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The Americanization of France: From Algeria to Phone Apps

Barnett Singer

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The Americanization of France: From Algeria to Phone Apps Barnett Singer
Merriam Press Modern History 1. First Edition (June 2012). In sprightly fashion this well-informed book shows that after the resolution of its searing Algerian conflict in 1962, France increasingly followed the American path. Here the author demolishes two pervasive clichés about modern France: 1. that the country was never martially sound and fit for wars, including wars on terror and 2. that the French have always been and still are overwhelmingly anti-American. Using new material on the Algerian conflagration of the ’50s and early ’60s, including its impact in the hexagon itself, the author clearly demonstrates that a serious, well-organized, courageous France did well in this war on terror, until its own divisions, international pressures, and the actions of de Gaulle ended the conflict with tragic consequences. That result then led to an important French sea change—this book’s main subject. It cleared the way for France increasingly to embrace American ways, including their rock n’ roll, and more generally, an American-style emphasis on personal happiness. Today’s France, wounded by the loss of traditions and certainties, has never been so pro-American, clinging to trends from across the Atlantic as to a lifeline. Barnett Singer is a retired academic historian who has published a number of other books in French history. Contents: Introduction; The Algerian Challenge in the Last Serious France; De Gaulle, the Algerian Denouement, and the End of an Era; From French Chanteurs to American Yé-Yé; Other Aspects of the “Happiness Revolution” in the 1960s and Beyond; Today’s Americanized France; Conclusion; Notes.

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