Mozart and Da Ponte

*Marriage of Figaro* (1786), *Don Giovanni* (1787), *Così fan tutte* (1790)

Beaumarchais’ *Figaro* (1784)
sly servant getting best of aristocrat; issue of *droit de seigneur*

*Così fan tutte*, or “The School for Lovers”

18th-century libertine literature

Crébillon fils, Choderlos de Laclos, Sade, etc.

atheism, empiricism, body as a machine

a mathematical game, or a deeper philosophical speculation on
the fragility and ephemerality of human emotions?

Sellars’ production

updating with a difference: Long Island during the Gulf War
does not try to justify every updating,
every analogy between past and present

simultaneously more realistic than most opera production in its
physicality and less realistic in the lack of redundancy between
text and presentation

somewhere between Brustein’s directing by analogy vs. metaphor
Büchner and *Danton’s Death* (1835)

Büchner involved in German revolutionary movements
cf. *The Hessian Courier* (1834)

lecturer in natural science in Zurich
dies of typhoid in 1837 at the age of 23

libertine philosophizing

the “terrible fatalism of history”

where is the will if the body is a machine?

historical realism in the sense of strict correspondences
to historical record

but does a notion of realism as correspondence suffice?

Büchner also seen as an anticipation of expressionism

see the simple, but nightmarish poetry in Lucile’s final scene

what if history is incoherent, full of unconscious drives and chance?