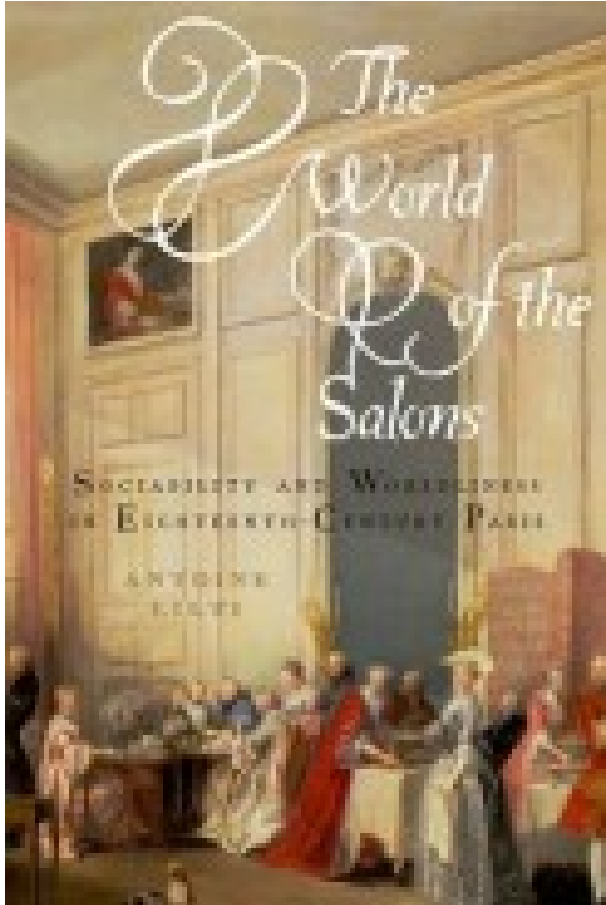


# The World of the Salons



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The world of the 18th century salon has long been lauded as a meritocratic setting where writers, philosophers, and women created the Enlightenment. Jurgen Habermas' influential theory of the public sphere was largely based on the salon.

Based on a thorough study of archival sources and using methodology derived from cultural history, social history, and the history of literature, *The World of Salons* proposes a completely new reading of salons' sociability in eighteenth-century Paris. It challenges the commonly accepted vision of salons as literary circles that were part of the Republic of Letters. It argues, instead, that salons were institutions of worldly sociability, had helped shape "the world" (le monde) and high society. They have been essential places where the aristocratic elites of the capital met and interacted with literary figures. These interactions based on the mastery of the codes of polite conversation but also on the circulation of news and of personal reputations are the subject of this book. *The World of the Salon* looks at the way in which eighteenth-century social elites redefined themselves through their practices of worldly sociability.

It highlights why some men of letters of the Enlightenment attended the salons. Moving from the salons to worldliness permits taking on some broader debates as well. What relations did worldly sociability maintain with the public sphere? How did the Parisian nobility use the idea of worldly merit and the figure of the man

of the world (homme du monde) to preserve its social preeminence? Was the new political culture characterized by an appeal to the public compatible with the monarchical apparatus and with court intrigues? A shortened and revised version of the French edition of this book, *The World of the Salons* is suitable for an Anglophone audience of early modern European cultural, political, and intellectual historians.

Slike pannebånd strikket jeg flere av i vinter også. Men jeg brukte Drops Nepal enkel tråd. Gode når de er så brede, synes jeg. Litt lufting på toppen er godt.