

## ***Rousseau to Revolution***

*PHL 324, PSC 292*

Fall 2007  
TuTh 9:40-10:55  
Morey Hall 501

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In 1750, Jean-Jacques Rousseau published the “Discourse on the Arts and Sciences” began a controversial literary and philosophical career that upturned many of the accepted views of the Enlightenment and inspired the revolutionaries of 1789. But his works are an odd combination of romanticism, republicanism, and resignation. We will look at some of Rousseau’s most important works, and then we will look at the reactions to Rousseau’s message in the political thought surrounding the French Revolution itself. We will read some of the important figures of the Revolution, but we will also look at the debates about the Revolution in England, which inspired three of the greatest works of English political philosophy: Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Thomas Paine’s *Rights of Man*, and Mary Wollstonecraft’s *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

The upheavals of the Revolution precipitated a general crisis in Europe of the legitimacy of existing governments and, more generally, of the authority of existing social structures. What constitutes a good society, or a good government? What are the foundations of government and society, and what is the role of the individual? These debates in the late eighteenth century about rights and traditions, democracy and privilege, and virtue and commerce still, I think, frame the political debates of the twenty-first century. By seeing these debates in a different political context, we will, I hope, come to a better understanding of contemporary politics.

### **Required Texts:**

Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Penguin)  
Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Hackett)  
Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man* (Penguin)  
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Basic Political Writings* (Hackett)  
\_\_\_\_\_, *The Government of Poland* (Hackett)  
Michael Walzer, ed., *Regicide and Revolution* (Columbia)  
Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Penguin)  
Readings on Blackboard

### *Supplemental text:*

D.G. Wright, *Revolution and Terror in France, 1789-95* (Longman)

## Course Requirements:

Class participation is worth a significant portion of your grade. The class is based on student discussions, not on lectures. You are expected to come to class, and you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings – if only to ask relevant questions about them. Each week, you will be expected to write a brief one-page reaction to the week’s reading and send it by e-mail to each of the teachers by 9:00 p.m. on Monday. In addition, at least once during the term, I will be showing a video to supplement the readings.

The major assignments in this course will be done using the tutorial system. Twice during the term, I will give you a series of questions about particular texts. You will choose one question and write a 6-8 page analytical paper. You and another student will then meet with me in my office to discuss and hand in your papers. Classes will be cancelled during the tutorials. I will explain the tutorial method in detail later.

For your final assignment, you will write an 8-10 page paper. This paper can be a third tutorial paper on a topic I give you, or on a subject of your own choosing. The latter option gives you the opportunity to explore an issue of particular interest to you. Before beginning such a paper, however, you must talk to me, so that I can make sure that the topic is suitable, and also so that I can help you with resources.

The course grade is divided into 13 parts, apportioned as shown:

First tutorial	3 parts
Second tutorial	3 parts
Final assignment	4 parts
Participation	3 parts

## Schedule of Readings:

This schedule is tentative; “BB” indicates a reading that can be found through a link on the Blackboard page for this course.

### *I. Rousseau*

Sep 4-6	Charles Loyseau, <i>A Treatise on Orders</i> (BB) <i>Supplemental</i> : D.G. Wright, <i>Revolution and Terror in France, 1789-95</i> , Introduction Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Discourse on the Arts and Sciences,” in <i>Basic Political Writings</i> , 1-21 David Hume, “Of Refinement in the Arts” (BB) <i>Supplemental</i> : Hume, “A Concise Account of the Dispute between Mr. Rousseau and Mr. Hume”
Sep 11-13	Rousseau, “Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality Among Men,” in <i>Basic Political Writings</i> , 23-109 Adam Smith, <i>Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations</i> , Book I, chs. i-ii (BB)
Sep 18-20	Rousseau, <i>The Social Contract</i> , Books I-II, in <i>Basic Political Writings</i> , 139-72
Sep 25-27	Rousseau, <i>Social Contract</i> , Book III-IV, in <i>Basic Political Writings</i> , 173-226
Oct 2-4	Rousseau, <i>The Government of Poland</i>

- Oct 9 • First tutorial (No classes, Oct 9)
- II. Revolution*
- Oct 11 Beaumarchais, *The Marriage of Figaro*  
--Movie: "La Nozze de Figaro" (Oct 11?)
- Oct 16-18 Robert Darnton, "Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of Rue Séverin" (BB)  
Abbe Sieyes, "What is the Third Estate?" (BB)  
"The Tennis Court Oath" (BB)  
"Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens," in Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*, 110-12  
Richard Price, "Discourse on the Love of Our Country" (BB)  
*Supplemental*: Wright, *Revolution and Terror*, chs. 2-3
- Oct 23-25 Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 3-99
- Oct 30-Nov 1 Burke, *Reflections*, 109-11, 144-54, 173-80, 213-18.  
Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*, part one
- Nov 6-8 Paine, *Rights of Man*, part two
- Nov 13-15 • Second tutorial  
Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, intro and chs. 1-4 (79-122)
- Nov 20 Wollstonecraft, *Vindication*, chs. 3-4 (123-72)  
*Thanksgiving break* (Nov 21-23)
- Nov 27-29 Wollstonecraft, *Vindication*, chs. 7-8, 10-12, 13.6 (227-51, 264-99, 316-18)  
"Constitution of 1791" (BB)  
Speeches by Jean-Baptiste Mairie, Charles-François-Gabriel Morisson, Louis-Antoine-Léon Saint-Just, Thomas Paine, and Maximilien Robespierre, all in Michael Walzer, *Regicide and Revolution*, 93-138  
*Supplemental*: Wright, *Revolution and Terror*, ch. 4
- Dec 4-6 Speeches by Marquis de Condorcet, Jean-Paul Marat Saint-Just, Robespierre, Pierre-Victorien Vergniaud, and Paine, in Walzer, 139-214  
*Supplemental*: Wright, *Revolution and Terror*, chs. 5-7
- Dec 11-13 Benjamin Constant, "The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns" (BB)  
• Final assignment due, Dec 14