The Enlightenment in Europe and Beyond
History 367 – Winter Term, 2009-10
Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30-5
Buchanan B210

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“Within limits, the Enlightenment was what one thinks it was.”
– Norman Hampson, The Enlightenment (1968)

The long eighteenth century is often called the “age of reason” or the Age of Enlightenment, a period that saw the elaboration and codification of political and social rights for the individual and witnessed unprecedented revolutionary movements to secure these rights. But it was also a period of warfare, religious intolerance, cultural conquests, and human slavery, and this course seeks to understand the myriad ways that the Age of Enlightenment was also an age of darkness, a time of despair and anxiety for a large number of groups within Europe and beyond its borders. The various definitions of the Enlightenment – “an Age of Reason and Empiricism,” “an Age of Print and Satire,” “an Age of Empires and Expanding Frontiers,” and “an Age of Revolutions and Human Rights” – will be discussed and debated as we move through the century to understand how modernity was born out of these complex and interwoven strands. The primary geographical focus will be on France and England, but an effort will be made to discuss events taking place elsewhere within Europe and far from Europe’s shores as well.

The primary readings aim to show that eighteenth-century Europeans began to view the world in dramatically different ways than had their predecessors, partly owing to the explosion of geographical and ethnographic information that arrived in Europe from overseas. This course will include materials from literary and historical genres that provided literate Europeans with spicy anecdotes about the non-European world. Observations of peoples and places far from the European continent transformed an extraordinary range of learned disciplines in the eighteenth century: from geography to natural history, from religion to comparative ethnology, from philosophy to literature. Thus, in addition to more traditional texts of political philosophy, we will examine letters and eyewitness accounts garnered from overseas, shedding light on the mental and philosophical notions Europeans used to control and categorize the description of the wider world.

Required Texts (available at UBC bookstore):

Denis Diderot, Rameau’s Nephew
Robert Darnton, The Great Cat Massacre
Laurent Dubois, Avengers of the New World

** Readings marked with a double-asterisk will be distributed by e-mail or made available on the course website (www.vista.ubc.ca).
Course Requirements and Grading:

Book Review, Museum, Music and/or Lecture Review 10%
Discussion Participation and Response Questions 15%
Short analysis (2 pages) of key text by eighteenth-century author 15%
Encyclopédie article analysis (2 pages)/presentation 20%
Essay (8-10 pages) 40%

Organization of Course:

This course will be a combination of lectures and discussion. On certain weeks, we will meet for lectures; on other weeks, we will divide up into smaller groups according to our last names for more intimate discussions of key texts. The lectures are designed to bring context and analysis to the course readings and to delve more deeply into the issues they raise. Even during lectures, I encourage you to ask questions – both passively and actively – as you think about the material we are covering. Because there is no textbook for this course, you are encouraged to consult reference works on your own. I will provide you with a list of books that I find useful for background knowledge.

Participation in the occasional discussion sections is an essential aspect of this course. These discussion sections are your opportunity to ask questions, give opinions, and grasp the subject matter actively, not as a passive observer. On the weeks that we have discussion meetings, you will be required to write short response papers of approximately 250 words (one typewritten page) on one of several questions I will provide you. Those will be turned in on the day of the discussion. If you miss discussion, you will not be allowed to turn in a response.

E-mails:
I will do my utmost to respond to your e-mails promptly, usually providing a response within 24 hours (excepting weekends and holidays). Course-related e-mails addressed to me at neil.safier@ubc.ca SHOULD be comprised of the following subject heading: hist367ns (all lowercase). If the subject is not written in that format, or if it contains any additional characters, I may not receive the message; therefore, please address your e-mails to me in this manner to ensure that I receive them.

Book Reviews, Museum, Music and/or Lecture Reviews: Ten-percent of your grade will include writing a two-page review of an event or activity that takes place outside of the classroom. These can include writing a short book review (books relevant to the period we are studying) or writing a review of a lecture, musical event, or museum exhibition that you attend. One such example is this Thursday’s performance by Early Music Vancouver at Green College, but there are many events going on in and around Vancouver that fit the bill. I will provide examples of the kinds of events that are appropriate for reviewing; you must turn in the review by April 8.

Writing Assignment: More specific instructions for the 8-10 page essay, the short analysis piece, and the Encyclopédie analysis will be handed out in January. The Encyclopédie analysis will be due on Thursday, February 11. The short analysis piece will be due on Tuesday, March 23. For the longer essay, I will provide questions after each of the four sections of the course. The essay will be due in class no later than the beginning of lecture on Thursday, April 15 (or to my mailbox in the history department by 3:00pm), but you can turn it in at any point during the semester.
CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week I: January 5, 7
What is the Enlightenment?

January 5: Introduction/Course Logistics/What is the Enlightenment?
January 7: CLASS CANCELLED

Readings:
** Kant, “Was ist Aufklärung?”
** Mendelssohn, “On the Question: What is Enlightenment?”

PART I – AN AGE OF REASON AND EMPIRICISM

Week II: January 12, 14
Reason and Empiricism I

January 12: Was ist Aufklärung?
January 14: Guest Lecture by Brandon Konoval

Readings:
** Kant, “Was ist Aufklärung?”

Week III: January 19, 21
Reason and Empiricism II

January 19: France and England–An Eighteenth-Century Comparison
January 21: Voltaire Crosses the Channel

** Linda Colley, Britons: Forging the Nation (selection)
** Voltaire, “On Chancellor Bacon”
** Voltaire, “On Mr. Locke”
** Voltaire, “On Descartes and Newton”

Week IV: January 26, 28
Bacon, Locke, and Newton – Discussion

January 26: Newtonian Science, Locke, and Continental Philosophy
January 28: 3:30-4:10 – Sections 1&2; 4:10-4:50 – Sections 3&4

Readings:
** Bacon, “The Great Instauration” (also available at http://www.constitution.org/bacon/instauration.htm)
** Newton, “The Method of Natural Philosophy” (selections)
** Locke, “Second Treatise” (selections)
PART II – AN AGE OF PRINT AND SATIRE

Week V: February 2, 4
Print and Satire I

February 2: Printers and Readers
February 4: The Business of the Encyclopédie

Readings:
Darnton, “The Great Cat Massacre”
Darnton, “A Bourgeois Puts His World in Order”
Darnton, “Philosophers Trim the Tree of Knowledge”
** Diderot, “Encyclopedia”

Week VI: February 9, 11
Print and Satire II

February 9: Salons and Coffeehouses
February 11: The Augustan Age – Swift and Hogarth

Readings:
** Swift, “A Modest Proposal”
Diderot, Rameau’s Nephew

ENCYCLOPÉDIE ANALYSIS DUE FEBRUARY 11

— TWO-WEEK BREAK FOR WINTER OLYMPICS —

Week VII: March 2, 4
DISCUSSION – Swift and Diderot

March 2: 3:30-4:10 – Section 1; 4:10-4:50 – Section 2
March 4: 3:30-4:10 – Section 3; 4:10-4:50 – Section 4

PART III – AN AGE OF EMPIRES AND EXPANDING FRONTIERS

Week VIII: March 9, 11
Empires and Expanding Frontiers I

March 9: Wars and Imperial Expansion
March 11: In-Class Video – Simon Schama’s A History of Britain

Readings:
** Colley, Britons (excerpt)
** Goldsmith, Citizen of the World
** Raynal, “Histoire des Deux Indes”
** Rousseau, Second Discourse
Week IX: March 16, 18  
Empires and Expanding Frontiers II

March 16: Cultures of Science: Eighteenth-Century Exploration  
March 18: Enlightenment Encounters in the Pacific Northwest: Malaspina

Readings:  
** Cook, excerpt  
** Malaspina, excerpt  
** Diderot, *Supplement*

Week X: March 23, 25  
Cook, Malaspina, and Diderot – Discussion

March 23: 3:30-4:10 – Sections 1 & 2; 4:10-4:50 – Sections 3 & 4  
March 25: Guest Lecture on Age of Revolutions

SHORT ANALYSIS DUE MARCH 23

PART IV – AN AGE OF REVOLUTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Week XI: March 30, April 1  
An Age of Revolutions

March 30: The French Revolution and Napoleon  
April 1: The Spanish American Revolutions

Readings:  
** Rousseau, *Social Contract* (excerpts)  
Dubois, *Avengers*, 1-114

Week XII: April 6, 8  
The Haitian Revolution

April 6: The Haitian Revolution  
April 8: 3:30-4:10 – Sections 1&2; 4:10-4:50 – Sections 3&4

Readings:  
Dubois, *Avengers*, 115-208

BOOK/MUSEUM/CONCERT REVIEW DUE APRIL 8

Week XIII: April 13, 15  
An Age of Human Rights

Readings:  
** “Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen”  
** DeGouges, “Declaration of the Rights of Woman”  
** DeGouges, “Preface to Slavery of the Blacks”  
Dubois, *Avengers*, 209-308

FINAL ESSAY DUE APRIL 15