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 postwar reconstruction. A novel by Simone de Beauvoir provides us with an opportunity to consider how intellectuals in Paris navigated through the turbulent political passage from the Liberation to the early years of the Cold War. The final weeks of the course investigate decolonization and the Algerian War, 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.

Because this is mainly a discussion course, its quality depends on everyone preparing the material and participating in class. Two papers are also required. The first will address the reading for one week during the course. This short analytical paper should be five to six pages long. The final paper (due May 4) should be twelve to fifteen pages on a topic of your own choosing. Grading in the course will be as follows:
Class discussion 30%
Short paper 20%
Final paper 50%

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:


Class Schedule

Week 1 (Jan. 19) – Introduction

Recommended:

Christophe Charle, *Les Elites de la République*.
Sanford Elwitt, *The Making of the Third Republic*.
William Irvine, *The Boulanger Affair Reconsidered*.

Week 2 (Jan. 26) – The Dreyfus Affair

Required:

Michael Burns, ed., *France and the Dreyfus Affair*.
Popkin, chs. 20-21.

Recommended:

Jean-Denis Bredin, *The Affair: The Case of Alfred Dreyfus*.
Michael Burns, *Dreyfus: A Family Affair, 1789-1945*.
Norman Kleeblatt, ed., *The Dreyfus Affair*.
Edward Berenson, *The Trial of Madame Caillaux*.
Philip Nord, *Paris Shopkeepers and the Politics of Resentment*.
Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years*.

Week 3 (Feb. 2) – The First World War

Required:

Popkin, chs. 22-23.

**Recommended:**

Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *Men at War, 1914-1918: National Sentiment and Trench Journalism in France during the First World War.*
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. 9) – Women and Men after the First World War**

**Required:**


**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.
Françoise Thébaud, *La Femme au temps de la guerre de 14.*

**Week 5 (Feb. 16) – The Rise of the Far Right**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**

Philippe Burrin, *La Dérive fasciste: Doriot, Déat, Bergery, 1933-1945.*

**Week 6 (Feb. 23) – The Popular Front**

**Required:**

Recommen:ed:

Siân Reynolds, *France Between the Wars: Gender and Politics.*
Jean Lacouture, *Léon Blum.*
Eugen Weber, *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s.*

**Week 7 (March 2) – The French Defeat of 1940**

Required:

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

Recommen:ed:

Robert Frankenstein, *Le Prix du réarmement français (1935-1939).*
Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *La Décadence, 1932-1939.*
Andrew Shennan, *The Fall of France, 1940.*
Julian Jackson, *The Fall of France: The Nazi Invasion of 1940.*
Week 8 (March 9) – Vichy France

Required:
Philippe Pétain’s speeches of 17 June 1940.
E-text: Philippe Pétain’s speech of 12 August 1941

Popkin, ch. 28.

Recommended:
Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order*.
Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-44*.
Philippe Burrin, *France under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise*.
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*.
Jean-Pierre Azéma and François Bédarida, eds., *Vichy et les français*.
Marcel Ophul’s film “The Sorrow and the Pity.”

Week 9 (March 23) – From Resistance to Liberation

Charles De Gaulle’s speeches of 18 June 1940, 6 June 1944, 25 August 1944, and 2 February 1945.


Popkin, ch. 29.

Recommended:


Alice Kaplan, The Collaborator: The Trial and Execution of Robert Brasillach.

Marguerite Duras, The War.


Fabrice Virgili, La France ‘virile’: Des femmes tondues à la liberation.


K. H. Adler, Jews and Gender in Liberation France.

Week 10 (March 30) - From Liberation to Cold War

Required:

Simone de Beauvoir, The Mandarins.


Recommended:

Sylvie Chaperon, Les Années Beauvoir.

Deirdre Bair, Simone de Beauvoir: A Biography.


Gisèle Sapiro, *La Guerre des écrivains 1940-1953*.
Simone de Beauvoir, *America Day by Day*.

**Week 11 (April 6) – The Algerian War and Decolonization**

**Required:**

Frantz Fanon, “Unveiling Algeria,” in *A Dying Colonialism* (New York: Grove Press, 1965).
Popkin, ch. 30.

**Screening:** “The Battle of Algiers,” a film directed by Gillo Pontecorvo

**Recommended:**

Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*. 


Albert Camus, Resistance, Rebellion and Death.


Benjamin Stora, La Gangrène et l’oubli, la mémoire de la guerre d’Algérie.

Miles Kahler, 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.


James D. Le Sueur, Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics during the Decolonization of Algeria.


Week 12 (April 13) – 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.*


Kristin Ross, *May’68 and Its Afterlives.*


**Week 13 (April 20) – Immigration and the Front National**

**Required:**

Françoise Gaspard, *A Small City in France: A Socialist Mayor Confronts Neo-Fascism.*


Popkin, ch. 33-34.

**Recommended:**

Yvan Gastaut, *L’Immigration et l’opinion et France sous la Ve République.*


Nonna Mayer, *La Boutique contre le centre.*

Peter Fysh and Jim Wolfreys, *The Politics of Racism in France.*


Harvey G. Simmons, *The French National Front: The Extremist Challenge to Democracy.*


Mehdi Charef, *Tea in the Harem.*
Week 14 (April 27) - France in Europe to the End of the Century

Research presentations in class.

Recommended:


Alain Guyomarch, Howard Machin, and Ella Ritchie, *France and the European Union.*


Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State.*


Jean Monnet, *Memoirs.*

George Ross, *Jacques Delors and European Integration.*


Larry Siedentop, *Democracy in Europe.*