

Prof. Jackson
Spring 2011
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Office Hours: Thursday 2:00-5:00 PM
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History 105
Americans in Paris

Course Description: This course examines the relationship between France and the US in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For many years, Americans have been fascinated with France as a land of art, literature, philosophy, and exciting political ideas, among other things. Likewise, the French have long been interested in America as a signal of things to come and, more recently, as the source for much of the worldwide mass culture of the late twentieth century (from the latest Hollywood movies to McDonald's to rap music). How has this relationship evolved over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and what does it tell us about ways in which the "Old World" of Europe and the "New World" of America have come to interact? How do other places serve as mirrors for our own culture and experience? Why have these two nations shared such a close relationship in the minds of their inhabitants during the twentieth century?

Books to Purchase:

Yasmin Sabina Khan, *Enlightening the World: The Creation of the Statue of Liberty*
Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*
Gertrude Stein, *Paris, France*
Jack Kerouac, *Satori in Paris*
Tyler Stovall, *Paris Noir: African-Americans in the City of Light*

An Important Definition: What is "analysis?"

When historians analyze something, they do not repeat information that everyone already knows about events or documents. Nor do they simply state obvious conclusions based on a quick set of observations. Analysis -- the heart of the historians' craft -- means taking something apart, looking at it from the inside-out, subjecting it to an intense investigation from many facets, juxtaposing it with other issues or facts that are both similar and different, identifying patterns and processes that are not necessarily easily seen or obvious, and arriving at original conclusions that will inform, enlighten, and educate the reader of your essay. Analysis is not easy, and it does not happen quickly. It requires a serious commitment to critical thinking that only comes when a scholar devotes time and energy to finding out something new rather than simply repeating what others have said. Please follow this definition of "analysis" throughout this syllabus and this course.

Writing:

General Guidelines: Each essay must conform to the following guidelines to be accepted. All essays must include:

- (1) A signed honor code pledge;
- (2) An engaging title which captures the main thrust of your argument. I will not accept papers with titles like "Paper #1." You must also include your name and the date;
- (3) A final word count of the body of your essay (not including footnotes, endnotes, bibliography, or title). This word count must be indicated on your first page of your essay;
- (4) Appropriate citations, either footnotes or endnotes, which follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Copies of this style manual are in the library and the history department office. The style manual commonly known as "Turabian" (i.e. Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*) is a shortened version of the Chicago style guide and is acceptable;
- (5) Appropriate American-style punctuation and general formatting as indicated in the *Chicago Manual of Style*;
- (6) Sequential page numbers at the bottom of each page beginning with page 1. All notes should also use numbers, not symbols or letters;
- (7) **An introductory paragraph which clearly states your interpretive claim (i.e. thesis) and answers all of the following questions: (a) what is the paper about, (b) what is the reader going to find out, (c) why is this paper worth reading -- i.e. the "so what" question.**

Essay 1: Analyze how the American perception of France evolved from the 1700s to the mid-1800s and explain why it changed. You must create your own original argument which states your interpretive claim as an answer to this question. In the course of your essay, you must use at least one primary source. Minimum word count: 1,650.

Essay 2: Why was the period from 1920-1940 a transitional moment in French-American relations? Explain and analyze that transition. You must create your own original argument which states your interpretive claim as an answer to this question. In the course of your essay, you must use at least three primary sources. Minimum word count: 1,650.

Essay Revision: You will revise either Essay 1 or Essay 2 based on written comments and a face-to-face conversation with Prof. Jackson. Your grade for the revision will replace your original grade for the essay you choose to revisit. Minimum word count: 1,650.

Essay 3: A research paper on the relationship between France and the US concerning the question of motion pictures. More information below. Minimum word count: 1,650.

Participation:

This class will function as a seminar, which means that each student is responsible for doing all the reading and coming to class prepared to engage critically with that reading. The successful functioning of this class depends on the willingness of each student to participate in the ongoing conversation. Listening is not enough; each student is expected to make a reasonable contribution to the discussion so that others may benefit from their insight.

Discussion: I define “participation” as active engagement with the ideas, readings, and conversations that are an integral part of this course. Class attendance is necessary for class participation, since you cannot participate if you are not here. However, you do not earn your participation grade simply by showing up to class. Rather, you must actually participate by joining in the class discussion, posing questions, sharing ideas, and interpreting the readings with your classmates in a thoughtful and reflective way.

I reserve the right to call on any member of the class so that they might contribute to our discussion. I recommend bringing questions that you have about reading assignments or about the previous class meeting if what we discussed is not entirely clear to you. I also recommend bringing a list of comments that you wish to make during class discussion so that you will be ready to contribute. *If you are someone who has difficulty speaking in class for whatever reason, please speak to me about alternative ways of participating.*

Grades:

Essay 1	20%
Essay 2	20%
Essay 3	30%
Participation and Additional Assignments	30%

Our Schedule for the Semester

R	1/12	Introduction Two Revolutionary Declarations
T	1/17	C. Vann Woodward, <i>The Old World's New World</i>
R	1/19	<i>John Adams</i> , episode 3, “Don’t Tread on Me” Lloyd Kramer, <i>Lafayette in Two Worlds</i>
T	1/24	James Wood, “Tocqueville in America” Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i>
R	1/26	David McCullough, <i>Greater Journey</i> Harvey Levenstein, <i>Seductive Journey</i> Writing Discussion #1
T	1/31	Yasmin Sabina Khan, <i>Enlightening the World</i>
R	2/2	Yasmin Sabina Khan, <i>Enlightening the World</i>
T	2/7	Brooke Blower, <i>Becoming Americans in Paris</i>
R	2/9	Writing Workshop

- M 2/13 ESSAY #1 DUE in my office by 12:00 PM
- T 2/14 Writing Discussion #2
Jeffrey H. Jackson, "Making Jazz French: The Reception of Jazz Music in Paris, 1927-1934"
- R 2/16 Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing*
- T 2/21 Georges Duhamel, *America the Menace*
Philippe Soupault, *The American Influence in France*
André Citroën, "Speeding Up the Automobile Industry"
Paul Morand, *New York*
- R 2/23 Malcolm Cowley, *Exile's Return*
F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Babylon Revisited"
Sylvia Beach, *Shakespeare and Company*
- T 2/28 Gertrude Stein, *Paris, France*
- R 3/1 Gertrude Stein, *Paris, France*
- T 3/6 Ernest Hemingway, *A Movable Feast*
- R 3/8 Ernest Hemingway, *A Movable Feast*
- T 3/13 SPRING BREAK
- R 3/15 SPRING BREAK
- T 3/20 Introduce Research Paper
Victoria de Grazia, "Mass Culture and Sovereignty: The American Challenge to European Cinemas"
- R 3/22 NO CLASS -- ESSAY #2 DUE in my office by 12:00 PM
- T 3/27 Vanessa Schwartz, "The Belle Epoque that Never Ended: Frenchness and the Can-Can Film of the 1950s"
Film: *An American in Paris*
- R 3/29 Tyler Stovall, *Paris Noir*
Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea*
- T 4/3 Tyler Stovall, *Paris Noir*
James Baldwin, "Encounter on the Seine: Black Meets Brown"
- R 4/5 EASTER
- T 4/10 Christopher Sawyer-Laucano, "At the Beat Hotel"
- R 4/12 Jack Kerouac, *Satori in Paris*

T 4/17 Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French*

R 4/19 Tyler Stovall, *Paris Noir*
Film: *Paris Blues*

T 4/24 Film: *Midnight In Paris*

R 4/26 Writing Workshop

Research Paper Due TBA

Research Papers

Since the early 1900s, the presence of American motion pictures has been especially controversial among many people in France. Many viewers welcomed US films as lively and entertaining. Others, however, believed that American films were not only eroding audiences' artistic tastes but also destroying France's own indigenous film industry. Examining the period 1920-1940 and the period 1950-1970, analyze how the contentious relationship between the US and France over the question of motion pictures has evolved. In other words, you should explain how this relationship has changed over time.

This assignment challenges you to go to the library, to find out information about a general topic, and then to tell a coherent story using what you've learned. Based on the research you have done in the library, provide a narrative account of your subject. What was the order of events? What were the issues at stake? What were the consequences? You should frame your narrative with a **central, unifying argument** that suggests why the issue you have researched was important in a larger historical context. In other words, what did it matter to anyone that these changes happened?

This paper emphasizes research using primary sources. You will need to cite at least six (6) primary sources in your essay in order to receive credit -- at least 3 from France, and at least 3 from the US. You will also use some secondary sources to help you construct the larger picture; I will help guide you to some appropriate secondary sources. The essay itself must be at least 1,650 words long.

Some secondary sources that you will find important are:

- Richard Pells, *Not Like Us*
- Richard Abel, *French Cinema*
- Alan Williams, *The Republic of Images*, and
- Victoria de Grazia's article
- Vanessa Schwartz, *It's So French!*
- www.cairn.info (in French)

Source for French primary source documents:

- Richard Abel, ed., *French Film Theory and Criticism* (2 volumes) in English
- Gallica (bnf.gallica.fr) (in French)

Make sure you consult search some of the databases to which the College subscribes:

- <http://moodle.rhodes.edu/onlres/search.php?q=&srchdef=4&x=18&y=7>

Useful Websites:

- Smithsonian American Memory
- Cornell Making of America
- New York Times
- America's Historical Newspapers (database; see link above)

Useful Sources:

- Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature

Descriptions of Essay Grades

An A paper is a well-developed, sustained, clearly articulated argument supported by an accurate, creative interpretation and/or criticism of sources and readings. It maintains a sharp focus on exactly what the student has been asked to address (i.e. it answers the question). It shows originality of thought, expanding on materials presented in class instead of simply repeating readings, class lectures, or discussions. In other words, it demonstrates that the student has thought carefully, critically, and thoroughly about the material outside of class. It demonstrates both depth and breadth of understanding. An A paper shows that the student is able to read between the lines and can tease out of the sources something beyond the immediately obvious surface details. It will contain almost no factual errors. It will be well written, containing only minor grammatical problems, if any, such as typographical errors or simple word omissions. It will properly document all quotations and sources.

A B paper will contain many -- but not all -- of the elements of an A paper. Its argument may not be as well-developed as that of an A paper, but the argument will be well-organized, coherent and reasonably clear. It remains tightly focused on the assigned topic. It will have a strong factual basis and provide strong analysis of the source materials, but it will not show the same degree of originality and creativity as an A paper. It will not penetrate as far beneath the surface of sources, readings, or ideas. A B paper will contain interesting ideas that indicate the student has read and thought about the material, but his or her argument might be more problematic or not as fully/clearly supported and defended as the argument in the A paper. It will be well-written, but it will contain more problems than the A paper. Its grammatical difficulties might include awkward sentence structures and mild incoherence in addition to comparatively minor problems like typographical errors or omitted words. It will properly document all quotations and sources.

A C paper will be less focused than the B paper as described above. Stylistically, it will feature a greater number of grammatical problems than the ones in B papers. It will show signs of compositional breakdown such as sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Its organizational structure will be far more chaotic than those of the A or B papers. It will seem choppy and poorly thought out to the reader. Its thesis will be vague, and while the analysis will be largely correct, it may contain moderate to severe interpretative errors. Unlike the A and B papers, a C paper will evidence little to no penetration beneath the surface of the subject under consideration. A C paper will not consistently demonstrate that the student has given the topic under consideration much extended thought. It will properly document all quotations and sources.

A D paper will be even less developed than the C paper. Its structure and organization will be poor and confused. It will lack clear focus, and it will take the reader considerable effort to determine exactly what its point is. Its internal logic will break down quickly. It will vaguely address the question being asked of the student, but will often stray from the topic into inappropriate or irrelevant areas. Its grammatical problems will be even more severe than those of the C paper, being so bad as to be a distraction to the reader. A D paper will be confused in its handling of sources and even basic background information, misrepresenting source materials and arguments oftentimes grossly. There will be enough of the subject matter apparent for the instructor to see that the student has read the material, but there will be little sign of comprehension, much less intellectual engagement. It will properly document all quotations and sources.

An F paper is a complete disaster. Papers that earn an F based on content (and not plagiarism) will be incoherent, completely off topic, sub-literate, rife with grammatical errors, and utterly inappropriate as a response to the assignment. It will fail at even the most basic levels to engage the material and will demonstrate that the student has either not read the assigned materials or has thoroughly failed to grasp their content. Any student engaging in academic dishonesty on an essay assignment, as defined by the Honor Code or by the description provided in my faculty folder in the Word file “Documenting Sources.doc,” will automatically receive an F.

Criteria for Grading Essays:

(Adapted from Richard Marius, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*)

1. Does the essay contain an argument?
 - a. Does the author state the argument quickly, concisely, and as early as possible in the paper?
 - b. Does the author provide examples as evidence when he or she makes an assertion?
 - c. Does the author stay on the subject of the argument throughout the essay so that the argument is not submerged in meaningless detail?
2. Does the essay have a sharply focused, limited topic?
3. Does the paper carefully assess the texts or sources in question?
4. Does the paper tell a good story?
5. Does the paper get to the point and stick to it?
6. Does the paper have a title that reflects its subject matter?
7. Does the paper build step-by-step on evidence?
 - a. Does the author ask appropriate “who” questions and explain the historical actors?
 - b. Does the author ask appropriate “what” questions and provide a narrative of the events?
 - c. Does the author ask appropriate “when” questions to establish a chronological narrative?
 - d. Does the author ask appropriate “where” questions to situate actions within a particular place?
 - e. Does the author ask appropriate “why” questions in order to explain historical events?
 1. Does the author distinguish between precipitating causes and the background causes?
 2. Does the author acknowledge the complexity of historical causes?
 3. Is the author cautious in his or her judgments about historical causation?
8. Does the author of the paper properly document sources or texts using the *Chicago Manual of Style*?
9. Is the essay written dispassionately?
10. Does the essay contain original thoughts or simply repeat the thoughts of others?
11. Does the author of the essay write for an appropriate audience?

12. Does the author take contrary evidence or interpretations into account?
13. Does the essay use standard English and observe the common conventions of expository writing?
14. Does the paper come to a conclusion that helps to explain or elaborate on the implications of the argument established in the introduction?

A List of Historians' Questions to Consider While Reading Primary Sources

Here are some basic questions that you should apply to every primary source that you read. Answer these questions as you go in order to help you analyze the sources. Use this information in your essays to help place the primary sources that you are analyzing into their appropriate historical contexts.

Who?

- Authorship:** Who was this author? Where were they from? What was their background? What kinds of things had they been living through before they wrote this document that might have shaped their point of view? How does the author's background show through in the document?
- Audience:** Who might have been reading this document? Whom did the author want to read it? How can we tell? How did readers respond to this document?
- Context:** Was this author the only one writing things like this? Were other authors interested in the same issues? Was there much talk about the questions or concerns raised by this author during the time he or she wrote it?

Where?

- Context:** Where was this document written? What was going on in that place when the document was written?
- Audience:** Where were people reading it? Was it intended for public consumption or just for the author's own private use?

What?

What is the document about? What is the story that the author is relating? What information does the author present? What are the events that the author is describing?

When?

- Authorship:** When did the author write this document? What was going on around them when they wrote this document? How distant from the events under consideration was the author?
- Audience:** When did people read this document?

Why?

- Authorship:** Why did the author write this document? How do you know? What is the argument of this document? What was this author trying to tell his or her readers? What was his or her point of view? What were his or her assumptions? What evidence do I have for my conclusions about this argument? What aspects of the document led me to that understanding?
- Context:** With what larger issues did this author engage? Did he or she talk about the major events of his or her day? Was he or she trying to convince people to do something (or not to do something)? Did the author advocate particular actions or new ways of thinking?

Audience: Why did people read this document? What attraction might it have had to readers at the time? Why was this document remembered (or forgotten) by later generations of readers?

Additional Questions for Analysis

Why is this document historically significant and worthy of the historian's note? What does it tell us about the moment in which it was written? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this document as a historical source? What does the document not tell us? How does this document compare with other documents written at the same time, by the same author, or about the same events or issues?

Prof. Jackson
Department of History
Rhodes College

Philosophy

I believe that we are a community of scholars actively working together to discover something new about our world and ourselves. To achieve those goals, we must struggle together, asking questions about what we don't yet know and challenging our assumptions about what we think we know and believe. Teaching is also a team effort. I am asking each of you to accept a certain amount of responsibility in this class for contributing to our intellectual commonwealth by being willing to question, to challenge, and to propose new ideas and interpretations. In other words, I am asking you to be a good citizen of Rhodes College and of this classroom by contributing to the success of everyone in it.

History is not a list of facts and events, but an ongoing series of debates about what those facts and events mean. In taking this class, you are joining in a world-wide discussion that continually asks about the ongoing meaning and significance of life's events both past and present.

But while teaching and historical debates are group activities, learning is, in the end, an individual act. No one can make another person learn something if they do not want to, and only you can choose to receive something from your time in this class. To that end, think carefully about how you prepare each day for class, how you study for exams, and how seriously you approach your essays. Your grades will reflect your individual performance, and the amount of effort you apply will directly effect your outcomes.

My personal goals for all my classes are: (1) that everyone succeeds to the best of their abilities, (2) that everyone improves in their capability to think analytically and creatively, and (3) that everyone grows in their capacity to express themselves, to create knowledge, and to engage with their world.

Class Policies and Procedures

General

1. I expect you to come to each class prepared to listen, ask questions, discuss readings, and take notes. You should bring all necessary materials to class including all reading assignments for the day, your reading notes, notes from previous classes, and materials that I may ask you to prepare for a particular class session.
2. I expect each of you to be actively engaged in the functioning of this class, and you should come prepared to participate in our ongoing class discussion. I reserve the right to call on any member of the class so that they might contribute to our discussion. I recommend bringing questions that you have about reading assignments or about the previous class meeting if what we discussed is not entirely clear to you. I also recommend bringing a list of comments that you wish to make during class discussion so that you will be ready to contribute. If you

are someone who has difficulty speaking in class for whatever reason, please speak to me about alternative ways of participating.

3. You should come to every class session. There is no such thing as an “excused absence” (with the possible exception of a medical leave that is officially approved by the College administration). Absences for athletics or other extra-curricular activities are not “excused” even if they are officially announced. Therefore, you are allowed to miss *the equivalent of one week’s worth of class time* (for Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes, three (3) class periods; for Tuesday/Thursday classes, two (2) class periods; for classes which meet once a week, one (1) class period) for any reason. Additional absences will adversely effect your grade for the course since you cannot participate in our community of scholars if you are not here.

If you are absent from class, it is *your responsibility* to talk to me and to fellow classmates to find out what you have missed. I frequently distribute handouts or make additional assignments in class, so you need to check with me to find out if I have done so for the day of your absence. You are still responsible for all material covered in each class period regardless of whether you attended it.

I will take attendance at the beginning of every class meeting to establish your presence. If you are not present when attendance is taken, you may be counted absent, so please arrive to class early or on-time.

4. Each of you is bound by the Honor Code as elaborated in the Student Handbook, and no violation will be tolerated. Please review the Student Handbook if you are unclear about the details of the Honor Code, particularly the definitions in Article I, Section 3. If you are unfamiliar with the definition of “plagiarism,” you can find it there. On every assignment, you should reaffirm the Honor Code by writing the entire honor pledge and signing your name. No work will be accepted without an Honor Code pledge. Studying together and reading one another’s papers is always a good idea, but make sure that your work is your own. Collaboration on an assignment that results in remarkably similar results, whether intentional or accidental, is a violation of the honor code.

5. I reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus as the semester progresses, but I will always make changes known to you as soon as possible, and I will make reasonable accommodations for assignment due dates should the schedule changes warrant. I also reserve the right to give unannounced quizzes in class or to make short assignments for the next class period with no advance notice.

6. All assignments must be turned in to be eligible for a passing grade in this course. No student will be allowed to pass without having turned in every assignment.

Essays

7. Essays are due in class as indicated on the syllabus. No papers will be accepted under my door, in my mailbox, under my office door, or electronically except in the event of extreme circumstances which must be approved by me in advance of the due date. I will accept papers only from students who are present in class on the date on which the paper is due; I will not accept papers submitted by proxy. Late papers will not be accepted except in extreme

circumstances which must also be approved by me in advance of the date on which the paper is due.

You are responsible for keeping a backup copy of each writing assignment for the course. In the unlikely event that I misplace your essay, I will ask you for another copy as soon as I realize that I need it. If you cannot provide a copy of any assignment to me upon request, you will forfeit your entire grade for that assignment.

Courtesy

8. Turn off all cell phones during class time unless I have approved their continued activation in advance. If you leave the classroom to answer a cell phone call, do not return.

9. Learning happens when done in an environment in which everyone feels free to express themselves openly without fear of ridicule or recrimination. I will not tolerate any disrespect of other students or their viewpoints during class.

Disabilities

10. I am happy to make reasonable accommodations to people with *documented* disabilities. Please consult the appropriate College administrators before coming to see me. Once you have done so, please discuss your particular needs with me as soon as possible.

revised 11/2008