillaise; Declaration of War Against Austria; The Fall of the Monarchy, Baker 286-96; Proceedings of the National Convention, 5 September 1793, Baker 342-53; Saint Just, Report to the Convention, 10 October 1793, Baker 354-62.
- 10/1 *Saratoga and its Aftermath*
George Washington, General Orders, 1777; Baroness von Riedsel on Saratoga; Lafayette to the Duc D'Ayen; Treaty of Alliance with France; Lafayette to Washington, 1778; Henry Laurens to Horatio Gates; Washington to Benjamin Harrison.

WEEK VIII: REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE

- 10/6 *Midterm exam (take-home) due.*
- 10/8 *Forcing Change*
Richard Maxwell Brown, "Violence and the American Revolution"; Colin Lucas, "The Crowd and Politics"; François Furet, "Terror."

WEEK IX: WAR AND REVOLUTION

- 10/13 *Fighting for Independence.*
Lafayette, Selected Correspondence; Home Front Documents; Observations on the War; John Shy, "Military Conflict as a Revolutionary War."
- 10/15 *France: War on Two Fronts*
Declaration of War Against Britain; Decree Establishing the Levée en Masse; Norman Hampson, "St-Just, Military Commissar"; Claude Petitfrère, "Origins of the Civil War in the Vendée."

WEEK X: WHOSE REVOLUTION?, I

- 10/20 *Fall Break (No Class).*
- 10/22 *Women in Revolutionary America and France*
Documents concerning Colonial Women; Laurel Thatcher, "Daughters of Liberty: Religious Women in Revolutionary New England." The October Days, Baker 231-37; De Gouges, Declaration of the Rights of Women, Baker 261-69; National Convention Outlaws Women's Clubs, 1793; Hufton, "Counter-Revolutionary Women."

WEEK XI: WHOSE REVOLUTION?, II

- 10/27 *The Problem of Slavery*
Lord Dunmore's Proclamation; Henry Laurens to John Laurens, 1776; Jefferson on Slavery, selected documents; Constitution of the US, excerpts. Colonial Grievance List; Vieville des Essars, "On the Emancipation of the Negroes," 1790, Baker 242-47; Kersaint, Discussion of Troubles in the Colonies, 1792; Creole of St. Domingue, *My Odyssey*.
- 10/29 *Social Revolutions?*
Allan Kulikoff, "Was the American Revolution a Bourgeois Revolution?"; Edmund Morgan, "Conflict and Consensus in the American Revolution." Alfred Cobban, *The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution*, excerpts; T. C. W. Blanning, *The French Revolution, Class War or Culture Clash?*, excerpts.

WEEK XII: ENDING THE REVOLUTION

11/3 *To Form a More Stable Union*

Wood 91-166. Treaty of Paris, 1783; Constitution of the United States, excerpts; Documents Relating to the Preparation and Ratification of the Constitution.

11/5 *After Thermidor*

Constitution of Year III, excerpts; Materials on Conditions after Thermidor; Decrees concerning Religious Affairs; The Coup d'État of 18 Brumaire (1799), Baker 405-16.

WEEK XIII: ASSESSMENTS & LEGACIES, I

11/10 *How to End a Revolution*

Readings, TBA.

11/12 *How Revolutionary Was It?*

William and Mary Quarterly Forum: How Revolutionary Was the American Revolution (51/3, 1994,). Doyle 1-18 and 65-97; Robert Darnton, "How Revolutionary Was the French Revolution?"

WEEK XIV: ASSESSMENTS AND LEGACIES, II

11/17 *Interpreting the Revolution: Trans-Atlantic Perspectives*

Readings: TBA

11/19 *What Difference Did a Revolution Make?*

Readings: TBA.

WEEK XV: ASSESSMENTS & LEGACIES, II

11/24 *Comparing Revolutions*

Susan Dunn, *Sister Revolutions* (excerpts); additional reading, TBA.

11/26 *Thanksgiving Break (No Class).*

TAKE-HOME FINAL DUE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2:00 P.M.