

OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY
POLITICS DEPARTMENT
PUBLIC LECTURE

Rousseau's Rejection of Enlightenment: The Origins of Millenarian Tyranny

Thursday April 8th, 2021 at 11:30-1:00pm

Zoom Link: [https://zoom.us/j/93678451646?](https://zoom.us/j/93678451646?pwd=eitlazdGZIZORXBsMVBUMCs1VS9EQTO9)

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Description: Rousseau's critique of bourgeois liberalism in the Discourse of the Origin of Inequality, many speculate, inspires Robespierre and the Reign of Terror of the French Revolution, leading to a new type of tyranny not seen before in history, one where the individual is to be completely submerged in the collective. Millenarianism is a modern type of tyranny, according to W.R. Newell, that wants to destroy western Enlightenment progress to return to some idyllic past of community. In this lecture, I bring to light different typologies of tyranny to further uncover the origins of millenarian tyranny. By situating millenarian tyranny in the rejection of bourgeois individualism, I read Rousseau's critique of Enlightenment as an instrumental force in shaping subsequent millenarian revolutionary movements.