

## **OLLI Course Syllabus: Fall 2023**

**Title:** **The Enlightenment**

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**Course Description:** In the years between 1650 and 1789, Europe produced a flurry of genius that transformed its culture, politics, and society. Science made rapid progress in biology, astronomy, and optics. Philosophy asserted its independence from theology. Learned societies developed, scholarly journals debuted. Refugees fled religious persecution, opposition to slavery intensified, and nations doubted whether kings were ordained by God. This was the Enlightenment.

This course will survey the Enlightenment from Descartes to the American Bill of Rights, highlighting its major figures and accomplishments. It will examine the controversies that heated the pursuit of happiness, freedom, and equality before the law.

### **Week One: God and the Church**

After a brief introduction to the course, I'll introduce one of the most controversial issues of the Enlightenment: the status and power of the Church, and the Enlightenment figures who opposed it, especially Benedict Spinoza, Pierre Bayle, and Voltaire.

### **Week Two: King and Country**

Week two will review the 17<sup>th</sup>-century monarchies of England and France (especially Louis XIV) and their critics. It will introduce Enlightenment reconsiderations of history and how it should be written. This week will feature John Locke, the *Encyclopédistes*, Montesquieu, and again Voltaire.

### **Week Three: Natural Law**

Week three will detail Enlightenment contributions to science—astronomy, physics, botany, etc.—and the nascent human sciences—psychology, anthropology, and economics.

## **Week Four: The American Enlightenment**

Week four will concentrate on how Enlightenment ideas were absorbed and enacted in the English colonies of North America. It will highlight the ideas that influenced the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution.

### **Recommended**

Burns, James MacGregor. *Fire and Light: How the Enlightenment Transformed Our World*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2013.

*The Enlightenment Reader*, edited by Isaac Kramnick (Penguin Books, 1995).

Gay, Peter. *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 2 volumes. New York: W. W. Norton, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1977.

Hazard, Paul. *The Crisis of the European Mind: 1680-1715*, translated by J. Lewis May. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953.

Israel, Jonathan. *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

### **Works Used to Construct this Course**

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Alembert, Jean Le Rond d', and Denis Diderot. *Encyclopédie, ou, Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers*, 17 volumes. Paris: Chez Briasson, David, Le Breton, & Durand, 1751-1765.

Anthony, Katharine. *First Lady of the Revolution: The Life of Mercy Otis Warren*. Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1958.

Astell, Mary. *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest*. New York: Source Book Press, 1970; a reproduction of the 1701 London edition.

Baker, Keith Michael. *Condorcet: From Natural Philosophy to Social Mathematics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

Beccaria, Cesare, marchese di, *Dei Delitti e delle Pene*, edited by Felice Turotti. Edizione nuovissima corredata. Milan: F. Sanvito, 1858.

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Brands, H. W. *The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin*. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

Broadwater, Jeff. *George Mason: Forgotten Founder*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Brown, Stuart, editor. *British Philosophy and the Age of Enlightenment*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996.

Brumfitt, J. H. *The French Enlightenment*. London: Macmillan, 1972.

Bunge, Wiep van, Henri Krop, Piet Steenbakkens, and Jeroen van de Ven, eds. *The Continuum Companion to Spinoza*. London: Continuum, 2011.

Burns, James MacGregor. *Fire and Light: How the Enlightenment Transformed Our World*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2013.

Burstein, Andrew and Nancy Isenberg. *Madison and Jefferson*. New York: Random House, 2010.

Condorcet, Marquis de. *Political Writings*, edited by Steven Lukes and Nadia Urbinati. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Damrosch, Leo. *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Restless Genius*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005.

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- Davies, Kate. *Catharine Macaulay and Mercy Otis Warren: The Revolutionary Atlantic and the Politics of Gender*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Descartes, René. *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, translated by John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch, 3 volumes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985-1991.
- Diderot, Denis. *Œuvres Complètes de Diderot: Revisés sur les éditions originales comprenant ce qui a été publié à diverses époques et les manuscrits inédits conservés à la Bibliothèque de L'Ermitage*, 20 volumes. Paris: Garnier frères, 1875-1877.
- . *Jacques the Fatalist*, translated by David Coward. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- . *Political Writings*, edited by John Hope Mason and Robert Wokler. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- . *Rameau's Nephew and Other Works*, translated by Jacques Barzun and Ralph H. Bowen. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1956.
- Encyclopédie, ou, Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Métiers*, 8 volumes. Paris: Chez Briasson, 1751-1765.
- Flexner, Eleanor. *Mary Wollstonecraft: A Biography*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1972.
- Furbank, P. N. *Diderot: A Critical Biography*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1992.
- Fontenelle, Bernard de Bovier. *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds*, translated by H. A. Hargreaves. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
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- Gibbon, Edward. *The Autobiographies of Edward Gibbon: Printed verbatim from hitherto unpublished mss.* London: John Murray, 1896.
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- Glutz, Marguerite, and Madeleine Maire. *Salons du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle.* Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1945.
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- . *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights, 1750-1790*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- . *The Enlightenment that Failed: Ideas, Revolution, and Democratic Defeat, 1748-1830*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.
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- *The Secular Enlightenment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019.
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- . *Barbarism and Religion: Volume Two: Narratives of Civil Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
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