French History, 1770-1871 focuses on the revolutionary period of modern France. This was a tumultuous and creative time, a time of revolution and reaction, republics and monarchies, liberalism and centralized power. We will study this period in three principal ways: by learning about the various regimes, politics, ideologies, and social patterns that marked the era; by reading documents written during this time and texts composed by some of its principal figures; and by analyzing selected works of present-day historical scholarship that help us understand modern France.

As we build this understanding, our thinking will be guided by the following questions: Why was it so difficult, during the century following the French Revolution, for France to develop a stable political regime? Why, in this connection, did France irrupt into revolution in response to the problems it faced? And to what extent did the French Revolution define the nature and meaning of the period that followed it? Finally, what were the principal social and political groups that characterized this era, and how did those groups change during the century we consider?

Since this course is a seminar, discussion is its central feature. Each week you will be asked to talk in class about key aspects of the readings in question. To facilitate that discussion, I will organize the group into study teams of three members each. Every week, one team will be responsible for opening the discussion with a set of questions its members think the whole seminar should consider. The purpose of these questions is not to present the readings but to help create a structure for discussion.

In addition to completing the assigned readings in time for each class, you will be required to write four short essays during the semester. The first three will analyze aspects of the course readings in response to a choice of questions or topics I will hand out. Each essay should be about 5 double-spaced pages in length. The final paper will be a short piece of research (about 10 pages) that builds on the primary sources assigned in the course. For example, you might write a paper analyzing the accuracy of Marx’s 18th Brumaire using recent historiography on the Revolution of 1848; or you could consider the extent to which one or more of the revolutions we study improved or diminished the lives of women. These are only examples; you will have considerable latitude in choosing your topic, which must be submitted to me no later than the beginning of Week 12.

Readings and Assignments
(∗ = material on reserve)

**Week 1 (Sept 6)** Introduction: The past is never past.

**I. The Old Regime and the French Revolution**

**Week 2 (Sept. 13)** The End of the Ancien Regime
Gordon Wright, France in Modern Times, chs. 3-4
Francois Furet, Revolutionary France, 1770-1880, ch 1.
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Discourse on the Origins of Inequality among Men.

**Week 3 (Sept. 20)** The French Revolution: I
Wright, ch. 5
Furet, chs. 2-3
Albert Soboul, A Short History of the French Revolution, Intro and ch. 1
Citizen.

Chronology of the Ancien Regime and Revolution

Week 4 (Sept. 27) The French Revolution: II
Wright, ch. 6
Soboul, chs. 2-3 and conclusion
Furet, “The Revolutionary Catechism” in Interpreting the French Revolution*
Edward Berenson, “The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution” in Nikki Keddie, Debating Revolutions*
“La Marseillaise,” Robespierre, “Terror and Virtue”

Week 5 (Oct. 4) Gender, Family, and the French Revolution
Furet, ch. 4.
Lynn Hunt, The Family Romance of the French Revolution. All but ch. 5

Week 6 (Oct. 11) From Revolution to Empire
Wright, ch. 7
William Doyle, Oxford History of the French Revolution, chs. 16-17*
Furet, ch. 5
Begin reading Stendhal, The Red and the Black

First paper due

II. The Legacy of Revolution

Week 7 (Oct. 18) The Restoration
Wright, ch. 9
Furet, ch. 6
Stendhal, The Red and the Black
Week 8 (Oct. 25) The July Monarchy and the Origins of the Social Question
Wright, ch. 10
Furet, ch. 7
William H. Sewell, Jr., Work and Revolution in France, chs. 1-2, 4, 7-9
Judith Coffin, The Politics of Women’s Work, ch. 2.*
Bonnie Smith, “The Productive Life of Women,” in Ladies of the Leisure Class, ch. 3*
Week 9 (Nov. 1) The Revolution of 1848 (I)
Wright, ch. 11
Furet, ch. 8
Alexis de Tocqueville, Recollections, Parts I and II
Week 10 (Nov. 8) The Revolution of 1848 (II)
Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte
Joan Wallach Scott, “The Duties of the Citizen: Jeanne Deroin in the Revolution of 1848” in Only Paradoxes to Offer, ch. 3.*
Second Paper Due

III. The Emergence of a Modern France?

Week 11 (Nov. 15) The Second Empire
Wright, ch. 12
Furet, ch. 9
David Pinkney, Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris, pp. 3-48, 174-209.*
Sudhir Hazareesingh, From Subject to Citizen: The Second Empire and the Emergence of Modern French Democracy, Intro, chs. 1, 4, and Conclusion
Week 12 (Nov. 22) Art and the City in Napoleon III’s Paris
T. J. Clark, The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers
Week 13 (Nov. 29) “Modernization” and the French Peasants
Third Paper Due
Week 14 (Dec. 6) The Paris Commune
Wright, pp. 221-28
Furet, ch. 10
Stewart Edwards, The Paris Commune (documents)*
Rupert Christianson, Paris Babylon, parts II and III
Week 15 (Dec. 13) No Class
Final Paper Due: Monday, December 18