

History 256H: France Since 1940 (Spring 2023)<sup>1</sup>

TTh 12:30-1:45 in Kenan Laboratories B125

Donald Reid [dreidl@email.unc.edu](mailto:dreidl@email.unc.edu)

Hamilton 554 Office Hours: Th 2-3:00 and by appointment



**Juliette Greco, 1947**

Students in this course will examine in depth five sets of events that have made contemporary France: (1) collaboration and resistance during World War II; (2) decolonization and the long war in Algeria; (3) the political, cultural and social movements born of the “thirty glorious” years of postwar economic expansion which marked all facets of French life in the late 1960s and 1970s; (4) the demographic transformation of France through immigration and (5) the effects of the 2008 recession, including the election and re-election of Emmanuel Macron and emergence of the “yellow jackets.” In this class, we will examine these developments, interconnections among them, and the changing ways they are remembered and given meaning in France. This course will introduce students to the basic skills employed by historians (e.g. how to interpret, contextualize, and discuss a diversity of primary source materials). We will use these skills to analyze the forms and nature of domination, inequality, and resistance in France since 1940. I will give lectures for a portion of most classes (with PowerPoints available on the

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<sup>1</sup>This course can be taken for credit toward the major or minor in French in the Romance Studies department. Let me know if you are taking this option and I will inform the Romance Studies department.

Resources page of the Sakai site), but the primary mode of instruction in the class will be discussion.

### Assignments and Grading<sup>2</sup>.

--**Papers** (45%). Students will write three five-page papers (10%; 15%; 20% [20% for your best essay; 10% for your least successful]). Papers are to be submitted at the assigned time on the Assignments page on the Sakai course site. Late papers will be marked down one grade for each day or portion of the day that they are late starting at the time they were due.

--**Discussion** (15%). The heart of this class is shared discussion. The keys here are quality, not quantity, and interventions that refer to others' contributions (whether in support or disagreement) and which build on earlier developments within the course. To do well in discussion, you must read and view the texts carefully before class.

--**Comment or Question** (20%) For each day of discussion (classes identified as "**Discussion of ...**"), post on the Assignments page of the Sakai site one comment or question **by 9:00 a.m. the day of discussion (no later)** that you would like the class to discuss about the reading or the film. These can be a sentence or two in length. Specific references to the passages in the reading and film (and why you want to discuss them) are good. So are "big" questions about which you have an answer you would like to discuss. Please don't draw something from googling the text in lieu of providing your own insight. Your grade will be based on an appraisal of the quality of these comments/questions and of your explanation of why you think this is important for the class to discuss if asked this in class.

--**Final Exam** (20%). See the prompt at the end of the schedule.

**Required Texts.** The following are available on reserve and at the bookstore (except for the texts by Ousmane and Scott, which are available as hard copies on reserve and on line)

Joseph Andras, *Tomorrow They Won't Dare to Murder Us*

Christophe Boltanski, *The Safe House*

Assia Djebar, *Children of the New World*

Didier Eribon, *Returning to Reims*

Robert Linhart, *The Assembly Line*

Sembane Ousmane, *God's Bits of Wood*

Joan Scott, *The Politics of the Veil*

William Gardner Smith, *The Stone Face*

Vercors, *The Silence of the Sea*

Sembene Ousmane's *God's Bits of Wood* is out of print, but available on line at <http://www.socialiststories.com/en/writers/Sembene-Ousmane/Gods-Bits-of-Wood-Ousmane-Sembene.pdf>.

Joan Scott's *The Politics of the Veil* is available on-line through the UNC library.

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<sup>2</sup> The Office of the University Registrar has given instructors us the following guidance on grading: <http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/>

There are four required films. *The Battle of Algiers* can be streamed from the UNC library. The other three films are available to rent on Amazon Prime (and as DVDs at the UNC library).

## POLICIES

**Sakai:** Students are responsible for being familiar with all materials posted on Sakai and any other course announcements by email during the course of the semester. Powerpoints for lectures will be posted on the Sakai Resources page. In the Resources section, there is a guide to citing sources for all types of materials.

**Attendance:** No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences<sup>3</sup>: 1. Authorized University activities; 2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC); or 3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC). Students are responsible for completing any reading/viewing/written work due during their absence. If you know in advance that you are going to miss class or have a legitimate excuse for missing class, please discuss the matter with me.

**Emails:** I will make every effort to respond to emails from students in a timely manner. Last minute emails about assignments, however, might or might not be answered in time to provide critical feedback. Please email well before any deadlines.

**Honor Code:** Students are expected to be familiar with and observe the Honor Code: <http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/>.<sup>4</sup> Be particularly aware of plagiarism. You do not need to do research to ace this course. Your time will be much better spent reviewing and rethinking material in the texts, films, and lectures and discussions than Googling your life away. However, should you decide to let your fingers do the walking, be very careful not to import text from elsewhere into your work unless you give a full citation.<sup>5</sup> In particular, be aware of importing text from elsewhere and reworking it into “your own words,” without attribution. This too is plagiarism. Plagiarism will be detected—it’s not hard—and will be sanctioned, by a ‘0’ (not an ‘F’) on the paper the first time if it is just a question of a few sentences and by being brought before the Honor Court if the first violation is more serious than a few sentences or in the case of a second offense.

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<sup>3</sup> The Office of the Dean of Students ([dos@unc.edu](mailto:dos@unc.edu)) handles University Approved Absences.

<sup>4</sup> See <http://studentconduct.unc.edu/students/honor-system-module> for an explanation of the code.

<sup>5</sup> For an online source, give the complete address and the day you consulted it. Ideally you should provide the name of the website, the title or if not the title, a descriptive phrase identifying the piece cited, and the author. If there is no author of this particular document, the name of the website will do.

**Human Rights:** The University's [Policy on Prohibited Harassment, Discrimination and Related Misconduct](#) prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of an individual's race, color, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or veteran's status. Related misconduct includes sexual violence, sexual exploitation, interpersonal (relationship) violence, and stalking.<sup>6</sup>

**Accessibility Resources:** UNC-Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations for students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health struggles, chronic medical conditions, temporary disability, or pregnancy complications, all of which can impair student success. See the ARS website for contact and registration information: <https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us>

**Counseling and Psychological Services:** If you are feeling like your mood, loneliness, or anxiety have started to make it hard to function (e.g., if you feel like you are having a hard time getting out of bed or you are feeling really bad about yourself), please know there are treatments that can help you. For mental health support services you can reach out to [the Dean of Students](#) team [<https://dos.unc.edu/>], [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) [<https://caps.unc.edu/>; by phone 24/7 at 919-966-3658], or [Student Wellness](#) [<https://studentwellness.unc.edu/>].

If you are considering dangerous behavior, such as ending your life or self-harm, please call 911 immediately. You can also call the national suicide hotline at 1-800-273-8255 or the suicide text line by texting HOME to 741741. This service is available 24/7. It is free and confidential.

**This syllabus is subject to change at the professor's discretion.**

### Schedule

1/10 France in 1940, the Defeat, and the Occupation

1/12 What is Resistance? **Discussion** of Vercors, *The Silence of the Sea*, pages 71-97 (of the paperback edition edited by Brown and Stokes, published by Berg. This is the complete text. You can read it in another edition. [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

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<sup>6</sup> Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. To discuss your specific needs, please contact the [Director of Title IX Compliance, Report and Response Coordinators](#) (Ew Quimbaya-Winship, Rebecca Gibson, or Kathryn Winn), [Counseling & Psychological Services](#) (confidential), or the [Gender Violence Services Coordinators](#) (confidential) (Cassidy Johnson or Holly Lovern). You can make a report to the university at [eoc.unc.edu](http://eoc.unc.edu). Additional resources are available at [safe.unc.edu](http://safe.unc.edu). Students who want additional information regarding the University's process for investigating allegations of discrimination or harassment can contact the [Report and Response Coordinators](#) or visit [eoc.unc.edu](http://eoc.unc.edu).



18-year old farmgirl and resister Simone Segouin, during the liberation of Paris, August 19, 1944  
 [“The Girl Partisan of Chartres,” *Life*, September 4, 1944]

1/17 **Discussion** of what is Resistance? Discussion of Jean-Paul Sartre, “The Republic of Silence” (September 1944) [<https://cdn.theatlantic.com/media/archives/1944/12/174-6/132330930.pdf>] (just pages 39-40 of this issue of *Atlantic*) and “Lucie to the Rescue” (1946), available in the Resources section of the Sakai site. [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

1/19 **Discussion** of the film: Jean-Pierre Melville, *Army of Shadows* [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

1/24 **Discussion** of Christophe Boltanski, *The Safe House*, pages 3-125, 139-142, 161-206, 214-228<sup>7</sup> [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

1/26 The Collective Memory of the War

**Thursday, 1/26 at NOON. Five-page essay due:** Power and resistance are often taken to be self-evident concepts defined in terms of one another. Go beyond this. Using “The Republic of

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<sup>7</sup> The sections I have not assigned concern Christophe’s trip to Odessa in 2014, where he can find no trace of his great grandparents; his grandmother’s concern with appearance; and Christian’s production of art. However, feel free to read them!

Silence,” “Lucie to the Rescue,” *The Silence of the Seas*, *Army of Shadows*, and *The Safe House* as evidence, discuss what gave resistance and power particular characteristics in Occupied France.

1/31 French Colonialism. **Discussion** of Sembene Ousmane, *God’s Bits of Wood*, pages 1-127 [pages 1-126 in the Heinemann edition] [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

2/2 **Discussion** of Sembene Ousmane, *God’s Bits of Wood*, pages 137-248<sup>8</sup> [pages 135-245 in the Heinemann edition] [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

2/7 French Algeria and the War of Independence

Read Donald Reid, “Reviewing the Battle of Algiers with Germaine Tillion,” pages 67-72 (in Sakai Resources page)

2/9 **Discussion** of the film, Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers* and, after watching the film, Reid, “Reviewing the Battle of Algiers with Germaine Tillion,” pages 72-95 [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

2/14 Well-Being Day

2/16 **Discussion** of Assia Djebar, *Children of the New World* [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

2/21 The Fourth Republic. **Discussion** of Joseph Andras, *Tomorrow They Won’t Dare to Murder Us* [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

2/23 **Discussion** of William Gardner Smith, *The Stone Face*, pages 9-66 {Part I} [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

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<sup>8</sup> The unassigned pages tell of the isolated existence and death of the watchman Sounkaré.



[Zohra Drif (who set the bomb in the Milk Bar) and FLN militants in hiding during the Battle of Algiers]



Graffiti marking the massacre of Algerians in Paris on October 17, 1961

2/28 **Discussion** of William Gardner Smith, *The Stone Face*, pages 69-207 [Parts 2 and 3] [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

3/2 The Fifth Republic

**3/2 at NOON. Five-page paper due.** Albert Camus said that fiction is the lie through which we tell the truth. Historians often present themselves as those who correct novelists' factual errors. However, we will do something different. Drawing for evidence on *God's Bits of Wood*, *Tomorrow They Won't Dare to Murder Us*, *The Stone Face*, and *Children of the New World* show how novelists in their presentation of context, creation of three-dimensional characters and development of plots can challenge historians to think about what happened in the past and why in new valid and valuable ways.

3/7 May 1968; Self-Management at Lip and Elsewhere

3/9 **Discussion** of Robert Linhart, *The Assembly Line* [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]



Meeting in an Occupied Factory

3/21 Visit to the Library to examine and discuss 1968 posters

3/23 **Discussion** of the film, Olivier Assayas, *Something in the Air* [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

3/28 From Che Guevara to the French Republic. From May 1968 to Doctors Without Borders. The Worlds of Régis Debray and Bernard Kouchner

3/30 **Discussion** of the film, Robin Compillo, *BPM* [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]



Soldiers Protesting in Draguignan, September 10, 1974

4/4 The Long 1968 and the Military: Soldiers' Rights and Solidarity within the Army; the Larzac Struggle [We will watch the short clip, "Leadership" in class: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJ4w6xp7zcY>]

4/6 Well-Being Day

**Friday, 4/7 at NOON. Five-page essay due.** To use the words of May 1968, what happens when people “demand the impossible” and seek to make it happen? What changes and what remains the same for individuals involved in these movements and in the societies in which they live. Draw evidence from *Something in the Air*, *The Assembly Line*, *Something in the Air*, and *BPM*.

4/11 Immigration to France and the Transformation of France

4/13 **Discussion** of Joan Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

4/18 Front National and the Communist Party

4/20 **Discussion** of Didier Eribon, *Returning to Reims*, pages 15-110 [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]



Eugène Delacroix, “Liberty Leading the People” (1830) [in 2018-2019]

4/25 Emmanuel Macron and France Today

4/27 **Discussion** of Donald Reid, “History at the Roundabout: The Pasts and Presents of the Gilets Jaunes” (available on the Sakai Resources page) [Post your comment/question by 9:00 a.m.]

5/4 The FINAL EXAM will be in the form of a take-home exam. Submit it on the Assignments page as early as you’d like, but no later than 3 p.m. on Thursday, 5/4.

The Final Exam has two parts. I think you can write excellent answer in 7 pages (4-5 pages for part 1 and 2-3 pages for part 2):

In part one, take the work which we have read or seen this semester that has most changed you. Historians may fantasize that they are scientists who have no particular feelings about the amoeba or pieces of quartz they examine, but they aren’t. And, in fact, repressing what historians learn about themselves in engaging with historical texts can limit and distort their interpretation of them. So, examine the text that most changed you and then analyze how this helps you understand the world in which it was written and the problems it dealt with and the world in which you live and the problems with which you deal, and what you learn about yourself and both the world of the text and the world in which you live. (two-thirds of the grade)

In part two, you will take the role of one of the authors or directors/screenwriters based on what we know of them from the works we have read and seen. Pick a film or a book that falls outside the pairing of works made in the prompts for essays written during the semester (i.e. Jean-Pierre Melville on *Returning to Reims* would be o.k., but Melville on *The Silence of the Sea* would not be) and write an essay on what interpretation your author or director/screenwriter would make and why (one-third of the grade)