

SPRING 2023

# Changing Social Class

## TRANSCONTEXT LITERATURE IN CONTEMPORARY FRANCE

French novelist Annie Ernaux received the Nobel Prize in 2022. As the daughter of coffeeshop owners in Normandy who became an international best-seller, Ernaux is well-known for exploring issues related to changing social classes or what French philosopher Chantal Jaquet calls being a “Transclass” (2023). Although this is not a new phenomenon, transclass identities intersecting with gender, sexuality, and race have been recently explored in French literature. In this course, we will study novels that put into light transclass identities: *Retour à Reims* (2009) [Return to Reims] by Didier Eribon about sexuality, *Qui a tué mon père?* (2018) [Who killed my Father?] by Edouard Louis about the working class, *L'Événement* (2000) [The Happening] by Annie Ernaux about her illegal abortion in the sixties, and *Illégitimes* (2021) [Illegitimate] by journalist Nesrine Slaoui about children born in immigrant families in France.

Readings will be complemented by film and play adaptations, articles, and multimedia. Course taught entirely in French.

### SOME QUESTIONS WE WILL EXAMINE:

- How do these authors use sociology (e.g. Pierre Bourdieu's theories) and history in writing memoirs and autobiographies?
- How do sexual, female, and postcolonial identities intersect with being transclass?
- Which unique perspectives do these authors bring on the French republic's motto "liberté, égalité, fraternité"?

**FRW4100-902 & FRW 5934-901**

"SOCIAL ISSUES IN LITERATURE" &  
"THE FRENCH NOVEL"

**When:** Thursdays 5pm-7:45pm

**Where:** CPR 126

**CRN:** 24906 & 21189

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