This course examines the history of revolutionary politics in Britain, America and France between 1642 and 1799, when the very foundations of monarchical rule came under threat from those who championed the cause of liberty – for good and for ill.

Beginning with an overview of the period and its keystone events, we will go on to explore the nature of the revolutionary challenge in each of the three states, asking why those threats emerged, and how they evolved through time - sometimes in ways their creators could never have imagined. In the process we will examine the roles played by key revolutionaries and royals alike, from Charles I, George III and Louis XVI to Cromwell, Paine, and the Jacobins, asking how they helped shape the course of events, and how this impacted on both their national, and personal, destinies. We will also explore the critical role of enlightened thought throughout, from Hobbes to Locke and from Voltaire to Rousseau, asking whether, and to what extent, the revolutions shared a common philosophical identity.

Finally we will reflect on the wider impact of these dramatic developments, asking how they helped shape the very nature of the modern world, from the emergence of liberal democracy to the birth of totalitarianism and terror.

1. **Introduction and Overview.** Key Issues and Events
2. **A Question of Sovereignty?** Charles I and the origins of the English Civil War.
4. **A Glorious Revolution**: The English Bill of Rights and the Lockean legacy
5. **A Tax on Liberty?**: Colonial America and the impact of the Stamp Act
6. **Time to Part**: Paine and the path to American independence
7. **An Enlightened Affair?**: Ancien Regime France and the Liberal Revolution.
8. **A Republic of Virtue**: The Jacobin takeover and the politics of Terror.
9. **Return to Order?**: The revival of liberalism in France and the coming of Napoleon
10. **Concluding thoughts**

**Bibliography**
Available upon request

**Tutor Bio**
Dr Kate Watson teaches for the Oxford University Department of Continuing Education, and other university programmes. She has lectured and published on modern British and European culture, and modern revolutionary experiences.