

THE AGE OF REASON

Subject Description. Has there ever been an “Age of Reason?” In the western tradition, one might make claims for various moments during Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance. In this class, however, we will focus on the two centuries from the early 1600s to the early 1800s, a period when insights first developed in the natural sciences and mathematics were seized upon by social theorists, institutional reformers and political revolutionaries who sought to change themselves and the society in which they lived. Through the study of trials, art, literature, music, politics, philosophy, and culture more generally, we will consider evolution and revolution (and their opponents) in these two centuries.

Subject Requirements. Active class participation is central to our work together. Attendance is mandatory, and students are expected to arrive in class on time and prepared to discuss common readings. Students will write three seven-page papers during the term. Half the class members will rewrite the first essay, and half will have an opportunity to rewrite either the first or the second essay. In addition, to satisfy the CI-H speaking requirement, we will conduct three debates at the end of the term; each student will have a central speaking role in one of the debates. Instructions for the papers and debates will be distributed later in the term. There will be no midterm and no final. Each assignment will be weighted as follows in the calculation of the final grade, although these calculations will also take into account improved performance during the course of the semester:

Class Participation	20 points
Three 7-page essays	45 points each, 135 points total
Class Debates	45 points
<hr/> TOTAL	200 points

Required Reading. The following books are available for purchase at the MIT Bookstore; they will also be on reserve in the Hayden Library. All other class readings, indicated with an asterisk (*), are available online at the class website.

Lynn Hunt, *et al.*, *The Making of the West: Peoples and Cultures*, 2nd ed. Vol. II: *Since 1340*
Peter A. Morton, ed. *The Trial of Tempel Anneke* (Broadview, 2006)
René Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (Hackett, 1998, 3rd ed.)
Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (Bedford/St Martins, 2002)
Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (Norton, 2007)

Criteria for HASS CI Subjects. Communication intensive subjects in the humanities, arts, and social sciences should require at least 20 pages of writing divided among 3-5 assignments. Of

these 3-5 assignments, at least one should be revised and resubmitted. HASS CI subjects should further offer students substantial opportunity for oral expression, through presentations, student-led discussion, or class participation. In order to guarantee sufficient attention to student writing and substantial opportunity for oral expression, the maximum number of students per section in a HASS CI subject is 18, except in the case of a subject taught without sections (where the faculty member in charge is the only instructor). In that case, enrollments can rise to 25, if a writing fellow is attached to the subject.

Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism: The web now hosts many sites which offer college-level papers of varying quality on a variety of topics. I am well acquainted with these sites, and with others that offer detection services to professors. **Buying a paper and submitting it as your own work is cheating. Copying sections from someone else's print or online work into your own without an acknowledgement is plagiarism.** MIT has strict policies against both activities that I will fully enforce. For the appropriate MIT definitions and policies, visit the following websites. If you are uncertain about what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, please contact me **before** submitting the work in question.

- MIT Online Writing Communication Center: <<http://writing.mit.edu/wcc>>
- Avoiding Plagiarism: <<http://writing.mit.edu/wcc/avoidingplagiarism>>

Class Meetings and Reading Assignments

Week One

2/4. Introduction: Ages of Reason

1. *The Making of the West*, 504-9, 567-77, 707-13

Week Two

2/9. The Waning of the Renaissance

1. *Anthony Grafton, "The Astrologer's Practice," in *Cardano's Cosmos: The Worlds and Works of a Renaissance Astrologer* (Cambridge MA, 1999), 22-37.
2. *Anthony Grafton, "Humanism and Science in Rudolphine Prague: Kepler in Context," in *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450-1800* (Cambridge MA, 1991), 178-203.
3. *Michel de Montaigne, "That it is folly to measure truth and error by our own capacity," in *Essays* trans. J.M. Cohen (New York, 1958), 86-91.

2/11. The Cartesian Method

1. René Descartes, *The Discourse on Method*, all
2. *Optional: browse the “Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy” site on Descartes at <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/d/descarte.htm>

Week Three

2/16. No Class – Presidents’ Day

2/17. English Radicalism and The Trial of Charles I, 1647-1649 [Monday schedule of classes]

1. *The Making of the West*, 540-7
2. * “The Putney Debates, 1647,” in Eric Cochrane, Charles M. Gray, and Mark Kishlansky, eds. *University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization. Volume 6, Early Modern Europe: Crisis of Authority* (Chicago, 1987), 349-84.
3. * David Lagomarsino and Charles J. Wood, eds. *The Trial of Charles I*, 1-12, 74-82, 118-28.

2/18. More Trials: Galileo and Tempel Anneke

1. *The Making of the West*, 509-20
2. *Browse the Galileo Project web site: <http://galileo.rice.edu/>. Be sure to read “Galileo and the Inquisition,” including all the links embedded in the text: http://galileo.rice.edu/bio/narrative_7.html
3. **The Trial of Tempel Anneke*, xiii-xliii (introduction)
4. **First Paper Due**

Week Four

2/23. Discussion of the Trial of Tempel Anneke

1. *The Trial of Tempel Anneke*, 3-151

2/25. Writing Workshop

3/3. Lecture (required): J.B. Shank, "Making Enlightenment Newtonianism in France c. 1700." 4:30-6 PM, E51-149

3/4. Louis XIV, Versailles, and the Culture of Absolutism

1. **Rewrite of First Paper Due (half the class)**

Week Five

3/2. The Leibniz-Newton Debates: Religion, Politics, Science, Society (Guest Discussant: J.B. Shank, University of Minnesota)

1. *Margaret Jacob, "The Legacy of the English Revolution," and "The Newtonian Enlightenment and Its Critics," in *Radical Enlightenment - Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London, 1981), 65-108.
2. *Steven Shapin, "Of Gods and Kings: Natural Philosophy and Politics in the Leibniz-Clarke Disputes," *Isis*, 72 (1981), 187-215
3. *Excerpts, *G.W. Leibniz and Samuel Clarke, Correspondence* (Indianapolis, 2000), 4-22.

Week Six

3/9. The Public Sphere and the *Encyclopedia* of Diderot & d'Alembert

1. *The Making of the West*, 552-63, 600-5.
2. *Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*, ed. Robert J. Allen (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1955), v-xvi, 3-17.
3. *Robert Darnton, "The *Encyclopédie* Wars of Prerevolutionary France" *The American Historical Review* 78 (December 1973): 1331-52.
4. * Jean le Rond d'Alembert, "Preliminary Discourse" in *Denis Diderot's The Encyclopedia: Selections*, ed. Stephen J. Gendzier (New York, 1967), 1-12, 35-43.

3/11. No Class Meeting

3/14. Visit to the Museum of Fine Arts, 12-3 PM (Two visits of 1.5 hours each)

Week Seven

3/16. *Encyclopedia* Articles

1. * Browse the online web site for English translations of *Encyclopedia* articles: <http://www.hti.umich.edu/d/did/>; read "Artichoke," "Sunday," "Philosopher," "Tailor of Suits" and accompanying plates. [See stellar web site.]
2. * Browse the French online version of the *Encyclopedia* at <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/efts/ARTFL/projects/encyc/>. Be sure to look at the engravings for "chirurgie" and "imprimerie."

3/18. No Class Meeting

1. **Second Paper Due**

SPRING VACATION, MARCH 23-27

Week Eight

3/30. A North American Perspective

1. *Read the English translation of the *Encyclopedia* article “Virginia” online:
<http://www.hti.umich.edu/d/did/>
2. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, ed. David Waldstreicher (Bedford/St. Martins, 2002), 43-77.

4/1. Discussion of *Notes on the State of Virginia*

1. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, ed. David Waldstreicher (Bedford/St. Martins, 2002), 79-213

Week Nine

4/6. The 1760s: Voltaire and Rousseau

1. *Voltaire, *Treatise on Tolerance* trans. Brian Masters (Cambridge, 2000), 3-27, 92-105
2. *Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, excerpts, in Margaret Jacob, ed. *The Enlightenment: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St Martins, 2001), 177-201.
3. *Optional: browse the “Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy” site on Rousseau at
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/r/rousseau.htm>

4/8. Revolution in France I

1. *The Making of the West*, 747-52
2. **Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*:
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>, chapters 1-3, and browse the documents and images in the left-hand side-bar.
3. **Rewrite of First or Second Paper Due (half the class)**

Week Ten

4/13. Revolution in France II

1. *The Making of the West*, 752-73
2. **Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*:
<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>, chapters 4-6, and browse the documents and images in the left-hand side-bar.

4/15. The Industrial “Revolution”

1. *The Making of the West*, review 714-23
2. *Kevin Reilly, ed. *Readings in World Civilizations. Volume 2: The Development of the Modern World* (St. Martins, 1992), 121-34
3. *Katharine J. Luialdi, ed. *Sources of the Making of the West. Peoples and Cultures: Volume 2: Since 1500* (St Martins, 2005, 2nd ed.), 119-29
4. *Jan de Vries, "The Industrial Revolution and the Industrious Revolution," *The Journal of Economic History* 54-2 (June 1994): 249-70.

Week Eleven

4/20. Patriots Day – No Class

4/22. From Saint Domingue to Haiti

1. *The Making of the West*, review 567-77
2. **Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/>, chapter 8, and browse the documents and images in the left-hand side-bar.
3. *Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, eds. *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804*, 7-40, 188-96

Week Twelve

4/27. Inventing Human Rights I

1. Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights*, 15-112

4/29. Inventing Human Rights II

1. Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights*, 113-214

Week Thirteen

5/4. Debate I (Topic TBA)

5/6. Debate II (Topic TBA)

Week Fourteen

5/11. Debate III (Topic TBA)

5/13. Conclusion
1. Paper 3 Due

NO FINAL EXAMINATION

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<http://ocw.mit.edu>

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