Stanford



Dan Edelstein

William H. Bonsall Professor of French, Professor, by courtesy, of History and of Political Science and Senior Fellow, by courtesy, at the Hoover Institution

French and Italian

Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

Born in Ithaca, NY, I moved to Geneva, Switzerland when I was eleven. After attending the Collège Calvin, I studied literature at the University of Geneva; I then returned to the U.S. to pursue graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania, receiving my PhD in French literature in 2004. I joined the Department of French & Italian at Stanford that same year.

I started off my career as a dix-huitièmiste, working on the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. I have since moved more into the history of political thought. I am the author of four books (three with the University of Chicago Press, the most recent with Princeton). The first is on French revolutionary Terror; the second, on the genealogy of the Enlightenment; the third on the early-modern history of human rights; the fourth is an intellectual history of revolution from Thucydides to Lenin, entitled The Revolution to Come (Princeton). I am currently working on monograph about the history of (the idea of) Western culture.

I've edited or co-edited seven volumes of essays: "Myth and Modernity" (co-edited with Bettina Lerner, Yale French Studies); "The Super-Enlightenment" (Voltaire Foundation, at Oxford University); "Scripting Revolution" (co-edited with Keith Baker, Stanford University Press); "Let There Be Enlightenment" (co-edited with Anton Matytsin, Johns Hopkins University Press); "Networks of Enlightenment" (co-edited with Chloe Edmonson, Oxford University Studies in the Enlightenment); "Power and Time" (co-edtied with Stefanos Geroulanos and Natasha Wheatley, University of Chicago Press), and a volume (with Jennifer Pitts) for the Cambridge History of Rights. I was a PI for the "Mapping the Republic of Letters" project.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor, French and Italian
- Professor (By courtesy), History
- Professor (By courtesy), Political Science
- Hoover Senior Fellow (By courtesy), Hoover Institution

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Faculty co-director, Stanford Civics Initiative, (2025- present)
- Faculty co-director, ePluribus Stanford, (2024- present)
- Nehal and Jenny Fan Raj COLLEGE Director, VPUE (SIS, Civic, Liberal, and Global Education, COLLEGE), (2021- present)
- Allen D. Christensen Director of Stanford Introductory Studies, VPUE (SIS), (2019- present)
- Chair, Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages (DLCL), (2015-2019)

- Director, Department of French and Italian, (2013-2014)
- Director, Stanford Summer Humanities Institute, (2011- present)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Louis Gottschalk Prize, American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (2026)
- Selma V. Forkosch Prize, Journal of the History of Ideas (2023)
- Cornerstone: Learning for Living Grant, Teagle Foundation (2021-2023)
- ACLS Digital Extension Grant, ACLS (2016-2017)
- W. Warren Shelden University Fellow in Undergraduate Education, Stanford University (2013-2023)
- Digital Humanities Implementation Grant ("Networks in History"), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) (2013-2015)
- Faculty College, Stanford University (2011-2012)
- Dean's Distinguished Teaching Award, School of Humanities and Sciences (2011)
- National Forum on the Future of Liberal Education, Fellow, Teagle Foundation (2010-2012)
- "Digging into Data" Challenge Grant ("Digging Into the Enlightenment"), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) (2010-2011)
- Oscar Kenshur Book Prize, Center for Eighteenth-Century Studies at Indiana University/ASECS (2010)
- Fellowship at a Digital Humanities Center (ARTFL project), University of Chicago/National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) (2009-2010)
- William H. and Frances Green Faculty Fellow, School of Humanities and Sciences (2009-2010)
- William Koren, Jr. Prize (honorable mention), Society for French Historical Studies (2009)
- Presidential Fund for Innovation in the Humanities Grant, Stanford University (2008-2011)
- Stanford Humanities Center Fellowship, Stanford Humanities Center (2008-2009)
- Walter J. Gores Award, highest award for excellence in teaching, Stanford University (2006)
- Naomi Schor Memorial Award, Nineteenth-Century French Studies Association (2003)
- Fulbright Fellowship, Université Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle (2002-2003)

BOARDS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Member, Advisory Board (2022 - 2023)
- Vice-chair, Faculty senate (2019 - 2020)
- Faculty Senate, Stanford University (2018 - present)
- Faculty Director, Education as Self-Fashioning (ESF) (2018 - 2019)
- Residential Fellow, Ng Humanities House (2015 - 2017)
- Faculty Director, Humanities + Design research lab, CESTA (2013 - 2020)
- Breadth Governance Board, Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE) (2013 - 2017)
- Faculty Senate, Stanford University (2013 - 2015)
- Faculty Advisory Committee, Stanford Pre-Collegiate Studies (SPCS) (2012 - 2017)
- Faculty Oversight Committee, Bing Overseas Studies Program (BOSP) (2012 - 2014)
- Undergraduate Advisory Council (UGAC), Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE) (2012 - 2014)
- Selection Committee, Andrew W. Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellowship (2012 - 2013)
- Faculty Director, Stanford Summer Humanities Institute (2011 - present)
- Academic Council Committee on Libraries (C-LIB), Stanford University (2011 - 2014)
- Search Committee (Academic Technology Specialist), Division of Literatures, Cultures and Languages (DLCL) (2011 - 2012)

- Search Committee (Digital Humanities), Division of Literatures, Cultures and Languages (DLCL) & Department of English (2011 - 2012)
- Steering Committee, Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) Program, Stanford University (2011 - 2012)
- Executive Committee, Division of Literatures, Cultures and Languages (DLCL) (2010 - 2019)
- Executive Committee, The Europe Center, FSI/School of H&S (2010 - 2018)
- Chair of undergraduate studies, French, Department of French and Italian (2010 - 2014)
- Chair, Undergraduate Affairs Committee, Division of Literature, Cultures and Languages (DLCL) (2010 - 2014)
- Director of undergraduate studies, Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages (DLCL) (2010 - 2014)
- Humanities Curriculum Committee, School of H&S, Stanford University (2010 - 2014)
- Search Committee (Francophonie), Department of French & Italian (2010 - 2011)
- Subcommittee on Breadth, Study of Undergraduate Education at Stanford (SUES) (2010 - 2011)
- Executive Committee, France-Stanford Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (2009 - 2014)
- Editor, Republics of Letters (journal) (2008 - 2017)
- Planning and Personnel Committee, Division of Literatures, Cultures and Languages (DLCL) (2006 - 2007)
- Steering Committee, Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities (2006 - 2007)
- Academic Advisor, Undergraduate Advising Program, Stanford University (2004 - 2006)

PROGRAM AFFILIATIONS

- Center for Human Rights and International Justice

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania , French (2004)
- Licence ès Lettres, Université de Genève , French, English, Latin (1999)

Research & Scholarship

CURRENT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTERESTS

My current research lies mostly in the history of political thought, and more broadly on the history of Western culture.

PROJECTS

- Revolutions in Political Thought
- Digital Humanities

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Classical Texts and Traditions I: "It's All Greek to Me": Ancient Greek Classics: CIVIC 49A, CLASSICS 49A, COMPLIT 49A (Aut)
- Kennedy Scholar Seminar: CIVIC 200 (Aut, Win)

2025-26

- Classical Leadership: CLASSICS 147C, DLCL 147C, POLISCI 247C (Win)
- Global Capitals: How Cities Shape Cultures, States, and People: COLLEGE 118 (Spr)
- Why College? Your Education and the Good Life: COLLEGE 101 (Aut)

2024-25

- Citizenship in the 21st Century: COLLEGE 102 (Win)
- Global Capitals: How Cities Shape Cultures, States, and People: COLLEGE 118 (Spr)

2023-24

- Ancient Greece and Rome: COLLEGE 115 (Spr)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Reader (AC)

Michael Thomas

Orals Chair

Lucy Stark

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Stasis in Ithaca? A Thucydidean Reading of the Odyssey** *CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY*
  Edelstein, D.
  2026; 121 (3): 377-393
- **Plutarch and Machiavelli: The Politics of Prudence** *POLITICAL THEORY*
  Edelstein, D.
  2025
- **The Revolution to Come: A History of an Idea from Thucydides to Lenin**
  Edelstein, D.
  Princeton University Press.2025
- **On the liberties of the ancients: licentiousness, equal rights, and the rule of law** *HISTORY OF EUROPEAN IDEAS*
  Edelstein, D., Straumann, B.
  2023
- **Rousseau, Bodin, and the Medieval Corporatist Origins of Popular Sovereignty** *POLITICAL THEORY*
  Edelstein, D.
  2021
- **Power and Time: Temporalities in Conflict and the Making of History**
  edited by Edelstein, D., Geroulanos, S., Wheatley, N.
  University of Chicago Press.2020
- **On the Spirit of Rights** *The Life of Ideas*
  Edelstein, D.
  University of Chicago Press.2019
- **Do We Want a Revolution without Revolution? Reflections on Political Authority** *FRENCH HISTORICAL STUDIES*
  Edelstein, D.
  2012; 35 (2): 269-289
- **The Terror of Natural Right: Republicanism, the Cult of Nature, and the French Revolution**
  Edelstein, D.
  Chicago: University of Chicago Press.2010
- **The Enlightenment: A Genealogy**
  Edelstein, D.
  Chicago: University of Chicago Press.2010

- **SOVEREIGNTY AND GOVERNMENT IN THE FRENCH REVOLUTION** *HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT*
  Edelstein, D., Sawyer, S. W.
  2026; 47 (2): 349-382
- **Rethinking Word Similarity: Semantic Similarity through Classification Confusion**
  Zhou, K., Gao, H., Chen, S., Edelstein, D., Jurafsky, D., Shani, C.
  edited by Ritter, A., Chiruzzo, L., Wang, L.
  ASSOC COMPUTATIONAL LINGUISTICS-ACL.2025: 5803-5817
- **HOW REPUBLICS DIE: PLUTARCH AND THE INTRA-ELITE RIVALRIES THAT DESTROYED THE ROMAN COMMONWEALTH** *HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT*
  Edelstein, D.
  2024; 45 (3): 401-424
- **You Say You Want a Revolution? Radical Idealism and Its Tragic Consequences (Book Review)** *JOURNAL OF MODERN HISTORY*
  Book Review Authored by: Edelstein, D.
  2022; 94 (1): 170-172
- **ROMAN RIGHTS TALK: SUBJECTIVE RIGHTS IN CICERO AND LIVY** *HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT*
  Edelstein, D., Straumann, B.
  2022; 43 (4): 637-659
- **Public Welfare and the Natural Order On the Theological and Free-Market Sources of Socioeconomic Rights** *SOCIAL RIGHTS AND THE POLITICS OF OBLIGATION IN HISTORY*
  Edelstein, D.
  edited by Jensen, S. L., Walton, C.
  2022: 47-62
- **HOW ENGLAND FELL OFF THE MAP OF VOLTAIRE'S ENLIGHTENMENT** *MODERN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY*
  Edelstein, D., Kassabova, B.
  2020; 17 (1): 29–53
- **Christian Human Rights in the French Revolution** *JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY OF IDEAS*
  Edelstein, D.
  2018; 79 (3): 411–26
- **LET THERE BE ENLIGHTENMENT The Religious and Mystical Sources of Rationality Introduction** *LET THERE BE ENLIGHTENMENT: THE RELIGIOUS AND MYSTICAL SOURCES OF RATIONALITY*
  Matytsin, A. M., Edelstein, D.
  edited by Matytsin, A. M., Edelstein, D.
  2018: 1–20
- **The Aristotelian Enlightenment** *LET THERE BE ENLIGHTENMENT: THE RELIGIOUS AND MYSTICAL SOURCES OF RATIONALITY*
  Edelstein, D.
  edited by Matytsin, A. M., Edelstein, D.
  2018: 187–201
- **RED LEVIATHAN: AUTHORITY AND VIOLENCE IN REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL CULTURE** *HISTORY AND THEORY*
  Edelstein, D.
  2017; 56 (4): 76–96
- **INTELLECTUAL HISTORY AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES** *MODERN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY*
  Edelstein, D.
  2016; 13 (1): 237-246
- **Enlightenment Rights Talk** *JOURNAL OF MODERN HISTORY*
  Edelstein, D.
  2014; 86 (3): 530-565
- **To Quote or not to Quote: Citation Strategies in the Encyclopedie** *JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY OF IDEAS*

Edelstein, D., Morrissey, R., Roe, G.
2013; 74 (2): 213-236

- **THE CLASSICAL TURN IN ENLIGHTENMENT STUDIES** *MODERN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY*
  Edelstein, D.
  2012; 9 (1): 61-71
- **A Response to Jonathan Israel** *Self-Evident Truths? Human Rights and the Enlightenment*
  Edelstein, D.
  edited by Tunstall, K.
  London: Bloomsbury Press.2012
- **How is Innovation Taught? On Liberal Education and the Knowledge Economy** *Liberal Education 96*
  Edelstein, D.
  2010
- **The Super-Enlightenment: Daring To Know Too Much**
  Edelstein, D.
  Oxford: Voltaire Foundation.2010
- **Iphigenia and the iPhone** *Inside Higher Ed*
  Edelstein, D.
  2009
- **The Birth of Ideology from the Spirit of Myth: Georges Sorel among the Idéologues** *The Re- Enchantement of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age*
  edited by Landy, J., Saler, M., Edelstein, D.
  Stanford: Stanford University Press.2009
- **Humanism, l'Esprit Philosophique, and the Encyclopédie** *Republics of Letters*
  Edelstein, D.
  2009
- **War and terror: The law of nations from Grotius to the French revolution** *FRENCH HISTORICAL STUDIES*
  Edelstein, D.
  2008; 31 (2): 229-262
- **Hostis Humani Generis: Devils, Natural Right, Terror, and the French Revolution** *Telos: A Quarterly Journal of Critical Thought*
  Edelstein, D.
  2007; 141
- **Hyperborean Atlantis: Jean-Sylvain Bailly, Madame Blavatsky, and the Nazi Myth** *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*
  Edelstein, D.
  2006; 35
- **Between Myth and History: Michelet, Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, and the Structural Analysis of Myth** *Clio: A Journal of Literature, History, and the Philosophy of History*
  Edelstein, D.
  2004; 32 (4)
- **Moving Through the Looking-Glass: Deleuzian Reflections on the Series in Mallarmé** *L'Esprit Créateur*
  Edelstein, D.
  2000; 40 (3)