Course Description

This course will address the individual and collective trauma of modern warfare, as that was experienced in France both during and after the country’s three main wars in the twentieth century. It focuses more specifically on how the experience of modern war was negotiated in culture---in personal and collective memory, in gender identities and relations, and in a great variety of written and visual texts. The course begins with consideration of World War I as the first fully modern “total war”, waged in large measure on French soil and necessitating an unprecedented mobilization of French resources and civilian population. The course’s second unit will focus on France’s “strange defeat” at the hands of German Nazism in 1940 and the country’s subsequent occupation, division and highly conflicted experience of collaboration/resistance during the *années noires* (“dark years”). Its third and final unit will deal with the 1954-1962 War of Algerian Independence, and with the protracted violence and political fractiousness that were intrinsic to that conflict. In each of these cases, our main concern will be how those involved in war, and France as a whole, attempted to come to terms with war experience. The course’s interdisciplinary approach will entail critical consideration of historical texts, as well as literary memoir, film, popular culture and architectural media such as war monuments and cemeteries.

Course Objectives

The aim of the course is to enable students to:

- better understand the historical impact of modern warfare in the twentieth century, in France and also beyond it
- employ tools of analysis from multiple disciplines in analyzing the personal and historical workings of memory
- refine specific skills in interpreting visual and literary texts as historical sources
- demonstrate measurable improvement in their writing

Course Texts

The following are required texts for the course. They are available at the University bookstore, and should be purchased there or online as soon as possible.
Supplementary readings and other vital materials such as image files will be housed on the course website or placed on reserve at O’Leary Library. Films and film clips for the course will be made available by weblinks and/or put on reserve at the Media Center in O’Leary Library.

**Course Texts**


**Course Requirements**

**Written Work (80%)**  
Students will have the option of writing either three unit papers or two unit papers and a final research paper elaborating the topic of one of the unit papers. That choice will need to be made at the beginning of Unit Three.  
All of the papers will require synthesis of multiple forms of historical evidence, as well as information from reading, lecture/class discussion and the course website.  
Written work will also include shorter worksheets connected to the unit assignment topics  
I will provide the assignments at the very beginning of each unit, in order to enable more effective note taking and essay planning in advance  

*Please note:* Late written work cannot be accepted unless arrangements are made with me in advance of the due date. Written work should also be submitted directly to me in hard copy format. The penalty for lateness is one-half letter grade per day. Let me know as soon as possible if you anticipate difficulties in handing in an assignment in time.

**Class participation (20%)**  
Students are expected to participate actively in discussion throughout the semester, and have multiple avenues for doing so. I require that individual students take responsibility for being the “principal discussant” during two classes of their choosing at some point over the course of the semester. There will also be opportunities for participation in online discussion threads connected to the papers, and that will be considered a part of the
class participation grade as well. Conversely, lateness and/or incomplete preparation for the discussion will lower the participation grade, as will any more than three absences.

**Schedule of Classes**

9/6 Course introduction: Defining the Problem, Defining the Terms

**Unit One: France and la Grande Guerre**

9/11 Background: Turn of the Century France and the Road to War
*France and the Great War*, chapter 1
Roland Dorgelès, “That Fabulous Day”, course website
Emilie Carles, *A Life of Her Own*, chapters 6-7, course website

9/13 The Home Front and French ‘War Culture’
*France and the Great War*, chapter 2
view image file, ‘French war culture’, course website

9/18 Gender Roles and Identities in Wartime
Charles Rearick “French Identities in the Crucible of War”, from *The French in Love and War*, course website
James McMillan, “World War I and Women in France”, from *Total War and Social Change*, course website

9/20 The Soldiers’ War
*France and the Great War*, chapter 3
Smith, *The Embattled Self*, introduction, chapter 1

9/25 Soldiers’ Memories and Memoirs
Smith, *The Embattled Self*, chapters 2-4, conclusion
*worksheet due*

9/27 Moving on from “Victory”
*France and the Great War*, chapters 4-5
Paul Valéry, “Disillusionment”, course website
Antoine Prost, “Monuments to the Dead”, from Pierre Nora, ed., *Realms of Memory*, course website

10/2 War Monuments and Museums in the 1920’s
Jay Winter, “War Memorials and the Mourning Process”, from *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, course website
Daniel Sherman, "Bodies and Names: The Emergence of Commemoration in Interwar France," course website
*worksheet due*
10/4 Confronting Old and New Battles: War Films of the 1930’s
   in-class viewing of parts of “Croix de Bois/Wooden Crosses” (1932)
   and “La Grande Illusion/Grand Illusion” (1937)
   *worksheet due

**Unit Two: ‘The Dark Years’: France and World War II**

10/9 France’s “Strange Defeat”: Causes and Consequences
   Charles De Gaulle June-July 1940 speeches, course website
   Marshall Pétain’s Message to the French People, October 11, 1940, course
   website
   *Unit One Paper due

10/11 Occupation and the Vichy Regime
   Kedward, *Occupied France*, chapters 1-3

10/16 Everyday Life in Wartime France
   Robert Gildea, “Cohabitation” and “Bread” from *Marianne in Chains*,
   course website
   Marguerite Duras, *The War*, Part One, pp. 3-68

10/18 Ambiguities of the War and Liberation: A Writer’s Account
   Marguerite Duras, *The War*, Parts Two and Three, pp. 71-183

10/23 Experiences, Dilemmas and Memories of Resistance
   Kedward, *Occupied France*, chapters 4-5
   Albert Camus, “I Am Fighting You…..”, course website
   Margaret Weitz, “Women and the War-within-a-War”, from *Sisters in the
   Resistance*, course website

10/25 The “Vichy Syndrome”: French Memory of the War Years
   Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome*, “Introduction: The Neurosis”, and
   “Unfinished Mourning”, course website

10/30 Memorializing and its Perils
   Sarah Farmer, “Oradour-sur-Glane: Memory in a Preserved Landscape”,
   course website
   André Malraux’s Speech on the Transfer of Jean Moulin’s Ashes to the
   Pantheon, December 19, 1964, course website
   view “Transfert des cendres de Jean Moulin au Panthéon”, at
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZbeMLga6gA

11/1 A Broken Mirror? “The Sorrow and the Pity”
   *in-class viewing of sections of “Le Chagrin et la Pitié (The Sorrow and
   the Pity), by Marcel Ophuls, 1968
Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome*, “The Broken Mirror”, course website

11/6  The Holocaust in French Memory
*in-class viewing of sections of “Le Chagrin et la Pitié (The Sorrow and the Pity), by Marcel Ophuls, 1968
Richard Vinen, “Jews, Germans and French”, from *The Unfree French*, course website
Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome*, “Obsession: Jewish Memory”, course website
François Hollande, “The Crime Committed in France, by France”, course website

11/8  A “Haunted Past”: Recent Dilemmas of Memory and Justice
Robert Paxton, “The Trial of Maurice Papon”, from *New York Review of Books*, course website
Richard Golsan, “The Trial of Paul Touvier”, from *Vichy’s Afterlife*, course website

**Unit Three: The ‘War Without Name’: The Algerian Conflict and its Aftermath**

11/13  Historical Origins of the “Algerian Conflict”
*Unit Two paper due*

11/15  The Course of War, 1954-1962
Stora, *History of Algeria*, Part One, pp. 29-106
Djebbar, *Children of the New World*, chapters 1-3

11/20  Ethical Dilemmas of Political Violence
Frantz Fanon, “Concerning Violence” from *Wretched of the Earth*, course website
Jean-Paul Sartre, preface to *Wretched of the Earth*, course website
Albert Camus, “The Guest”, handout

11/27  Images and Realities of War: “Battle of Algiers”
view Gillo Pontecorvo, “Battle of Algiers” (1966), on reserve at O’Leary Library

11/29  Connections and Separations of War: Djebbar’s *Children of the New World*
Djebbar, *Children of the New World*, chapters 4-finish

12/4  War’s Aftermath, 1962-2000: An Absence of Memory?
William B. Cohen, “The Algerian War, the French State and Official Memory”, course website
Martin Evans, “Rehabilitating the Traumatized War Veteran: The Case of French Conscription from the Algerian War”, course website

12/6  Torture, Memory and the Return of the Past  
    Adam Shatz, “The Torture of Algiers”, course website  

*Final Paper due*