Course Objectives
This course surveys the social, political, and cultural history of old regime and revolutionary France. We will examine such themes as the structure of old-regime society, the rise of absolutism during the reign of Louis XIV, the ideas of the Enlightenment, the formation of an overseas empire, and the outbreak of the French and Haitian Revolutions. Lectures will introduce chronological and thematic background material, while readings and discussion will focus on specific historical texts, problems, and events.

Required Readings (available for purchase at the JHU bookstore [https://tinyurl.com/JHU-F20-100-303-01] and on e-reserve at the JHU Library)

Doyle, ed., Old Regime France
Davis, The Return of Martin Guerre
Molière, The Misanthrope and Other Plays
Corneille, The Cid, Cinna, The Theatrical Illusion
Beik, Louis XIV and Absolutism
Farge and Revel, The Vanishing Children of Paris
Dubois and Garrigus, Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804

PLEASE NOTE: Several additional required readings have been placed on e-reserve at the JHU library.

Course Requirements
This seminar is designed to impart the skills of reading, writing, and discussing history in a critical fashion. I will give short lectures providing historical background on readings, but the class will mainly be oriented to discussion. The day before discussion (by 10pm EST), students are expected to post via Blackboard at least one question on the reading that aims to prompt class discussion. Students should post a short statement (a few sentences will suffice) that explains why this question is significant and how it might provoke useful debate. The questions can be specific or general, but they should be designed with discussion in mind. After each lecture, students will be divided into small break-out discussion groups, pool their questions, and select one question (and one back-up question) to be put on the board for the class to consider. Students will then reunite as a class, Gregory Smaldone, a designated student, and I will use the questions on the board in addition to our own questions to co-lead class discussion. Everyone is expected to contribute to discussion. Class participation is worth 25% of your grade.
Students are also expected to write three double-spaced 6-7-page papers based on class readings. The papers will be due on October 8, November 10, and December 16. Each paper is worth 25% of your grade. Papers are to be formatted as Word documents and sent both to me and Gregory Smaldone via email attachment by 4:00 pm on the day they are due.

Please Note:
1) The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition. Please report any violations you witness to the instructor. For more information, see https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/policies-guidelines/undergrad-ethics/.

2) JHU provides students with mental health services and counseling. Feel free to make use of them. For information, visit https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/counselingcenter/

3) Please don’t forget to register to vote. Democracies are fragile and depend on the active participation of citizens like you.

Course Schedule

I. The Society of Old Regime France

Week 1 (Sept 1 and Sept 3): Introduction to Class
T: Distribute and review syllabi. Introduction to early modern society.

Week 2 (Sept 8 and 10): The Peasantry

Week 3 (Sept 15 and 17): The Bourgeoisie

Week 4 (Sept 22 and 24): The Nobility

**II. Absolutism and the Rise of Louis XIV**

Week 5 (Sept 29 and Oct 1): Absolutism


Week 6 (Oct 6 and 8): Absolutism: Versailles, Provinces, and Colonies
T: Lecture on Absolutism. Discussion of Beik, 50-81.
Th: No Class. **First Drafts of Paper Due**

**III. The Eighteenth Century: Absolutism Challenged**

Week 7 (Oct 13 and 15): The Enlightenment I

Th: Lecture on Enlightenment. Discussion of Diderot, “Encyclopedia,” on reserve; and Rousseau, “Discourse on the Arts and Sciences” (also known as “Discourse Which Won the Prize of the Academy of Dijon…” or “The First Discourse”), on reserve.

Week 8 (Oct 20 and 22): The Enlightenment II

Th: Fall Break

Week 9 (Oct 27 and 29): Parlementary Politics


Week 10 (Nov 3 and 5): Popular Politics and Social Change in the Eighteenth Century
T: Lecture on Popular Politics. Discussion of Farge and Revel, *The Vanishing Children of Paris*, 1-79. **Don’t forget to vote!**


**IV. The French Revolution**
Week 11 (Nov 10 and 12): The Origins of the French Revolution / The Liberal Revolution
Th: Lecture on Liberal Revolution. Discussion of Mason, 67 (introductory paragraph only), 69-73, 73-75, 83-87.

Week 12 (Nov 17 and 19): From Liberal to Republican Revolution: Politics High and Low
Tue: Lecture on Transition from Liberal to Republican Revolution. Discussion of Mason, 89-97, 101-104, 144-152, 167, 177-187.
Th: Lecture on Republican Revolution. Discussion of Mason, 189-195 (stop at the Thermidorian Reaction), 197-198, 204-206, 254-258, 258-262.

Week 13 (Nov 24 and 26): Thanksgiving Vacation

Week 14 (Dec 1 and Dec 3): The Haitian Revolution
Tue: Lecture on the Haitian Revolution. Discussion of Dubois and Garrigus, 67-70, 70-72, 75-8, 78-82, 82-83, 84-85, and 86-88.

Week 15 (Dec 8):
Tue: No Class

**Third paper due on December 16**