

FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT ON "IMAGES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION," ED-20677-97

This project has now come to a very successful conclusion. This report will be brief since the actual results of the project are embodied in two products that we have already made available to NEH:

1. The combination book and CD-ROM published in the spring of 2001 by Penn State University Press under the title, *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: Exploring the French Revolution*.

2. The web site of the same name formally launched at <http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution> during the summer of 2001.

Both products provide an accessible and lively introduction to the French Revolution as well as an extraordinary archive of some of the most important documentary evidence from the Revolution. Ten overview essays cover the major topics in the history of the revolution, including, the social causes of the Revolution, the fall of the monarchy, women and the Revolution, the story of Napoleon, and the legacies of the Revolution. Two additional essays consider "How to Read an Image" and "Songs of the Revolution." The Web site and CD-ROM also provide a rich collection of documentary evidence, including 338 texts, 245 images, and a number of maps and songs. Lynn Hunt of UCLA and Jack Censer of GMU (both internationally renowned scholars of the Revolution) served as principal authors and editors. The conceptualization and execution of the digital products was a collaboration of the Center for History and New Media (CHNM) at George Mason University and the American Social History Project at the City University of New York. The producers of the CD-ROM and Web site were Pennee Bender, Joshua Brown, and Roy Rosenzweig. Seed and matching funding for the project was provided by the Florence Gould Foundation.

The CD-ROM and book—thanks to the support of NEH and the flexibility of Penn State University Press—is being sold for a very modest price of \$19.95. As a result, the book is affordable for the general public and introductory students—the most important target audience. Already, Penn State has orders for 5,000 copies—an extraordinary sale for a book in European history.

Despite the modest price of the book, we are also committed to making the material developed in this project available to an even broader and non-paying audience through the World Wide Web. The Web site contains almost all the resources presented on the CD-ROM. The only exceptions are a few multimedia overviews, which we intend to add later to the Web site. Although just launched, the Web site is already being used in classrooms around the country.

We have been gratified by the very enthusiastic reception that the project has received so far from students, teachers, and scholars. A major panel was devoted to the project at the meeting of the American Historical Association. Keith Baker, the moderator and former editor of the *Journal of Modern History*, pronounced the project "extraordinary" and "fantastic." The audience also responded very positively to what

we presented. We have also made presentations to a number of other audiences, including an NEH-sponsored conference of Community College educators at GMU; faculty and students at Miami University of Ohio; graduate students and faculty at a conference for Eastern European educators in Pulawvy, Poland, the Western Society of French History, the Society for French Historical Studies, and the Education Committee of the National Humanities Council, and Fairfax County Social Studies teachers.

Our next step is publicizing the Web site and CD-ROM among multiple audiences. We have done an e-mailing to 1,200 history department contacts. In addition, we will be hosting a booth at the fall meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies to make high school teachers aware of the rich materials for teaching. We are also beginning to develop a teaching page with sample lesson plans. And we will make use of the Web site as part of a new project on teaching World history.

In sum, we are extraordinarily grateful to NEH for the support that has made possible this project, which we believe will have a major impact on teaching about the French Revolution.

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