

**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 18<sup>th</sup> 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)

--Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?" (1784) in *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions*, ed. James Schmidt (California, 1996), 58-64, as well as Schmidt's intro to this volume, 1-44

--Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, ed. James Pettegrove, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelin (Princeton, 1968 [1951]), 3-36

--Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: The Rise of Modern Paganism* (Norton, 1995 [1966]), ix-xii, 3-38 and *The Enlightenment: The Science of Freedom* (Norton, 1996 [1969]), ix-xi, 3-55, 84-207 (X)

--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)

--John M. Dixon, "Henry May and the Revival of the American Enlightenment: Problems and Possibilities for Intellectual and Social History," *William and Mary Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (2014): 255-80

--John Robertson, "The Enlightenment Above National Context: Political Economy in Eighteenth-Century Scotland and Naples," *Historical Journal* 40, no. 3 (1997): 667-697

--Laurent Dubois, "An Enslaved Enlightenment: Rethinking the Intellectual History of the French Atlantic," *Social History* 31, no. 1 (Feb. 2006): 1-14

--Sebastian Conrad, "Enlightenment in Global History: A Historiographical Critique," *American Historical Review* 117, no. 4 (2012): 999-1027

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

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

--Denis Diderot, "Encyclopedia," Cesar Chesneau Dumarsais, "Definition of a Philosophe," and Benjamin Franklin, "Autobiography: Industry and the Way to Wealth" in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, ed. Isaac Kramnick (Penguin, 1995), 17-21, 21-22, 483-488 respectively (X)

--Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, "Who Were the *Philosophes*?" in *Making Sense of Life and Literature*, trans. Glen Burns (Minnesota, 1992 [1985]), 133-77

--Robert Darnton, "A Police Inspector Sorts His Files: the Anatomy of the Republic of Letters" and "Philosophers Trim the Tree of Knowledge" in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (Random House, 1984), 145-189 and 191-213 (X)

--Mark Ross, "The Author as Proprietor: Donaldson v. Becket and the Genealogy of Modern Authorship," *Representations* 23 (1988): 51-85

--David Shields, "Franklin in the Republic of Letters," in *The Cambridge Companion to Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Carla Mulford (Cambridge, 2009), 50-62

--Dena Goodman, "The *Secrétaire* and the Integration of the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Self," in *Furnishing the Eighteenth-Century: What Furniture Can Tell Us about the European and American Past*, ed. Dena Goodman and Kathryn Norberg (Routledge, 2010), 183-204

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)

--Anthony La Vopa, "Conceiving a Public: Ideas and Society in Eighteenth-Century Europe," *Journal of Modern History* 64 (March 1992): 79-116 (on Kosellek and Habermas)

--James Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge, 2001), 1-122, 160-276 (X or ebook)

--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)

--David Lundberg and Henry May, "The Enlightened Reader in America," *American Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (summer 1976): 262-273

--Roger Chartier, "Figures of the Other: Peasant Reading in the Age of the Enlightenment," in *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Cornell, 1988), 151-166

--Robert Darnton, "An Early Information Society: News and Media in Eighteenth-Century Paris," *American Historical Review* 105, no. 1 (Feb 2000): 1-35

--Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (Norton, 2007), 15-69 (X)

### **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

--Jonathan Sheehan, "Enlightenment, Religion, and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 4 (Oct. 2003): 1061-1080

--David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment: Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton, 2008), 1-21, 165-213 on Moses Mendelssohn

--or, as an alternative to Sorkin on Mendelssohn: Lee Eric Schmidt, *Hearing Things: Religion, Illusion, and the American Enlightenment* (Harvard, 2002), 1-14, 78-134, 199-221 (X) or Alexander Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (Harvard, 2018), intro and chapt. 6 (X)

Week Eight: Enlightened Reform: Liberalizing Institutions and Practices (March 15)

--Cesare Beccaria, "An Essay on Crimes and Punishments," John Howard, "The State of Prisons," and Jeremy Bentham, "Cases Unmeet for Punishment" in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, 525-535, 535-540, 541-546 respectively (X)

--Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Viking, 1995 [1975]), 1-228 (X)

--optional: Anthony Vidler, "Confinement and Cure" and "The Design of Punishment" in *The Writing of the Walls: Architectural Theory in the late Enlightenment* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1987), 51-83

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

--John Locke, "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding," in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, 185-187 (X)

--Marshall Berman, *The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society*, new ed. (Verso, 2009 [1970]), 57-74, 163-199

--Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Yale, 2006), xi-xviii, 83-153, 157-197, 265-311 (X or ebook)

--Colin Jones, *The Smile Revolution: In Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford, 2014), 1-97 (X)

Week Ten: Difference: Race, Slavery, and Abolitionism in the Age of Enlightenment (March 29)

--David Hume, "Negroes...Naturally Inferior to Whites," Denis Diderot, "Who are You, Then, to Make Slaves..." and Thomas Jefferson, "On Indians and Negroes," in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, 629, 640-644, and 657-668 respectively (X)

--Thomas Haskell, "Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility, Part 1 and 2," in *The Antislavery Debate: Capitalism and Abolitionism as a Problem in Historical Interpretation*, ed. Thomas Bender (California, 1992), 107-160

--Louis Sala-Molins, *The Dark Side of the Light: Slavery and the French Enlightenment*, trans. John Conteh-Morgan (Minnesota, 2006 [1992]), 3-39

--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)

--Edward Gibbon, "On Empires and Savages," in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, 649-657 (X)

--Jose Cañizares-Esguerra, *How To Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies, Identities in the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford, 2001), 1-129, 204-265, including plates (X)

--Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment Against Empire* (Princeton, 2003), 1-71 (X)

--Daniel Carey and Sven Trakulhun, "Universalism, Diversity, and Postcolonial Enlightenment" in *The Postcolonial Enlightenment: 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory*, eds. Daniel Carey and Lynn Festa (Oxford, 2009), 240-280

Week Twelve: Difference: Gender in the Age of Enlightenment (April 12)

--Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Duties of Women" and Mary Wollstonecraft, "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman," in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, 568-579 and 618-628 respectively (X)

--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)

- Karen O'Brien, "The Feminist Critique of Enlightenment," in *The Enlightenment World*, eds. Martin Fitzpatrick, Peter Jones, Christa Knellwolf, and Iain McCalman (Routledge, 2004), 621-34
- Dena Goodman, "Difference: An Enlightenment Concept," in *What's Left of Enlightenment? A Postmodern Question*, ed. Keith Baker and Peter Reill (Stanford, 2002), 129-147

### **The Legacy of the Enlightenment**

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

- Johann Adam Bergk, "Does Enlightenment Cause Revolutions?" (1795) in *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions*, ed. Schmidt (California, 1996), 225-232, and "Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen" and "Declaration of Independence" in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader*, 455-468 and 448-452
- Jonathan Israel, *A Revolution of the Mind: Radical Enlightenment and the Intellectual Origins of Modern Democracy* (Princeton, 2010), vii-36
- Roger Chartier, "Enlightenment and Revolution; Revolution and Enlightenment" and "Do Books Make Revolutions?" in *Cultural Origins of the French Revolution* (UNC, 1991), 1-19, 67-91
- Keith Michael Baker, "Enlightenment Idioms, Old Regime Discourses, and Revolutionary Improvisation," in *From Deficit to Deluge: On the Origins of the French Revolution*, ed. Thomas Kaiser and Dale Van Kley (Stanford, 2011), 165-197
- Darrin McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford, 2001), 1-120, 189-203 (X or ebook)

Week Fourteen: Enlightenment as a Philosophical Project--or Modernity Itself (April 26)

- Max Horkheimer, "Reason Against Itself: Some Remarks on Enlightenment," in *What is Enlightenment?*, ed. Schmidt, 359-367 [and see too, if interested, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, "The Concept of Enlightenment" in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Verso, 1997 [1944]), 3-42
- Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (Pantheon, 1984), 32-50
- Lawrence Klein, "Enlightenment as Conversation," in *What's Left of Enlightenment? A Postmodern Question*, ed. Keith Baker and Peter Reill (Stanford, 2001), 148-166 [and optional: David A. Hollinger, "The Enlightenment and the Genealogy of Cultural Conflict in the US," in the same volume, 19-36]
- Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History* (Pittsburg, 2009) (X or ebook)

Additional Resources/Reference Books (in English):

- John Yolton, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment* (Blackwell, 1991)
- Thomas Munck, *The Enlightenment: A Comparative Social History, 1721-1794* (Arnold, 2000)
- Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (Norton, 2000) and *The Enlightenment*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Palgrave MacMillan, 2001)
- Alan Kors, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 2003)

- Martin Fitzpatrick, Peter Jones, Christa Knellwolf, and Iain McCalman, eds., *The Enlightenment World* (Routledge, 2004)
- Dorinda Outram, ed., *Panorama of the Enlightenment* (Getty Museum, 2006)
- Barbara Taylor and Sarah Knott, eds., *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007)
- Charles Withers, *Placing the Enlightenment: Thinking Geographically about the Age of Reason* (Chicago, 2007)
- Anthony Pagden, *The Enlightenment and Why It Still Matters* (Random House, 2013)
- Chad Wellmon, *Organizing Enlightenment: Information Overload and the Invention of the Modern Research University* (Johns Hopkins, 2015)
- Vincenzo Ferrone, *The Enlightenment: History of an Idea* (Princeton, 2015)