HI1973N: The French Revolution

The French Revolution is inarguably one of the most important moments in western history. Yet its legacy, which is surprisingly widespread, is also quite mixed. Was it a time of progress or a time of retrenchment? Was it a success or a failure? In addressing these and other questions, this course will examine the social and cultural components of this moment, beginning with the Old Regime and ending with the Revolution’s ‘resolution’: the arrival of Napoleon Bonaparte. We will look at primary and secondary sources, including memoirs, pamphlets, and the debates between contemporary historians about the Revolution.

The major assignment for the course will be a research paper of approximately 20 pages in length. The paper may use a combination of primary and secondary sources, but if primary sources are unavailable, it may be solely based on secondary sources. You will write a research proposal for the paper, and you will also do an in-class presentation of your topic and preliminary findings. We will discuss topics and specific requirements in more detail in class. Additionally, Brown has a good number of resources devoted to the French Revolution; our course librarian is Dominique Coulombe, who will be happy to assist you in all aspects of the research project.

Grading
Participation & Attendance: 20%
Presentation: 20%
Research Proposal: 20%
Final Paper: 40%

Texts
Pierre-Ambrois-Francois Choderlos de Laclos, Dangerous Liaisons (Penguin Classics Ed.)
Robert Darnton, The Great Cat Massacre
François Furet, Interpreting the French Revolution (recommended)
Lynn Hunt, The Family Romance of the French Revolution
Lynn Hunt, The French Revolution and Human Rights
Lynn Hunt, Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution
Martyn Lyons, Napoleon Bonaparte and the Legacy of the French Revolution
Sarah Maza, Private Lives and Public Affairs
Jeremy Mercer, When the Guillotine Fell
Jeremy Popkin, A Short History of the French Revolution (recommended)

All other readings will be available via OCRA. The class password is: colvin.
Part One: Setting the Scene
September 14: INTRODUCTION

September 21: Daily Life in the *Ancien Regime*
- Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*

September 28: Versailles & Court Life
-Courtin, *The Rules of Civility* [selections]
-Pierre-Ambrois-Francois Choderlos de Laclos, *Dangerous Liaisons* (Penguin Classics Ed.)
FILM: *Ridicule* (suggested)

Part Two: Challenges to the Establishment
October 5: Enlightenment
-Lynn Hunt, *The French Revolution and Human Rights*
- Other primary source selections
One-paragraph paper about research topic due in class

October 12: No Class (University Holiday)

October 19: Enlightenment from below
-Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs*

Part Three: Revolution!
October 26: Art & Symbols of the Revolution
-Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Class, and Culture in the French Revolution*

November 2: Guillotine
-Jeremy Mercer, *When the Guillotine Fell*
-Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* [Part One]
FILM: *Danton*

November 9: Gender and the Revolution
-Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*

November 16: Race, Revolution, & Saint-Domingue
-Laurent Dubois et al, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean* [selections]

November 23: NO CLASS
Meetings about/work on final papers

Part Four: Revolution’s End?
November 30: Napoleon & Stabilization /CONCLUSION
-Martyn Lyons, *Napoleon Bonaparte and the Legacy of the French Revolution*
-François Furet, *Interpreting the French Revolution* (suggested)

**FINAL PAPERS DUE ON LAST DAY OF READING PERIOD (DECEMBER 11)**