

2022

Research Guide for Rosseau, Burke, and Revolution in France 1791

Simon Kailing
Grand Valley State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lib_scholars



Part of the [History Commons](#)

ScholarWorks Citation

Kailing, Simon, "Research Guide for Rosseau, Burke, and Revolution in France 1791" (2022). *Library Scholars Manuscripts*. 4.

https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lib_scholars/4

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Undergraduate Research and Creative Practice at ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Scholars Manuscripts by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

Research Guide for Rosseau, Burke, and Revolution in France 1791

Contents

Abstract.....	2
Introduction.....	2
Disclaimers.....	3
Databases and How to Use Them.....	3
Translations.....	3
Research Tips.....	4
Factions	6
Feuillants	6
Feuillants should read:	6
Jacobins.....	6
Jacobins should read:.....	7
Conservatives	7
Conservatives should read:	7
Indeterminates	7
The Most Prominent Issues and their Best Resources	8
Rebels	8
Rebels Should Read:.....	8

Abstract

This project aims to provide students playing the Reacting to the Past game Rosseau, Burke, and Revolution in France 1791 with research guides tailored to their characters and to the factions to which those characters belong. There is one main Research Guide and forty individual Role Sheets. The main Research Guide includes: An introduction to the document's purpose and to the game itself, a section titled "Disclaimers" designed to outline the limits of the document, a section titled "Databases" which provides information on the use of the library's various databases, a section titled "Research Tips" that contain the author's best research-related advice, a list of the game's five factions and a brief description of each along with a few recommended readings for each, and a Works Cited page for the documents listed in the Suggested Reading sections for the factions.

Introduction

The French Revolution, arguably the most important moment of revolution in 18th century Europe and perhaps even the history of the world, fundamentally changed the face of European leadership forever. The ideas of feudalism, monarchy, and divine right had already been losing steam for decades, but this was the final nail in the coffin. The execution of Louis XVI, King of the French, in 1793 sealed the fates of monarchs all around the Western World, and even though France fell back into a monarchy under his brother Charles twenty years later, the damage was done. It was inevitable that France would come to be ruled by the people, rather than A Person. And the rest of the world followed its lead. The game Rosseau, Burke, and Revolution in France 1791 follows the middle years of the revolution, beginning with the return of the king to Paris from his flight to Varennes in 1791 and ending with his death in 1793.

Or does it? That choice is yours to make.

This game examines the ideology behind France's shift from monarchy to republic, reaching as far back to the writings of classic Greece and Rome for rhetorical support. Participants play as key characters of the time, such as the Mayor of Paris, the King of France, and the leaders of the influential Feuillant and Jacobin clubs. They adopt—or choose not to adopt—the viewpoints and actions of those characters, while keeping in mind that any changes they make to history must be historically plausible and fitting to their roles. Louis XVI, for instance, can't build a tank and take out his opponents. He also can't summon a horde of knights from Germany and Spain to overwhelm them...or can he? If you can convince your Gamemaster it *could've* happened, then maybe it can.

Following that line of thought, information is power. The more you know about the time period and the state of the country and its inhabitants at the time, the stronger you'll be, and the more options you'll have. Read everything you can get your hands on, including everything your opponents are reading. If you know what they know, you'll be prepared to fight back when they attack you with it.

Also, the point of this game is to learn, so the reading comes in there, too. Learn as much as you can about the workings of the French Revolution, because it'll help you win the game, but also because it'll help you understand political turnings, people, and the world in a more complete sense. If you've ever heard someone say that history repeats itself, they're absolutely right. And in our turbulent modern world, the lessons of this violent era of our past are disturbingly applicable.

Good luck.

Disclaimers

- 1.) This guide was designed specifically for the Reacting to the Past game *Rosseau, Burke, and Revolution in France 1791*. It may be helpful for other research, but it was not designed to be an exhaustive guide on the French Revolution. Following that, this guide was intentionally designed *not* to be exhaustive because it was envisioned as an introduction to independent research. The goal of this document is not to simply confer victory on whomever reads it; it is to point them in the direction of the information that might help them win, and provide a few useful tips on the discovery of said information.
- 2.) In the beginning of your Game Book, (mine is on page viii in the printed version) you will find a section titled “Core Texts”. You may then wonder why I created this research guide, if one already exists that was made by the people who wrote the game. The simple answer is that the “Core Texts” section is exactly what it says it is: a selection of Core Texts. Primary sources, for the most part. This guide was designed to introduce readers to the other possibilities present at the time of the first of the French Revolutions, rather than to simply inform them of what did happen. The two documents are complimentary, though by necessity slight overlap does exist between them. Doubtless, overlap will exist between your faction’s recommended reading in this document and your own characters’ reading guides. I intend them both to be used in concert, but I also know there will be instances where that will not happen.
- 3.) This guide was designed for students with access to Grand Valley State University’s library system. Users from other institutions or private users may not have access to all of the resources listed here.

Databases and How to Use Them

Anything present in the library databases can be found through the library search bar, but it might not be one of the first results that comes up. You might have to search through a couple of pages for it. Starting with a specific database is a good way to weed out the things you don’t want to see. Additionally, especially while using the main library search function, you’ll frequently get lots of *reviews* of a title, rather than the title itself. This can be frustrating, but sometimes if you read the reviews you’ll get what you needed out of the actual document itself. If that doesn’t end up happening, you can select an option on the vertical bar on the left-hand side of the screen that will prohibit them from showing up as results.

Translations

Occasionally, during your research, you may come across a particularly irritating problem. The book you need, the article you want, is written in a language you do not speak and you cannot find it in English. What do you do about this?

You’ve got a couple options.

- 1.) Google “Translations of... [document name]. It may be helpful to search up the names of particular authors whom you know write frequently on this subject.”

- 2.) Find somebody who speaks the language it's written in, and ask them to translate the pieces you need. This could be difficult, as most of us don't have friends who speak, say, 14th century Germanic languages, but if one of your aunts is a linguistics professor, more power to you.
- 3.) Translate it yourself. Provided you're not in a language class where the exact translation of words is essential to success, pretty much any translation software out there will get you a decent understanding of the original document's meaning. If all you're looking for is information, having one word slightly askew here and there isn't going to be a problem. The trickiest part of this is that some translation software may not recognize a language if the dialect is sufficiently old/remote, so you might have to circle through a couple to find one that works. That's more likely going to be an issue if you're working with something rare or something from the ancient world—I had no issues translating documents for this game. The 18th century really wasn't that long ago.

Research Tips

Now that we've gone through all that, let's go ahead and talk about how to use the information from above. It may feel as though you are drowning in words right now. That's okay. That feeling is going to be with you for the rest of your life.

It's one of those things you're never really taught how to do, beyond someone showing you how to do a Google search. It can sometimes feel like you're looking for the needle in the haystack—except, the haystack is an ocean, and you're not sure what the needle looks like. To aid you in your endeavors, I have compiled a list of my most helpful tips, the first of which is to:

- 1.) Google "How to do Research" and watch a couple of videos. Multiple perspectives are always good.
- 2.) Biggest and best: never give up. You can find *anything* on the internet if you try hard enough. But, also know when to abandon a lead. Namely, if it stops making sense, don't try to force it to come together.
- 3.) Ctrl-F. Is your Friend.
- 4.) Remember not all sources are trustworthy. *Wikipedia* and *Britannica* being two of these not entirely reliable sources. Always double-check facts found here.
- 5.) CORROBORATE. Never believe anything you only read in one place. One man can be wrong. In fact, *three* men and two women can be wrong, but there's a much lower chance that they will be than the one singular man. At least, they will likely be wrong in different ways, which should provide you with enough overlapping details that you can figure out something close to the actual truth. It also just looks better if you have multiple sources, because everyone else is also subconsciously aware that three people have more authority than one single person.
- 6.) Use something like the CRAAP test to determine whether your information is trustworthy. Check out [The CRAAP Test « Evaluating Sources Easily](#) for information on how to properly evaluate the validity of a source.
- 7.) Books are probably going to be your greatest sources of information, simply because they're longer than anything else. Journal articles are also useful, but they're typically written for the purpose of making a point, not simply recounting history, so there is less by volume to be taken from them.

- a. It is important to note that you do not necessarily need to read through these books in entirety: search the indexes and tables of contents for the information you need, and pay closest attention to that.
- 8.) Videos will probably not be helpful. I know—I love Crash Course, too. However, I have extensively searched through YouTube, and I found very little on our characters or the time that was actually helpful, including our good friend John Green's video on the French Revolution. All of the videos that you'll find are either over an hour long, or very, very superficial. You need to go deep to understand what's happening in this game. In this time. It's a complex, confusing period in history. Reading will be your best option.

One final Note:

It is important to realize that these people are our ancestors, our forebears. They did not know all that we know now, and so they made quite a few erroneous assumptions. It is only natural that you may feel a little silly at certain parts in this game, or even a little ashamed of the viewpoints you're portraying. They are not your own, and certainly not unique to your character. For instance, *here* is an article describing the theory of a hyperborean Atlantis, introduced by Jean-Sylvain Bailly, a prominent astronomer of the age. Essentially, the gist of this theory is that mankind originated in Siberia, when the world was warmer, and that was where the city of Atlantis was. Obviously, in the modern age, we are much wiser than this, and thus we know that Atlantis is a city in Georgia. You can go read the article if you'd like—it's full of other ridiculous things important people of this age thought, and thus is quite amusing—but the point of this is that when you are pretending to be these characters, you are pretending to be a person with a VERY incomplete picture of the world. They don't know about nuclear fission. They don't understand genetics—or at least, they have only come to learn of it very recently, and most of modern medicine is yet to be invented. Their remedies for coughs and colds often involve cocaine and alcohol. They rode horses everywhere, so their concept of time is vastly different from ours. Have a little fun with this. Propose a couple outlandish ideas, because by the standards of the time, they're actually not that crazy.

Factions

There are five factions in this game. There are the Feuillants, the Jacobins, the Conservatives, the Indeterminates, and the Section Leaders of Paris. There are also two independent major characters, Louis XVI and the Marquis de Lafayette. Below, you will find a description of the five, and suggested readings for characters belonging to them.

Feuillants

In the beginning days of the revolution, the Feuillants were members of the Jacobin faction. They split off and formed their own group because they were unhappy with the extremism exhibited by their own party, and now they seek to moderate their radical brethren. Both factions want to see change—their main differences lie in the severity of those changes and how far they're willing to go to see them done. Feuillants, by and large, are hoping to accomplish reasonable goals without bloodshed. The atrocities of the past have shown them that rapid shifts typically involve at least a little bit of chaos and death. They would like to see a peaceful transition from absolute monarchy to something a little less authoritarian, such as a constitutional monarchy. They are moderates, people who believe slow and steady will eventually win the race and be best for everyone along the way.

Feuillants should read:

- *The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu. Montesquieu doesn't have a place in this game as a character—at least, not officially—but his ideas were very important, especially to the conservatives.
- *The Social Contract*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The Jacobin Bible. This is the origin of Rousseau's construct of General Will.
- *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Edmund Burke. Edmund Burke was a member of the English Parliament, and this book of his discusses the disturbing changes occurring in France at the time of the Revolution from the perspective of a staunch conservative.
- Dale Clifford: "The National Guard and the Parisian Community, 1789-1790." *French Historical Studies*, vol. 16, no. 4, Oct. 1990, pp. 849–78. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/286325>.
- Timothy Tackett: "Nobility and the Long-Term Origins of the French Revolution." *American Historical Review*, vol. 124, no. 3, June 2019, pp. 938–41. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhz318>. An article written on the ways the nobility caused the Revolution, this is everything the nobles among the Feuillants should know to watch their backs.

Jacobins

Jacobins are the revolutionary faction of the Revolution. They want change, and by God, they want it now. Led by men whose convictions are so strong that some may call them fanatics, they strive to purge France of injustice and damned be all who stand in their way. Before them, the outdated, obsolete, and unfair power structures of feudalism will be leveled, the nobility stripped bare of their absurd privilege and subjected to the same trials as the rest of humanity. They have their misgivings from time to time, but for the most part, Jacobins are fully committed to their cause.

Jacobins should read:

- *The Social Contract*, Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau's political ideology and a central text of the Revolution.
- *De Re Publica*, Marcus Tullius Cicero. The famous Roman senator's writings on the subject of republic as a form of government.
- *The Coming of the Terror*, Timothy Tackett. An analysis of the years of the Revolution; especially the years preceding the Terror.
- *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The Middle Years*, Mike L. Kennedy. An informative work written about the inner functions of the various Jacobin clubs around France.
- Timothy Tackett's article "Nobility and the Long-Term Origins of the French Revolution." *American Historical Review*, vol. 124, no. 3, June 2019, pp. 938–41. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhz318> for an understanding of just how badly the nobility have screwed up France.

Conservatives

This group includes the nobles who support the king, and the clergy who refuse to take the Obligatory Oath. As a general rule, they want France to return to the way it was before, although some do acknowledge there is need for change in some areas of society.

Conservatives should read:

- Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Edmund Burke was a member of the English Parliament, and this book of his discusses the disturbing changes occurring in France at the time of the Revolution from the perspective of a staunch conservative.
- Dale Clifford's "The National Guard and the Parisian Community, 1789-1790." *French Historical Studies*, vol. 16, no. 4, Oct. 1990, pp. 849–78. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/286325>. For information on the National Guard's numbers and disposition at the time.
- *The French Revolutionary Wars, 1787-1802* by T.C.W. Blanning, for information on the wars of the time.
- Montesquieu's *Considerations on the Greatness of the Romans and their Decline*, for some solid anti-republican arguments.
- Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws*, for balanced exposure to monarchy's strengths and weaknesses.

Indeterminates

The indeterminates in this game are, as their name suggests, unsure of their position. They don't know whose side they are on. If you are playing as an indeterminate, it is your job to learn as much as you can about current events and the history that preceded them so you can make the wisest, most informed decision you can. You should also research individual members of the factions, so you can determine which of them will be most likely to support your own personal goals.

The Most Prominent Issues and their Best Resources

- The question of active votership: *Elections in the French Revolution: An Apprenticeship in Democracy, 1789–1799* by Malcolm Crook. Crook’s exploration of electoral systems in the French Revolution. Discussed within are many relevant issues, including the question of active citizenship.
- Money and *assignats*: *Stuff and Money in the Time of the French Revolution*, by Rebecca L. Spang. The title really says it all. A discussion of money, and other things, in the time of the French Revolution.
- War: T. C. W. Blanning’s *The French Revolutionary Wars, 1787-1802*. The wars of the time, their causes, and their courses.
- The question of Republican government versus monarchial: Cicero, *De Re Publica*, and Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*. Additionally, Montesquieu’s *Considerations on the Grandeur of the Romans and their Decadence*.
- General Will: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*. Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Discourses* as well, for the argument over public and private property.

Rebels

You are the Section Leaders of Paris. For years, you have been beaten down. Starving. Poor. You have watched your friends, family, and neighbors suffer at the uncaring hands of the nobility who is supposed to protect you, and the King who is supposed to feed you. You owe them loyalty no longer. The time for retribution is now. They will pay for their crimes against the people of France. You will make sure of it.

Rebels Should Read:

- Bossenga, Gail. “Nobility’s Demise: Institutions, Status, and the Role of the State.” This article deals with the reasons behind the fall of the French nobility.
- Stephen Miller’s *Feudalism, Venality, and Revolution: Provincial Assemblies in Late-Old Regime France* was written regarding the twilight years of the Ancien Regime and the practices of the nobility at the time.
- T.C.W. Blanning’s book *The French Revolutionary Wars, 1787-1802* deals with the conflicts between France and neighboring countries during the time of the Revolution.
- *Elections in the French Revolution: An Apprenticeship in Democracy, 1789-1799* is Crook’s exploration of electoral systems in the French Revolution. Discussed within are many relevant issues, including the question of active citizenship.
- *Louis XVI and the French Revolution 1789-1792* is a summation of King Louis XVI’s involvement—direct, or not—with the revolution of his country. (Not to be confused with John Hardman’s *Louis XVI and the French Revolution*).

Works Cited

- Blanning, T. C. W. *The French Revolutionary Wars, 1787-1802*. Arnold, 1996. *EBSCOhost*, DC151 .B62 1996
- Bossenga, Gail. "Nobility's Demise: Institutions, Status, and the Role of the State." *American Historical Review*, vol. 124, no. 3, June 2019, pp. 942–49. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhz314>.
- Caiani, Ambrogio A. *Louis XVI and the French Revolution, 1789-1792*. [Electronic Resource]. Cambridge University Press, 2012. *EBSCOhost*, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=cat08963a&AN=gvsu.EBC1042520&site=eds-live&scope=site>
- Cicero, Marcus Tullius, and James E. G. Zetzel. *De Re Publica : Selections*. Cambridge University Press, 1995. *EBSCOhost*, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=cat09195a&AN=gvsu.b1257798&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Clifford, Dale Lothrop. "The National Guard and the Parisian Community, 1789-1790." *French Historical Studies*, vol. 16, no. 4, Oct. 1990, pp. 849–78. *EBSCOhost*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/286325>.
- Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and Their Decadence*. Gale, 1992. *EBSCOhost*, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=edsgvr&AN=edsgcl.2549100013&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Crook, Malcolm. *Elections in the French Revolution*. [Electronic Resource] : *An Apprenticeship in Democracy, 1789-1799*. Cambridge University Press, 1996. *EBSCOhost*, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=cat08964a&AN=gvsu.ebs848357e&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

- Edmund Burke, and Frank M. Turner. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Yale University Press, 2003. EBSCOhost, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=192243&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Hardman, John. *The Life of Louis XVI*. Yale University Press, 2016. EBSCOhost, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=1227507&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Kennedy, Michael L. *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution*. Princeton University Press, 1988. EBSCOhost, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=cat09195a&AN=gvsu.b1159945&site=eds-live&scope=site>
- Miller, Stephen, *Feudalism, Venality, and Revolution : Provincial Assemblies in Late-Old Regime France*. Manchester University Press, 2020. EBSCOhost, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=2659569&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jaques, et al. *The Social Contract*. Wordsworth Editions, 2013. EBSCOhost, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=1468721&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on Inequality : On the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men*. The Floating Press, 2009. EBSCOhost, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=330736&site=eds-live&scope=site>.
- Spang, Rebecca L., *Stuff and Money in the Time of the French Revolution*. Harvard University Press, 2015. EBSCOhost, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=932385&site=eds-live&scope=site>.

Tackett, Timothy *The Coming of the Terror in the French Revolution*. Harvard University Press, 2015. *EBSCOhost*,
[https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=958520
&site=eds-live&scope=site](https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=nlebk&AN=958520&site=eds-live&scope=site).

Tackett, Timothy. "Nobility and the Long-Term Origins of the French Revolution." *American Historical Review*, vol. 124, no. 3, June 2019, pp. 938–41. *EBSCOhost*,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhz318>.

"The Spirit of the Laws." *Masterplots, Fourth Edition*, Nov. 2010, pp. 1–3. *EBSCOhost*,
[https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=lfh&AN=103
331MP428749560000859&site=eds-live&scope=site](https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,sso&db=lfh&AN=103331MP428749560000859&site=eds-live&scope=site).

Tackett, Timothy. "Nobility and the Long-Term Origins of the French Revolution." *American Historical Review*, vol. 124, no. 3, June 2019, pp. 938–41. *EBSCOhost*,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhz318>.