Model of Causes

Economics/
Environment

Opposition (people)

Ideology/
Information (technol.; media)

Int'l Situation

Elites/Leaders

Culture/Institutions
The Uses of Theory

Béla Balázs (Hungarian film critic), 1925:
Theory is not "gray."

It is ... a roadmap that shows new ways of doing old things, and new places to go. ...

Theory breaks the ruts of coincidence and gives us the courage to undertake voyages of discovery. ...

Theory does not have to be true to inspire great works--most great discoveries were based on false hypotheses!
Causes in History

• **Question**: What factors played a role in *causing* the French Revolution?
  **In general**, what things play a role in allowing and making historical events happen?

• **Answer**:
  6 broad categories, interconnected:
  - **Economic** factors (Marxism: these underlie all others)
  - **International** factors (diplomacy, intervention)
  - **Elites** (behavior of groups w/ special access to power)
  - **Ideology/Information/Media**: perception of the world
    (Knowledge: technology, strategic innovations, …)
  - "**Opposition**: people, human agents
  - Culture, Institutions: Govern how the above 5 interact
Recap: Causes of French Revolution

• On overlay—textbook pp. 634f, 642f
  1. Economic: bad harvests, taxes
  2. International
    – Wars bankrupted (econ.); radicalized (fear)
  3. Elites (not siding w/ king), Leaders (who?)
  4. Ideological (Enlightenment, natural rights)
  5. “Masses”
  6. Institutions (Estates general, monarchy)
Haitian Revolution: Causes

• Carolyn Fick, “French Rev. in St. Domingue” (1997): “It can be argued therefore that the abolition of slavery in Saint Domingue resulted from a combination of mutually reinforcing factors that fell into place at a particular historical juncture. No single factor or even combination of factors—including the beginning of the French Revolution with its catalytic ideology of equality and liberty, the colonial revolt of the planters and the free coloreds, the context of imperial warfare, and the obtrusive role of a revolutionary abolitionist as civil commissioner—warranted the termination of slavery in Saint Domingue in the absence of independent, militarily organized slave rebellion . . .”

• [Which single factor does Fick consider to be the sine qua non (one without which nothing would have happened)?]
Model of Causes in History
(EIEIO)

Economics/Environment

Opposition (people)

Ideology/Information (technol.; media)

Int'l Situation

Elites/Leaders

Culture/Institutions
Ind. Rev.: Confluence of factors

Demographic revolution (climate, resources)

- more people: urbanization (innovators)
- New mindset: here & now (rights vs. racism) inventions

Economics/Environment

- Opposition (people)
- Ideology/Information (media)

Int'l Situation

- Elites/Leaders

Culture/Institutions

- infrastructure: transportation, finance, land & tax laws

- [Note: italics indicate economic factors]

Coal, iron, money/capital

Trade colonies slavery

Innovators bankers planters
Latin American Independence

Mercantilist restrictions

Growth without development

Free men follow charismatic leaders or…

Enlightenment

Economics/Environment

Opposition (people)

Ideology/Information (media)

Int'l Situation

Elites/Leaders

Culture/Institutions

representative gov't

Napoleon takes over Spain

Bolivar, San Martin, creoles, caudillos
Abolition of Slavery

- Shift agriculture -> manufacturing
- Declining profitability
- Slave uprisings, day-to-day resistance
- Bible, Enlightenment; belief in economic inefficiency
- British policing; military alliances
- Clarkson, Granville, Equiano, l'Ouverture

Economics/Environment
- Opposition (people)
- Ideology/information (media)
- Elites/Leaders
- Culture/institutions
- Representative government