



# The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe (New Approaches to European History)

*James Van Horn Melton*

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James Melton's lucid and accessible 2001 study examines the rise of 'the public' in eighteenth-century Europe. A work of comparative synthesis focusing on England, France and the German-speaking territories, this was the first book-length, critical reassessment of what Habermas termed the 'bourgeois public sphere'. During the Enlightenment the Public assumed a new significance as governments came to recognise the power of public opinion in political life; the expansion of print culture created new reading publics and transformed how and what people read; authors and authorship acquired new status, while the growth of commercialized theatres transferred monopoly over the stage from the court to the audience; salons, coffeehouses, taverns and Masonic lodges fostered new practices of sociability. Spanning a variety of disciplines, this important addition to the New Approaches in European History series will be of great interest to students of social and political history, literary studies, political theory, and the history of women.

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