This seminar examines an extremely rich but highly contested period in modern French history. Following the disastrous Franco-Prussian War, a newly created democratic government was soon rocked by scandals from the infamous Dreyfus affair to anarchist bombings. These last years of the nineteenth century also witnessed major transformations in French culture and society, from the rapid expansion of empire to renegotiations of gender relations to a flowering of art and entertainment all of which had broader consequences outside of France. Despite the tumultuous political and social change, France rallied to fight World War I, the most brutal military endeavor Europe had seen. This course ends with the war experience and how it created new questions which France would have to confront in the 1920s.

Books to Purchase:

- Alice L. Conklin, Sarah Fishman, and Robert Zaretsky, *France and Its Empire Since 1870*
- Jill Jonnes, *Eiffel’s Tower*
- John Merriman, *The Dynamite Club*
- Alistair Horne, *The Price of Glory*

Oral Presentation:

Students will make a 15 minute presentation on a major historical work in the field. Each presentation should outline the author’s main argument, evaluate how the author uses evidence, and place the book within the context of the readings for the course. As part of the presentation, students should read reviews of the book they are presenting found in scholarly journals and indicate how the book has been received by other historians.

Discussion Leadership:

Each student will lead discussion twice during the semester by providing a 15 minute presentation to colleagues about the main ideas and issues raised by the day’s reading. Each presentation should outline the author’s main argument, evaluate how the author uses evidence, and place the book within the context of the readings for the course. As part of the presentation,
students should read reviews of the book they are presenting found in scholarly journals and indicate how the book has been received by other historians.

**Writing Assignment:**

Students will select one book-length primary source (i.e. novel, memoir, autobiography, etc.) from the time period and write a 3,000 word essay analyzing it within the context of the readings in the syllabus. Before reading, formulate a research question about the source to guide your investigation. Essays should formulate a clear argument which answers the research question and then uses other reading in the course to provide a close textual analysis of the source.

**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.

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.

**Grades:**

- Oral Presentation 30%
- Primary Source Essay 20%
- Discussion Leadership 30%
- Participation 20%
Our Schedule for the Semester

R  8/23  Introduction

T  8/28  Legacies of the Revolution
Reading:  CFZ, 1

R  8/30  Franco-Prussian War and Commune
Reading:  CFZ, 2

T  9/4  Franco-Prussian War and Commune

R  9/6  Ideas of the Nation
Reading:  CFZ, 3
PRESENTATION: Stéphane Gerson, The Pride of Place: Local Memories and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century France

T  9/11  Ideas of the Nation

R  9/13  Liberalism, Science, Technology

T  9/18  Liberalism, Science, Technology
(2) Peter Soppelsa, “Paris’s 1900 Universal Exposition and the Politics of Urban Disaster” French Historical Studies (forthcoming).
PRESENTATION: Janet Horne, A Social Laboratory for Modern France OR William H. Schneider, Quality and Quantity

R  9/20  Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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| T 9/25 | Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century | Reading: *Eiffel’s Tower*  
PRESENTATION: Donald Reid, *Paris Sewers and Sewermen* |
| R 9/27 | Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century | (1) Vanessa Schwartz, “Public Visits to the Morgue”  
(2) Emile Zola, *The Ladies’ Paradise*  
PRESENTATION: Michael Miller, *The Bon Marché* |
| R 10/4 | NO CLASS | |
| T 10/9 | Race and Empire | Reading: CFZ, 4  
PRESENTATION: Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize* |
| T 10/16 | FALL BREAK | |
Gender
PRESENTATION: Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts*

Entertainment and Festivity
(1) Jerrold Seigel, *Bohemian Paris*
(2) John Kim Munholland, “Republican Order and Republican Tolerance in Fin-de-Siècle France: Montmartre as a Delinquent Community”
(3) Michael L.J. Wilson, “Portrait of the Artist as a Louis XIII Chair”

Entertainment and Festivity
Susanna Barrows, “Nineteenth Century Café: Arenas of Everyday Life”
PRESENTATION: Charles Rearick, *Pleasures of the Belle Epoque*

Psychology and Society
(1) Emile Durkheim
(2) Henri Bergson
PRESENTATION: Asti Hustvedt, *Medical Muses: Hysteria in Nineteenth Century France*

Psychology and Society
(1) Susanna Barrows, *Distorting Mirrors*
(2) Robert A. Nye, *Crime, Madness, and Politics in Modern France*

Fin de Siècle Political Battles
CFZ, 5
PRESENTATION: Edward Berenson, *The Crime of Madame Caillaux*

Fin de Siècle Political Battles

Scandal and Crisis
Reading: John Merriman, *The Dynamite Club*
R 11/15 Scandal and Crisis
   John Merriman, *The Dynamite Club*
   PRESENTATION: Richard Sonn, *Anarchism and Cultural Politics in Fin de Siecle France*

T 11/20 THANKSGIVING
R 11/22 THANKSGIVING

T 11/27 France At War
   (1) CFZ, 6
   (2) Emmanuelle Cronier, “The Street”
   PRESENTATION: Jean-Jacques Becker, *The Great War and the French People*

R 11/29 France At War
   Reading: Alistair Horne, *The Price of Glory*

T 12/4 France At War
   Reading: Alistair Horne, *The Price of Glory*
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 al-
ternative 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 admin-
istration). 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 assign-
ments 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 vio-
lution will be tolerated. Please review the Student Handbook if you are unclear about the de-
tails 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 reaf-
firm 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 pa-
pers is always a good idea, but make sure that your work is your own. Collaboration on an as-
signment that results in remarkably similar results, whether intentional or accidental, is a vio-
lation of the honor code.

5. I reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus as the semester progresses, but I will al-
tways make changes known to you as soon as possible, and I will make reasonable accommoda-
tions 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