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Sarah B. Greenberg
Close Reading Exercise in Discussion Section – Group Work (Example)

GOVT 1615: Introduction to Political Theory
TA: Sarah Greenberg/Tues 9:05am
Spring 2019

With your group, discuss these questions by using examples from the texts. You are encouraged to use your reading notes, your annotations in the text, or any other notation style you employ to find evidence. Please write notes, and designate someone to present on behalf of your group, as each group will share their findings with the rest of the class at the conclusion of [10-15 minutes/XX:XX xm].

It may be helpful to briefly discuss what you think Burke's central argument(s) is as you go about answering your questions.

Group 1:

Burke published *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in 1790. Louis XVI was not guillotined until 1793. Knowing this, why does Burke write about regicide (pp. 62-68)? What is the significance of this passage for his overall argument?

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Group 2:

Burke discusses the importance of “the spirit of a gentleman and the spirit of religion” as foundational to European society (p. 69). In France, the First Estate was the clergy, and the Second Estate was the nobility. Do you see any connections between Burke's theorizing and the upheaval in France? What is the significance of the connections you find?

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Group 3:

Across *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Burke implies pairings of words – “**Rage** and **frenzy** will pull down more in half an hour than **prudence, deliberation, and foresight** can build up in a hundred years” (147, emphasis added) – to illustrate his critique of the revolution in France. How would you characterize these pairings? Are they dichotomous? Thinking about other pairings/groups of words in the text, do you see a pattern(s) emerging?

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Group 4:

Why does Burke describe liberty (p. 7), pride (p. 70), religion (p. 11), freedom (p. 30) as “manly”? Why is Marie-Antoinette described as “the nurse of manly sentiment” (p. 67)? What is the role of gendered/gendering language in these examples, and what might they tell us about the kinds of arguments that Burke makes?