TWENTIETH-CENTURY FRANCE

This course will explore central issues in the history of France from the early decades of the Third Republic to the Fifth Republic of our own era. We begin with an examination of the Dreyfus Affair, an extraordinary national convulsion over anti-Semitism and a miscarriage of justice that left a powerful legacy for the rest of the twentieth century. We then turn to the First World War, giving special attention to its effects on the economy, government, social classes, and the relationship between men and women, and between colonial peoples and the French empire. Our focus then shifts to the 1930s, when the country was shaken by the Great Depression, the rise of political extremism, and the struggle to forge a “popular front” against fascism. We then spend several weeks exploring the Second World War, its anticipation, the French defeat of 1940, the Occupation, Resistance, Liberation, and early postwar reconstruction. The final weeks of the course investigate decolonization and the Algerian War, French reactions to American cultural and economic power, Gaullism, and the “events” of May 1968. We conclude with an effort to create a historical perspective on three key developments that have dominated public debate in the final decades of the century in France: immigration, the rise of the extreme Right, and the relationship of France to an increasingly integrated Europe. Although the course is organized around a chronological examination of the political history of France, we will stress social, cultural and economic history as well. After all, the century of total wars also brought France its period of most rapid social and economic change. We will investigate issues that call for crossing the usual boundaries between these several kinds of history. We will also repeatedly consider French developments within three wider international contexts: Europe, the French empire, and trans-Atlantic relations.

Each week’s session begins with a fifty-minute lecture, followed by a two-hour seminar discussion. Because this is mainly a discussion course, its quality depends on everyone preparing the material and participating in class. Each week a group of three or four students will meet beforehand to prepare a brief series of questions designed to provoke discussion. Three papers are also required. The first two will address the readings for two different weeks during the course. These short analytical papers should each be five to six pages long. The final paper should be ten to fifteen pages on a topic of your own choosing.

Grading in the course will be as follows:

Class discussion and presentations 30%

Short papers 30%

Final paper 40%

The required reading is available on reserve in the salle de lecture at the Institute of French Studies, as well as in the reserve room at Bobst Library. The following books have been ordered for purchase at the NYU Bookstore:

Françoise Gaspard, A Small City in France: A Socialist Mayor Confronts Neo-Fascism (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

Class Schedule
Week 1 (Jan. 21) – Introduction
Recommended:

Week 2 (Jan. 28) – The Dreyfus Affair
Required:
Michael Burns, ed., France and the Dreyfus Affair, selected pages.
Popkin, chs. 21-22.
Recommended:
Jean-Denis Bredin, The Affair: The Case of Alfred Dreyfus.
Michael Burns, Dreyfus: A Family Affair, 1789-1945.

Week 3 (Feb. 3) – The First World War
Required:
Recommended:
Leonard V. Smith, Between Mutiny and Obedience: The Case of the French Fifth Infantry Division during World War One.
Laura Lee Downs, Manufacturing Inequality: Gender Division in the French and British Metalworking Industries, 1914-1939.

Week 4 (Feb. 10) – Women and Men after the First World War
Required:
Popkin, ch. 25.
Recommended:
Essays by Michelle Perrot and Steven C. Hause in Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars, ed. by Margaret Randolph Higonnet et al.
François Thébaud, La Femme au temps de la guerre de 14.

**Week 5 (Feb. 17) – The Rise of the Far Right**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
Zeev Sternhell, Neither Right Nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France.
René Remond, The Right Wing in France from 1815 to De Gaulle.
Philippe Burrin, La Dérive fasciste: Doriot, Déat, Bergery, 1933-1945.
Ralph Schor, L’Opinion française et les étrangers, 1919-1939.
Kevin Passmore, From Liberalism to Fascism: The Right in a French Province, 1928-1939.

**Week 6 (Feb. 24) – The Popular Front**

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
Siân Reynolds, France Between the Wars: Gender and Politics.
Jean Lacouture, Léon Blum.
Tony Judt, Marxism and the French Left, ch. 3.
Eugen Weber, The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s.
Ingo Kolbloom, La Revanche des patrons: Le Patronat français face au front populaire.

**Week 7 (March 4) – The French Defeat of 1940**

**Required:**
Marc Bloch, Strange Defeat.
Popkin, ch. 27.

**Recommended:**
Ernest May, Strange Victory: Hitler’s Conquest of France.
Joel Blatt, ed., The French Defeat of 1940: A Reassessment, especially essays by Omar Bartov, William Irvine, and Vicki Caron.
Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, La Décadence, 1932-1939.
Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, L’Abîme, 1939-1945.
L. Mysyrowicz, Autopsie d’une défaite: Origines de l’effondrement militaire français de 1940.
Andrew Shennan, The Fall of France, 1940.
Carole Fink, Marc Bloch: A Life in History.
Week 8 (March 11) – Vichy France
Required:
Robert O. Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order.
Popkin, ch. 28.
Screening of Marcel Ophul’s “The Sorrow and the Pity.”
Recommended:
Julian Jackson, France: The Dark Years, 1940-44.
RoberT Gildea, Marianne in Chains.
Philippe Burbun, France Under the Germans.
Marc Olivier Baruch, Servir l’Etat français: L’Administration en France de 1940 à 1944.
Susan Zuccotti, The Holocaust, the French, and the Jews.
Francine Muel-Dreyfus, Vichy et l’éternel féminin.
Pierre Laborie, L’Opinion française sous Vichy.
Jean-Pierre Azéma and François Bédarida, eds., Vichy et les français.
Essays by Paula Schwartz and Sarah Fishman in Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars, ed. by Margaret Randolph Higonnet et al.

Week 9 (March 25) – From Liberation to Cold War
Required:
Popkin, ch. 29.
Recommended:
Alice Kaplan, The Collaborator: The Trial and Execution of Robert Brasillach.
Marguerite Duras, The War.
Simone de Beauvoir, The Mandarins.
Sylvie Chaperon, Les Années Beauvoir.
Gisèle Sapiro, La Guerre des écrivains 1940-1953.

Week 10 (April 1) – The Americanization of France?
Required:
Week 11 (April 8) – The Algerian War and Decolonization

**Required:**
- Popkin, ch. 31.

**Recommended:**
- Benjamin Stora, La Gangrène et l’oubli, la mémoire de la guerre d’Algérie.
- John Talbott, Decolonization in Britain and France: The Domestic Consequences of International Relations.
- Matthew Connelly, A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria’s Fight for Independence and the Crisis of the Cold War Era.
- Irwin M. Wall, France, the United States, and the Algerian War.
- James D. Le Sueur, Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics during the Decolonization of Algeria.

Week 12 (April 15) – The De Gaulle Republic and May ’68

**Required:**
- Popkin, chs. 31-32.

**Recommended:**
- Arthur Marwick, The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the U.S.
- Gabrielle Hecht, The Radiance of France: Nuclear Power and National Identity after World War II.
- Hervé Hamon and Patrick Rotman, Génération, 2 volumes.
- Raymond Aron, The Elusive Revolution.
- Alain Touraine, The May Movement.

Week 13 (April 22) – Immigration and the Front National

**Required:**
- Françoise Gaspard, A Small City in France: A Socialist Mayor Confronts Neo-Fascism.
States," French Politics, Culture & Society 19, 3 (Fall 2001): 82-94.  
Popkin, ch. 33-34.

**Recommended:**
“Race in France,” special issue of French Politics, Culture & Society 19, 3 (Fall 2001).
Yvan Gastaut, L’Immigration et l’opinion et France sous la Ve République.
Peter Fysh and Jim Wolfreys, The Politics of Racism in France.
Alec G. Hargreaves, Immigration, “Race” and Ethnicity in Contemporary France.
Harvey G. Simmons, The French National Front: The Extremist Challenge to Democracy.

**Week 14 (April 29) - France in Europe to the End of the Century**
Research presentations in class.
**Final paper due May 2.**