

## ***Cultura Francesa Contemporânea / Contemporary French Culture***

2<sup>as</sup>-feiras, 14.00-15.30 (C212)

4<sup>as</sup>-feiras, 14.00-15.30 (C246.B)

Prof. Chiara Nifosi

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Hora de atendimento: 4<sup>as</sup>-feiras, 12:30-13:30, e por marcação.



### **Course description**

This course provides a critical and literary survey of contemporary French culture through the prism of feminist movements and their entanglement with 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century French political history. During the semester, we will reflect on the following questions: Is gender a valid tool of historical analysis? What are the contradictions inherent to the social progress that we have witnessed in the last decades when it comes to gender-based discrimination? How does literature address these contradictions and promote change?

During the semester, we will consider major critical works in the field of women's and gender studies to reconstruct contemporary landscapes of feminist activism, also in their intersectionality with other forms of social oppression. Moreover, we will discuss three novels by Annie Ernaux, winner of the Nobel prize in 2021, Lola Lafon, and Olivia Rosenthal, to assess the contribution of literary texts to the description, validation, and/or reversal of existing cultural paradigms.

Primary texts can be purchased in translation (they are all available in English).

### **Grading and assessment**

Students will be graded based on the following class components:

*Reading, attendance, and participation in class (20%).* Students are asked to attend every meeting and to keep up with the readings assigned for each class. This is a discussion-based course and students are required to respectfully and actively participate in the class debate (both in the form of groupwork and plenary discussion).

*Midterm exam (30%).* A written exam consisting of one close reading question and one open question (1h 30 min).

*Final assignment (50%).* An argumentative essay on a topic chosen by the student, which will be approved after the submission of an abstract. More detailed guidelines will be provided by the instructor during the semester.

### **Primary texts**

Ernaux, Annie. *Les Années*. Paris: Gallimard (Folio), 2010 [2008] (<https://tinyurl.com/3z5p2at7>)

Lafon, Lola. *Nous sommes les oiseaux de la tempête qui s'annonce*. Paris: Flammarion, 2011 (<https://tinyurl.com/yckp9j6t>).

Rosenthal, Olivia. *Que font les rennes après Noël ?* Paris: Gallimard (Folio), 2012 (<https://tinyurl.com/4vvhsp>)

### **Secondary texts (short excerpts will be made available by the instructor in a shared Google Drive folder)**

Beauvoir, Simone de. *Le deuxième sexe*. Paris, Gallimard, 1949

Berger, Anne-Emmanuelle. *Le grand théâtre du genre. Identités, sexualités et féminisme en « Amérique »*. Paris: Belin, 2013

Butler, Judith. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Dec. 1988), p. 519-531

Cixous, Hélène. "Le rire de la méduse." *L'Arc*, n. 61, 1975, p. 39-54

Derrida, Jacques. *L'Animal que donc je suis*. Paris: Galilée, 2006

Despentès, Virginie. *King Kong théorie*. Paris: Grasset, 2006

Merchant, Carolyn. *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983

Pavard, Bibia, et al. *Ne vous libérez pas, on s'en charge. Une histoire des féminismes de 1789 à nos jours*. Paris: La Découverte, 2020.

Planté, Christine, et al. *Le genre comme catégorie d'analyse. Sociologie, histoire, littérature*. Paris: L'Harmattan (coll. "Histoire du féminisme"), 2003

Plumwood, Val. *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*. London, New York: Routledge, 1993

Riot-Sarcey, Michèle. *Histoire du féminisme*. Paris: La Découverte, 2002

Scott, Joan. *Feminism and History*. Oxford, New York: OUP, 1996

Simon, Anne. *Une bête entre les lignes. Essai de zoopoétique*. Marseille: Éditions Wildproject, 2021

Viart, Dominique. "Histoire littéraire et littérature contemporaine." *Tangence*, n. 102, 2013, p. 113–130  
<https://doi.org/10.7202/1022660ar>

## Course Schedule

- **Week 1**

Jan. 23 – Introduction to the main objectives of the course, methodology, corpus, assessment.

Jan. 25 – What is the place of women's and gender studies in contemporary France?

- **Week 2**

Jan. 30 – History of feminism in France and current *état des lieux*/1.

Feb. 1 – History of feminism in France and current *état des lieux*/2.

- **Week 3**

Feb. 6 – Annie Ernaux, *Les Années*.

Feb. 8 – Annie Ernaux, *Les Années*.

- **Week 4**

Feb. 13 – Annie Ernaux, *Les Années*.

Feb. 15 – Annie Ernaux, *Les Années*.

- **Week 5**

Feb. 20 – **No class.**

Feb. 22 – Annie Ernaux, *Les Années*.

- **Week 6**

Feb. 27 – Political activism/1: the “*Parité*” movement in the 1990s.

Mar. 1 – Political activism/2: the impact of #MeToo in France.

- **Week 7**

Mar. 6 – Lola Lafon, *Nous sommes les oiseaux de la tempête qui s'annonce*.

Mar. 8 – Lola Lafon, *Nous sommes les oiseaux de la tempête qui s'annonce*.

- **Week 8**

Mar. 13 – Lola Lafon, *Nous sommes les oiseaux de la tempête qui s'annonce*.

Mar. 15 – Lola Lafon, *Nous sommes les oiseaux de la tempête qui s'annonce*.

- **Week 9**

Mar. 20 – Lola Lafon, *Nous sommes les oiseaux de la tempête qui s'annonce*.

Mar. 22 – Lola Lafon, *Nous sommes les oiseaux de la tempête qui s'annonce*.

- **Week 10**

Mar. 27 – **Written midterm exam.**

Mar. 29 – Gender and intersectionality: the case of *zoopoétique*.

- **Week 11**

Apr. 10 – Olivia Rosenthal, *Que font les rennes après Noël ?*

Apr. 12 – Olivia Rosenthal, *Que font les rennes après Noël ?*

- **Week 12**

Apr. 17 – Olivia Rosenthal, *Que font les rennes après Noël ?*

Apr. 19 – Olivia Rosenthal, *Que font les rennes après Noël ?*

- **Week 13**

Apr. 24 – Olivia Rosenthal, *Que font les rennes après Noël ?*

Apr. 26 – Olivia Rosenthal, *Que font les rennes après Noël ?*

- **Week 14**

May 1 – **No class.**

May 3 – Peer review of abstracts for final essay.

### **Important dates**

Feb. 20 and 21: Carnival (no class).

**Mar. 27: Written exam in class.**

Apr. 3-9: Easter break.

**Apr. 24: Submission of abstracts for final essay.**

May 1: International Workers' Day (no class)

May 10: Submission of final essay.