

Revolution

HIST 3626 / GOVT 3726



Lecture: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:40 – 12:55 (Klarman Hall KG70)

Sections: Wednesday 11:15 – 12:05 (White Hall 104)
Thursday 2:30 – 3:20 (Rockefeller Hall B16)
Friday 9:05 – 9:55 (McGraw Hall 145)
Friday 10:10 – 11:00 (Uris Hall G26)

Professors:

Jason Frank, Government Department

Office: 307 White Hall • Email: jf273@cornell.edu • Office Hours: Wed. 1:30 – 3:30

Camille Robcis, History Department

Office: 455 McGraw Hall • Email: car27@cornell.edu • Office Hours: Thu. 1:30 – 3:30

Teaching Assistants:

Nate Boling, History Department

Office: B41 McGraw Hall • Email: nwb33@cornell.edu • Office Hours: Thu. 3:00 – 5:00

Ed Quish, Government Department

Office: B13 White Hall • Email: ejq7@cornell.edu • Office Hours: Tue. & Wed. 3:00-4:00

Course Description:

In 1989, following the anti-Communist revolutions in the Eastern Bloc countries, Francis Fukuyama famously proclaimed “the end of history” and predicted the final global victory of economic and political liberalism. Marxism had been definitively defeated and the era of revolutions was over. Yet, in the last two decades, revolutions have been spreading across the globe with remarkable speed: from the color revolutions in the former Soviet Union and Balkan states, to the Arab Spring and the widespread anti-globalization and anti-austerity protests around the world. This course will offer a comparative study of the history and theory of modern revolutions—from the American and French revolutions of the 18th century to the anti-colonial independence struggles of the postwar world—with the goal of attaining a more nuanced and contextualized understanding of the revolutions of our time. We will explore the causes and motivations of diverse revolutionary movements, placing particular

emphasis on the political ideas that inspired them. We will read works by Paine, Rousseau, Robespierre, Sieyes, L'Ouverture, Marx, Tocqueville, Lenin, Luxembourg, Mao, Fanon, and others. The course is designed as an introductory class and no previous knowledge of the history or political theory we will be covering is required.

Course Requirements

This is an introductory lecture course.

Students are expected to attend every class (roll will be taken), do all the reading, and bring hard copies of the readings to both class and discussion sections. The reading will average 80 pages a week.

Weekly discussion sections are mandatory (sign up the first week of class), as is active participation in discussions. Two unexcused absences from section will result in a failing grade, and participation in section discussion will be a part of the final grade (25% of the total).

There will be three short paper assignments over the course of the semester (6-7 pages), each worth 25% of the final grade. A list of paper topics will be posted on Blackboard one week before papers are due, along with instructions for formatting and citation. The papers are due at the beginning of class on Sept. 22nd, Oct. 27th, and Dec. 5th. Late papers will lose half a grade per day. There will be no mid-term and no final exam.

Statement Regarding Academic Integrity

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. The complete Cornell Code of Academic Integrity can be found at: <http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/aic.cfm>

Any violation of the Academic Code of Integrity will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct and will result in a failing grade for the course.

Required Books

Available for purchase at the Cornell Bookstore, or on reserve at Uris Library. Please note that you can also find many of these books used (on Amazon Marketplace, for example). All other texts (marked*) are available online through the Blackboard course site or through the library. Please make sure that you come to class with a printed version of these texts so that we can refer to specific passages.

Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (Dover Thrift Editions, 1997)

C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins* (Vintage, 1989)

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Recollections* (Transaction Publishers, 1987)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Penguin Classics, 2002)

Louise Michel, *Red Virgin* (University of Alabama Press, 2003)

Mao Tse-Tung, *On Practice and Contradiction* (Verso, 2007)

Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove, 2005)

Monique Wittig, *The Straight Mind* (Beacon Press, 1992)

Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction

August 23: Contemporary Revolutions and “the End of History” (Robcis)

August 25: Explaining Revolution (Frank)

Readings: Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” *

Week 2: The Age of Democratic Revolutions

August 30: Absolutism and the Ancien Régime (Robcis)

September 1: Popular Sovereignty in England and America (Frank)

Readings:

- John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (Excerpts) *
- James Otis, *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (Excerpts)*

Week 3: The American Revolution

September 6: Representation and Revolt (Frank)

September 8: Declaring Independence (Guest Lecture by Isaac Kramnick)

Readings:

- *The Declaration of Independence* *
- Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*

Week 4: The French Revolution

September 13: The Enlightenment and the Rights of Man (Robcis)

September 15: The Liberal Phase of the French Revolution (Robcis)

Readings:

- French Revolution Primary Sources *
- Abbé Sieyès, *What is the Third Estate?* (excerpt) *

Week 5: Constitutionalism and Terror

September 20: The Radicalization of the French Revolution (Robcis)

September 22: Jacobinism (Frank)

Readings:

- Maximilien Robespierre, “On the Trial of the King,” *
- Maximilien Robespierre, “On the Principles of Revolutionary Government” *
- Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Excerpts) *

Screening: *Danton* (on Wed. Sept. 21 at 8pm)

Week 6: The Haitian Revolution

September 27: Republicanism, Slavery, and Empire (Guest Lecture by Paul Friedland)

September 29: The Black Jacobins (Robcis)

Readings: C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins* (Excerpts)

Week 7: The Social Question

October 4: Counterrevolutions and Revolutions: 1830 and 1848 (Robcis)

October 6: Tocqueville's 1848 (Frank)

Readings: Tocqueville, *Recollections* (Excerpts)

Week 8: The Specter of Communism

October 11: Fall Break – NO CLASS

October 13: The Communist Manifesto (Frank)

Readings: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

Week 9: Marxism and Revolution

October 18: The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (Robcis)

October 20: Marxism and the Revolutionary Event (Frank)

Readings: Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte"*

Week 10: The Paris Commune

October 25: War and Revolution (Robcis)

October 27: The Commune and the Political Imaginary (Guest Lecture by Kevin Duong)

Readings: • Louise Michel, *The Red Virgin*
 • The Manifesto of the Paris Commune *

Week 11: Communism and the Russian Revolution

November 1: The Russian Revolution (Guest Lecture by Claudia Verhoeven)

November 3: Party and Vanguard (Frank)

Readings:

- V.I. Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?* (Excerpts) *
- Rosa Luxembour, *The Politics of Mass Strikes and Unions* (Excerpts)*
- Rosa Luxembour, “Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy”*

Week 12: Mao

November 8: The Chinese Revolution (Guest Lecture by Andrew Mertha)

November 10: Maoism (Frank)

Readings: Mao Tse-Tung, *On Practice and Contradiction*

Week 13: Decolonization

November 15: Fanon, Algeria, and the Call for Violence (Robcis)

November 17: Black Radicalism and the Postcolonial Imagination (Frank)

Readings: Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Excerpts)

Screening: *The Battle of Algiers* (on Wed. Nov. 16 at 8pm)

Week 14: Sexual Revolutions

November 22: Feminism and Gay Rights (Robcis)

November 24: Thanksgiving – NO CLASS

Readings: Monique Wittig, *The Straight Mind*

Week 1

5: The Return of Revolution

November 29: The Arab spring (Guest Lecture by Tarek El-Arris)

December 1: The New Age of Revolution (Frank)