

## SEVENTH HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT: *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*

*Due electronically by week #10.*

1) *Julie, or La Nouvelle Heloise*, is an epistolary novel, which means that it consists entirely of a series of fictional letters. In the preface to the novel, Rousseau explains that he stumbled across these letters and has merely arranged them chronologically so that the reader can more easily follow the story. In essence, Rousseau claims to be an editor, not an author. Why would he do this, and why would his audience fall so readily for this ploy?

2) What is the purpose of Rousseau's *Confessions*? Why did he use print in this effort to make his most inner thoughts and emotions transparent to his readers? Is it paradoxical to use a public medium to explore one's private world?

3) According to the historian Robert Darnton, how did Rousseau's readers read his works? Is this manner of reading different from that Erasmus hoped to encourage among his readers? What, if anything, has changed in the relationship between authors and readers in the two and a half centuries between Erasmus and Rousseau?