

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Department of History  
Semester I, 2006-07

Laird Boswell  
5126 Humanities  
Office hours: Tuesday 1-3 or by appointment  
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History 349  
Tu-Th 11-12:15

Teaching Assistant: Hunter Martin ([hkmartin@wisc.edu](mailto:hkmartin@wisc.edu))

Contemporary France, 1914 to the Present

This course analyzes key issues in contemporary French history from the outbreak of World War I to the present. Particular attention will be placed on the interplay between political, social and cultural developments. Themes to be studied include the Great War, the Popular Front, the Vichy Régime, the Liberation and the Fourth Republic, Decolonization, De Gaulle and the Fifth Republic, France and the European Union -- as well as broader themes concerning the changing nature of French society, the disappearance of the peasantry, and the role of women in politics.

Requirements: Attendance and participation in weekly sections, taught by Hunter Martin, is **mandatory**. The assigned readings should be completed **by each section meeting**. Students should come to section prepared for an in-depth and critical discussion of the reading. There will be one two hour final examination, one in-class map quiz, and two short 1 sentence summaries of arguments due in section. In addition, **3 credit students** will write a 5 page paper and a 6 page paper; **4 credit** students are required to write a 5 page paper and two 6 page papers. Paper topics will be distributed in advance; papers require no outside research and will be based on class readings.

Grading: 25% of your grade will be determined by your participation in section, the one sentence summaries, and the map quiz. Students who rarely come to section will fail this component of the class. The final exam will count for 20% of the grade. For **3 credit** students the 5 page paper will constitute 25% of your grade and the 6 page paper 30%. For **4 credit students**, the five page paper will be 15% of your grade and each of the 6 page papers will count for 20%.

Books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and are also on 3 hour reserve in Helen C. White library. Many of the books we are reading have been translated from the French. Those of you with a good knowledge of *la langue française* may want to read some of these books in their original version (copies available at Memorial Library). I have listed weekly readings from the Charles Sowerwine textbook (France since 1870) to enable you to keep up with lectures; by and large, the Sowerwine

readings will not be discussed in section. A short reader will also be available for purchase at the Humanities Copy Center.

I will hold office hours on Tuesday between 1 and 3. You can also speak with me after class to set up an alternative meeting time.

### Required Books

- Henri Barbusse, Under Fire (Penguin Books) [*Le Feu*]  
 Jean-Yves Le Naour, The Living Unknown Soldier: A Story of Grief and the Great War (Metropolitan Books, 2004). [*Le Soldat Inconnu Vivant*]  
 Marc Bloch, Strange Defeat (Norton, 1968) [*L'étrange défaite*]  
 Emilie Carles, A Life of her Own. A Countrywoman in Twentieth-Century France (Penguin, 1992) [*Une soupe aux herbes sauvages*]  
 Françoise Gaspard, A Small City in France: A Socialist Mayor Confronts Neofascism (Harvard University Press, 1995) [*Une petite ville en France*]  
 Marguerite Duras, The War: A Memoir (The New Press, 1986). (*La douleur*)  
 Philippe Burrin, France under the Germans: Collaboration and Compromise (The New Press, 1996) [*La France à l'heure allemande*]  
 Andrew Feenberg and Jim Freedman (eds.) When Poetry Ruled the Streets: The French May Events of 1968 (SUNY, 2001)  
 Charles Sowerwine, France since 1870: Culture, Politics, and Society (Palgrave, 2001)

### **Week 1** (September 5, 7). Introduction

Begin reading Henri Barbusse, Under Fire

### **Week 2** (September 12, 14) The Great War

Reading: Henri Barbusse, Under Fire, chapters 1-12; Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapter 8.

### **Week 3** (September 19, 21) The Postwar Settlement and the 1920s

Reading: Henri Barbusse, Under Fire, finish book; Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, Men at War 1914-1918, 9-20; 155-84 (reader); Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapter 9

**Due in section: in one sentence, of no more than 50 words, explain why, according to Audoin-Rouzeau, French soldiers kept on fighting**

### **Week 4** (September 26, 28) French Fascism and the Popular Front

Reading: “Programme of the Popular Front,” (reader); Jean-Yves Le Naour, The Living Unknown Soldier (entire book); Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapters 10-11.

**Week 5.** (October 3, 5) The Road to War and the Defeat of 1940

**\*\*\* All Students \*\*\* Five Page Paper Due in Class Tuesday October 3 \*\*\***

Reading: Marc Bloch, Strange Defeat, 1-125; Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapters 12-13

**Week 6** (October 10, 12) Vichy France

Reading: Bloch, Strange Defeat, 126-176; Burrin, France under the Germans, 5-17; 32-47; 65-97; Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapter 14

**Due in section: In one sentence, of no more than 50 words, summarize the argument in chapter 3 of Strange Defeat.**

**Week 7** (October 17, 19) The Liberation and the New Regime

Reading: Burrin, France under the Germans, 175-227, , 291-357, 459-67; Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapter 15

**Week 8** (October 24, 26) Intellectuals and Decolonization

Reading: Marguerite Duras, The War; Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapter 16.

**Week 9** (October 31; November 2) The Algerian Crisis and the Fifth Republic

Reading: Henri Alleg, The Question (reader); Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapter 18, 20

**\*\*\* 4 Credit Students \*\*\* Six Page Paper Due in Class Tuesday October 31 \*\*\***

**Week 10** (November 7, 9) Charles de Gaulle and 1968

Andrew Feenberg and Jim Freedman, When Poetry Ruled the Streets, 3-30, 73-121; Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapters 21-22

**Week 11** (November 14, 16) Women and Religion

Reading: Reading: Andrew Feenberg and Jim Freedman, When Poetry Ruled the Streets, 33-66, 123-184; “The Testamentary Instructions of Marc Bloch,” in Strange Defeat, 177-178; Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapter 24

**Week 12** (November 21) The Consumer Society and the Common Market

**Thanksgiving (no sections)**

**Week 13** (November 28, 30) Rural Society and Immigrants

**\*\*\* All Students \*\*\* Six Page Paper Due in Class Tuesday November 28\*\*\***

Reading: Emilie Carles, A Life of her Own. A Countrywoman in Twentieth-Century France (entire book)

**Week 14** (December 5, 7) The Troublesome Memory of the Past and the 1981 “Socialist Alternative”

Reading: Françoise Gaspard, A Small City in France. A Socialist Mayor Confronts Neofascism, 1-100 ; Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapters 26-27

**Week 15** (December 12, 14) The Rise of the Extreme Right

Reading: Gaspard, A Small City in France, 101-177; Jim Wolfreys, “Neither Right Nor Left? Towards an Integrated Analysis of the Front National,” (Reader); Sowerwine, France since 1870, chapter 28.

**FINAL EXAMINATION: Monday December 18, 2:45 pm**