“Proust’s World”  OLLI  Winter 2016

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http://www.radioproust.org/about/

Syllabus

2013 marked the 100th anniversary of the publication of “Swann’s Way,” the first Volume in Marcel Proust’s now famous seven-volume novel, “In Search of Lost Time.”

Worldwide publications, celebrations and commemorations (including a well attended one in Berkeley) confirmed Proust’s importance for the era in which he lived, as well as in our present time.

“Proust’s World,” now being offered for the sixth year at OLLI, is uniquely structured to present an extensive range of material: historical, political, artistic, and philosophical. The goal is to provide those who wish to appreciate Proust and his now legendary contemporaries – renowned artists, musicians, and writers – with a fuller understanding of the extraordinarily fertile, and troubled, times in which they lived.

Even in a time when cultural “literacy” was a common denominator among intellectual elites, Proust set a new standard. Not only does he seem to have read everything the prolific writers, poets, and journalists of his era produced, he also shows in his vast output of words – not just fiction, but poetry, essays, and over
10,000 letters which survive, from an estimated 100,000 he is thought to have written - a thorough openness to, and knowledge of, music, politics, art, and architecture.

It is my hope that in listening to, reading, and looking at some of the great creations in Proust’s time, as well as by studying the key political and cultural events of his era. those enrolled in this class will be enriched, entertained, and educated. As I have been, in my lifetime, through immersion in this important period.

Larry Bensky
Berkeley, CA
November 2015

**Suggested Course Resource Textbook:**


**Week by Week Outline**

**Note:** Each week there will be links to recommended reading, and also a suggested chapter from the “Cambridge Companion” resource book.

1. **Week One**

Proust and His Era: An overview.

Assigned reading:


The “Belle Epoque”: [http://www.la-belle-epoque.de/beintroe.htm](http://www.la-belle-epoque.de/beintroe.htm)

The Paris Commune of 1871: [http://libcom.org/history/1871-the-paris-commune](http://libcom.org/history/1871-the-paris-commune)

2. **Week Two (4/9): The Dreyfus Affair: Politics and Proust**

   Readings and Videos in Week Two Folder

3. **Week Three (4/16) Proust the Writer**

   Readings and Videos in Week Three Folder

4. **Week Four (4/30) The Arts in Transition**

   Readings and Videos in Week Four Folder

5. **Week Five (5/7): The World Falls Apart; Proust Becomes Famous**

   Readings and Videos in Week Five Folder.

6. **Week Six (5/14) What Endures from Proust’s Time: Art and History**

   Readings and Videos in Week Six Folder