

Reinterpreting The French Revolution

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Stone attributes the outbreak of the French Revolution to international/domestic pressures on national leaders. This book provides a synthesis of the most recent scholarly literature on the diplomatic, political, social, economic, and cultural history of eighteenth-century and revolutionary France. On the basis of that synthesis, and current theoretical writing on major modern revolutions, the book argues that the outbreak of the French Revolution, and the dramatic developments of the subsequent ten years, were attributable to the interacting pressures of international and domestic politics on those national leaders attempting to govern France and to modernize its institutions. The book furthermore contends that the Revolution of 1789-1799, reconceptualized in this fashion, needs to be placed in the larger contexts of 'early modern' and 'modern' French history and modern 'progressive' sociopolitical revolutions. In staking out these positions, the book offers a unique interpretation of the French Revolution, one that dissents from both the Marxian socioeconomic orthodoxy of earlier times and more recent 'political-cultural' analyses.

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