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The Enlightenment has long been seen as synonymous with the beginnings of modern Western intellectual and political culture. As a set of ideas and a social movement, this historical moment, the 'age of reason' of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, is marked by attempts to place knowledge on new foundations.

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A great book about an even greater book is a rare event in publishing. Darnton's history of the *Encyclopedie* is such an occasion. The author explores some fascinating territory in the French genre of *histoire du livre*, and at the same time he tracks the diffusion of Enlightenment ideas. He is concerned with the form of the thought of the great philosophes as it materialized into books and with the way books were made and distributed in the business of publishing. This is cultural history on a broad scale, a history of the process of civilization. In tracing the publishing story of Diderot's *Encyclopedie*, Darnton uses new sources--the papers of eighteenth-century publishers--that allow him to respond firmly to a set of problems long vexing historians. He shows how the material basis of literature and the technology of its production affected the substance and diffusion of ideas. He fully explores the workings of the literary market place, including the roles of publishers, book dealers, traveling salesmen, and other intermediaries in cultural communication. How publishing functioned as a business, and how it fit into the political as well as the economic systems of prerevolutionary Europe are set forth. The making of books touched on this vast range of activities because books were products of

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artisanal labor, objects of economic exchange, vehicles of ideas, and elements in political and religious conflict. The ways ideas traveled in early modern Europe, the level of penetration of Enlightenment ideas in the society of the Old Regime, and the connections between the Enlightenment and the French Revolution are brilliantly treated by Darnton. In doing so he unearths a double paradox. It was the upper orders in society rather than the industrial bourgeoisie or the lower classes that first shook off archaic beliefs and took up Enlightenment ideas. And the state, which initially had suppressed those ideas, ultimately came to favor them. Yet at this high point in the diffusion and legitimation of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution erupted, destroying the social and political order in which the Enlightenment had flourished. Never again will the contours of the Enlightenment be drawn without reference to this work. Darnton has written an indispensable book for historians of modern Europe.

Combining the intellectual history of the Enlightenment, Atlantic history, and the history of the French Revolution, Paul Cheney explores the political economy of globalization in eighteenth-century France. The discovery of the New World and the rise of Europe's Atlantic economy brought unprecedented wealth. It also reordered the political balance among European states and threatened age-old social hierarchies within them. In this charged context, the French developed a "science of commerce" that aimed to benefit from this new wealth while containing its revolutionary effects. Montesquieu became a towering authority among reformist economic and political thinkers by developing a politics of fusion intended to reconcile France's aristocratic society and monarchical state with the needs and risks of international commerce. The Seven Years' War proved the weakness of this model, and after this watershed reforms that could guarantee shared prosperity at home and in the colonies remained elusive. Once the Revolution broke out in 1789, the contradictions that attended the growth of France's Atlantic economy helped to bring down the constitutional monarchy. Drawing upon the writings of philosophes, diplomats, consuls of commerce, and merchants, Cheney rewrites the history of political economy in the Enlightenment era and provides a new interpretation of the relationship between capitalism and the French Revolution.

Early in 1788, Franz Anton Mesmer, a Viennese physician, arrived in Paris and began to promulgate a somewhat exotic theory of healing that almost immediately seized the imagination of the general populace. Robert Darnton, in his lively study of mesmerism and its relation to eighteenth-century radical political thought and popular scientific notions, provides a useful contribution to the study of popular culture and the manner in which ideas are diffused down through various social levels.

Examines the eighteenth-century French writers, publishers, and booksellers, who avoided official censorship, influenced public opinion, and affected the development of the French Revolution

In the late-18th century, a group of publishers in what historian Robert Darnton calls the "Fertile Crescent" countries located along the French border, stretching from Holland to Switzerland pirated the works of prominent (and often banned) French writers and distributed them in France, where laws governing piracy were in flux and any notion of "copyright" very much in its infancy. Piracy was entirely legal and everyone acknowledged tacitly or openly that these pirated editions of works by Rousseau, Voltaire, and Diderot, among other luminaries, supplied a growing readership within France, one whose needs could not be met by the monopolistic and tightly controlled Paris Guild. Darnton's book focuses principally on a

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publisher in Switzerland, one of the largest and whose archives are the most complete. Through the lens of this concern, he offers a sweeping view of the world of writing, publishing, and especially bookselling in pre-Revolutionary France--a vibrantly detailed inside look at a cut-throat industry that was struggling to keep up with the times and, if possible, make a profit off them. Featuring a fascinating cast of characters lofty idealists and down-and-dirty opportunists this new book expands upon on Darnton's celebrated work on book-publishing in France, most recently found in *Literary Tour de France*. *Pirating and Publishing* reveals how and why piracy brought the Enlightenment to every corner of France, feeding the ideas that would explode into revolution.

*Festivals and the French Revolution*--the subject conjures up visions of goddesses of Liberty, strange celebrations of Reason, and the oddly pretentious cult of the Supreme Being. Every history of the period includes some mention of festivals; Ozouf shows us that they were much more than bizarre marginalia to the revolutionary process.

The fall of the Bastille on July 14, 1789 has become the commemorative symbol of the French Revolution. But this violent and random act was unrepresentative of the real work of the early revolution, which was taking place ten miles west of Paris, in Versailles. There, the nobles, clergy and commoners of France had just declared themselves a republic, toppling a rotten system of aristocratic privilege and altering the course of history forever. The Revolution was led not by angry mobs, but by the best and brightest of France's growing bourgeoisie: young, educated, ambitious. Their aim was not to destroy, but to build a better state. In just three months they drew up a Declaration of the Rights of Man, which was to become the archetype of all subsequent Declarations worldwide, and they instituted a system of locally elected administration for France which still survives today. They were determined to create an entirely new system of government, based on rights, equality and the rule of law. In the first three years of the Revolution they went a long way toward doing so. Then came Robespierre, the Terror and unspeakable acts of barbarism. In a clear, dispassionate and fast-moving narrative, Ian Davidson shows how and why the Revolutionaries, in just five years, spiralled from the best of the Enlightenment to tyranny and the Terror. The book reminds us that the Revolution was both an inspiration of the finest principles of a new democracy and an awful warning of what can happen when idealism goes wrong.

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