

## UHC – Western European History

Here are the two essay questions you from which you have to choose. They are due by midnight on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October. (This way you won't be scrambling to get it done by the beginning of class.)

### Question #1

Examine and explain how the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment laid the foundation for the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. However, what you must also do is explain: “In what ways did the “tolerant and urbane” Enlightenment provide the Jacobins and, in particular, Robespierre the philosophical justification for “The Terror” in the Radical Phase of the Revolution and the Industrialists with a philosophical justification for the worst abuses of the Industrial Revolution. (Be careful, this is not as easy and straightforward as it seems.)

### Question #2

David Brin writes:

“And remember this too -- enlightenment, science, democracy, and equal opportunity are still the true rebels, reigning for just a few generations (and still imperfectly!) in one or two corners of the Earth, after elite chiefs, romantic bards and magicians dominated our ancestors for maybe half a million years. Don't you think a little pride in that rebellion might be called for? A radical revolution-in-progress, still fresh and incomplete. A rebellion that (among many other things) taught serfs like you to read so you can enjoy epic books and picture things different than they are. One that makes vivid movies that cater to your taste for adventure. One that, for all its imperfections, gave you a better chance than in some peasant village of old. One that has a long way to go, but has at least turned our eyes around to face the future. Self-critical almost to a fault, this culture may not be as romantic as those old kingdoms... but isn't it **better?** You are heirs of the world's first true civilization, arising out of the first true revolution. Take some pride in it... Let's keep enjoying kings and wizards. But also remember to keep them where they belong. Where they can do little harm. Where they entertain us.”

The assumption in this quote is that the period, 1789-1848, i.e. Hobsbawm's “Age of Revolution,” was a good thing and that humanity is much better off today because of these Revolutions. Obviously, David Brin does not agree with those who “look

backward.” If Brin is correct then why would anyone look backward to the past instead of forward to the future? If those who look backward are right then why do we need to go headlong into the future? Which side do you agree with? Do you agree with Brin or with those who long for some idyllic past? Or do you fall somewhere in-between? Take a position on this and when answering this question deal with and explain how this “age” shaped Europe physically, politically and intellectually, while changing the role of the individual, politically, socially and economically in society. When doing all this you need to deal with why people looked backward and why others looked to the future.

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## **Grading criteria for History 0124 Papers:**

### **Mechanics of the Paper (i.e. style and form):**

- You carefully construct your entire paper to introduce, discuss, and conclude; body of paper makes its case through logical order of exposition.
  - Paragraphs function as discrete units, with use of concrete evidence to support your claims.
  - Paper demonstrates mastery of standard written English grammar and usage and uses an appropriate system of reference such as Chicago or MLA or what your discipline uses.
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### **Intellectual Rigor and Historical Analysis:**

- Paper shows capacity to formulate historical question; you carefully structure your inquiry to answer the question posed and excludes irrelevant material.
  - Paper provides evidence from a variety of primary or secondary resources to back up your claims, either descriptive or causal.
  - Paper clearly locates argument in time and space, i.e. you make clear what period you are writing about throughout the paper.
  - Paper analyzes evidence and demonstrates its significance in relation to the historical question posed.
  - Argument and evidence are consistent throughout the paper, i.e. you do not contradict yourself, or fail to prove what you set out to prove.
  - Your argument and evidence are consistent with the state of scholarly knowledge.
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**Use the websites I put up on Courseweb to help you with your writing.**

**DEATH TO PASSIVE VOICE!**