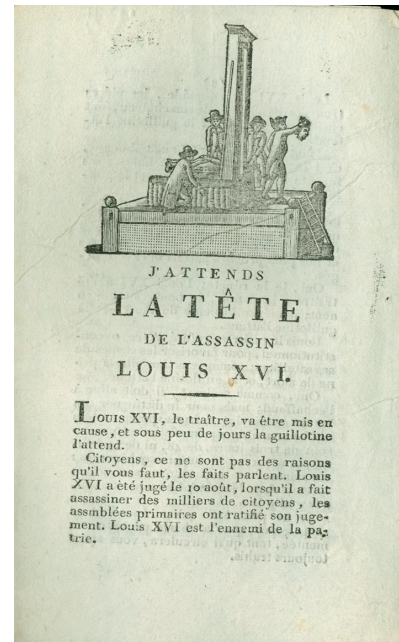
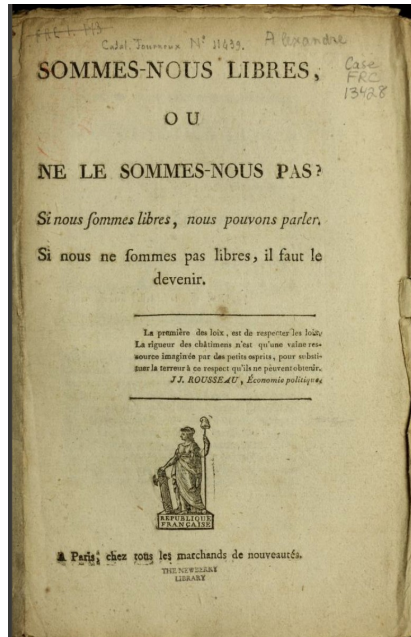


# FRENCH 499: Eighteenth-Century France Through Digital Archives and Tools

Course in English. Reading knowledge of French is helpful.

Supplementary sessions in French for interested students.

Winter 2018 MW 3:30-5:20



The last decade or two has witnessed a huge migration of texts and data onto digital platforms, where they can be accessed, in many cases, by anyone anywhere. This is a terrific benefit to students and teachers who otherwise wouldn't be able to consult these materials, and it has transformed the kind of work and research we can do in the French program and the Humanities. We can now discover texts that we would never have been able to find in the past. And we can look at the original forms of works that up to now we've only been able to study in modern re-editions. But this ease of access brings challenges: to locate these resources on the web, to assess their quality and reliability, and to understand how to use them, as primary sources and data and as new research technologies. A PDF of a first edition downloaded through Google Books certainly *looks* like the printed book it reproduces; but it is *not* that printed book. It is a particular image of it, and it can often be a mistake to forget the difference.

We'll study a variety of digital archives, databases, and tools useful for studying French cultural history. These resources will help us explore the eighteenth century and the intellectual culture of the Enlightenment in the decades leading up to the French Revolution. We'll look at:

- a new database of Revolutionary pamphlets recently created by the Newberry Library
- two competing databases of book orders received in the 1770s and 1780s by a publishing house in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, which shipped clandestine texts into France
- sites which map networks of correspondence in the period

We'll discuss current debates on the importance of digital scholarship and digital humanities. And we'll consider various aspects of the digitization of texts, which we might not normally think about: how are the texts chosen and edited? In what ways do copyright and intellectual property law determine what we can and can't access and how we can use the materials? We will also explore the rudiments of digital publishing, preparing a short reader of classic French texts, scanned, OCR'd, encoded in TEI XML, converted to HTML and published digitally. This is a new course which can be used towards the Culture & Civilization requirement for French majors. (5 credits VLPA)

Questions? Email [frenital@uw.edu](mailto:frenital@uw.edu)