DRAFT SYLLABUS JUST FYI!
HIST 670-301
The Trans-Atlantic Enlightenment:
Approaches to the Intellectual and Cultural History of the Eighteenth Century

Prof. Sophia Rosenfeld
Spring 2021
Class meeting: Mon., 2-4
Office hours: Mon., 4-5 and Tues. 3:30-4:30 and by appointment
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Description: The purpose of this seminar is to introduce graduate students to the key topics, issues, and debates in the 20th- and 21st-century historiography of the trans-Atlantic Enlightenment. We will do so through extensive reading and discussion of landmark secondary work in this field. In the process, we will also pay close attention to the varied approaches and methods by which the history of eighteenth-century European and American thought and culture have been reconstructed and consider the ways these different methods might be put to new uses in future research. No previous knowledge of the period or key texts is assumed, and a small number of primary sources will also be assigned most weeks in order to make the textual foundations of the secondary literature clearer. We will also make extensive use in class of materials from Rare Books, including images. Topics for discussion will include the birth of the intellectual; the idea of the public sphere; religious enlightenment and secularism; race, slavery and colonialism; the gender politics of the Enlightenment; Enlightenment and revolution; and the modern legacy of the Enlightenment project, among others.

Requirements: Active participation in all class meetings. A brief book review covering one of the week’s assigned readings (your choice of week, due in class on the day of discussion). A final paper/review essay of 20-25 pages covering a min. of five key works, on a topic of your choice, related to the larger theme of Enlightenment (due April 30 in hard copy). Good candidates for papers include subjects to which the syllabus gives short shrift, including, but hardly limited to: the practice of Enlightenment science and/or conceptions of nature; political economy and the expansion of trade and/or capitalism; international relations, human rights, and thinking about war and peace; notions of taste and aesthetics; children as thinkers or subjects of education in the 18th century; poverty and the Enlightenment; technology and the relationship between the Enlightenment and craft or practical knowledge; language, epistemology and the organization of knowledge; the Enlightenment outside western Europe or North America, including India and South Asia, Central and South America, Russia and Eastern Europe, or at a local level; the usefulness of Enlightenment as a category for thinking about the visual arts or music; the Enlightenment and particular commodities or objects; the social reach of the Enlightenment, etc.

Assigned readings: Articles and single chapters can all be found on electronic reserve (Canvas) under the class name. Copies of all longer readings or full books (marked X on the syllabus) can be found either as e-books or at amazon.com for purchase. Isaac Kramnick, *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* (Penguin, 1995) is especially recommended for purchase as excerpts from it will be discussed on multiple weeks. Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 4th ed. (Cambridge, 2019) is recommended as background reading and for bibliography.
Schedule of Weekly Meetings:

**Definitions and Locations**

**Week One. Introduction (January 25)**

**Week Two: What is/was Enlightenment? (February 1)**


-- Dan Edelstein, *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy* (Chicago, 2010), 1-18, 24-30 (X or ebook)

**Week Three: Where and when was the Enlightenment? (February 8)**

-- Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich, eds., *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge, 1981), two-page preface, table of contents, and one chapter of choice (library reserve only)


**Actors and Practices: Social and Cultural History Approaches**

**Week Four: The Birth of the Author and Intellectual (February 15)**


Week Five: Judgment, Knowledge, Enlightenment Sociability, and the Public Sphere (February 22)
--David Hume, “Of the Standard of Taste,” in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, 322-329 (X)
--Caroline Winterer, *American Enlightenments: Pursuing Happiness in the Age of Reason* (Yale, 2016), 1-141 (X)

Week Six: On Reading and the Circulation and Reception of Ideas (March 1)

**Rethinking Enlightenment Ideas and Politics**

Week Seven: Religion: Toleration, Secularism, and Innovation (March 8)
--Voltaire, “Reflections on Religion,” in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, 115-133 (X)
--Ole Peter Grell and Roy Porter, ed., *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2006), 1-68

Week Eight: Enlightened Reform: Liberalizing Institutions and Practices (March 15)
--Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Viking, 1995 [1975]), 1-228 (X)

Week Nine: The Individual and the Self (March 22)

Week Ten: Difference: Race, Slavery, and Abolitionism in the Age of Enlightenment (March 29)
--Ibram X. Kendi, Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America (Nation Books, 2016), 79-103 (on Jefferson)
--Manisha Sinha, The Slave’s Cause: A History of Abolition (Yale, 2016), 1-64

Week Eleven: The Colonial Enlightenment (April 5)
--Jose Cañizares-Esguerra, How To Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, Identities in the 18th-Century Atlantic World (Stanford, 2001), 1-129, 204-265, including plates (X)
--Sankar Muthu, Enlightenment Against Empire (Princeton, 2003), 1-71 (X)

Week Twelve: Difference: Gender in the Age of Enlightenment (April 12)
--Suzanne Desan, The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France (Princeton, 2006), 1-140 (X or ebook)
--Dror Wahrman, The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England (Yale, 2006), 3-82 (X or ebook)

**The Legacy of the Enlightenment**

Week Thirteen: Radicalism and Revolution: The Problem of Causes (April 19)

Week Fourteen: Enlightenment as a Philosophical Project--or Modernity Itself (April 26)
--Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History* (Pittsburg, 2009) (X or ebook)

Additional Resources/Reference Books (in English):

--Charles Withers, *Placing the Enlightenment: Thinking Geographically about the Age of Reason* (Chicago, 2007)
--Chad Wellmon, *Organizing Enlightenment: Information Overload and the Invention of the Modern Research University* (Johns Hopkins, 2015)