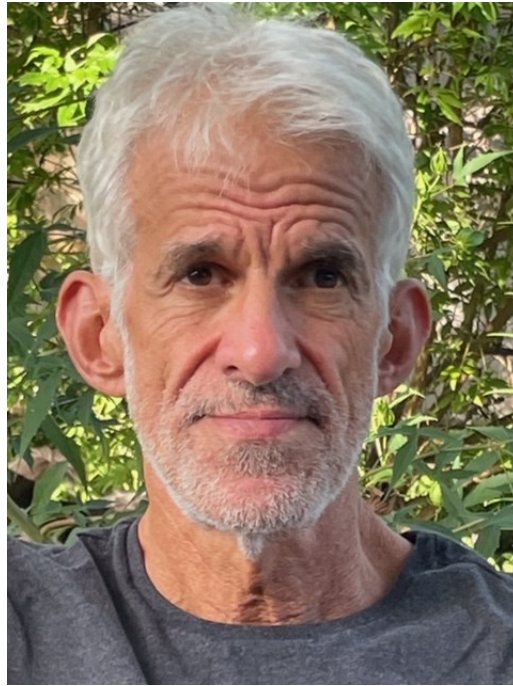


The Humanities Center presents

Robert Zaretsky

Thursday, April 14 at 4:30pm
413 Waterman



“The Peste That Never Rests: Why Albert Camus’ *The Plague* Matters”

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the publication of Albert Camus’s *The Plague*. In 2020, when we were slammed by Covid-19, there was a mad rush to acquire a copies of the novel. It was, after all, a novel that dealt with a city that, besieged by the bubonic plague, had no choice but to deal with the consequences.

And yet, Camus used the bubonic plague as an allegory to tell the story about a world confronting a different kind of plague: war and occupation. It is understandable, but ironic that there has not been the same interest in the novel since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. It is also unfortunate, since the novel casts light on current events. Camus had been criticized, by Sartre, Beauvoir and Barthes among others, for failing to distinguish between bacilli and bombs. Surprised, Camus replied that the novel—along with everything he wrote until then—does make this distinction. But it is a distinction that does not alter the way one must respond to either one of these plagues.

Robert Zaretsky is a professor of history in the Honors College, University of Houston. His books include *Albert Camus: Elements of a Life* (Cornell UP, 2010), *A Life Worth Living: Albert Camus and the Quest for Meaning* (Harvard UP, 2013), *Boswell’s Enlightenment* (Harvard UP, 2015), *Catherine & Diderot: The Empress, The Philosopher and the Fate of the Enlightenment* (Harvard UP, 2019), *The Subversive Simone Veil: A Life in Five Ideas* (U Chicago P, 2021), and *Victories Never Last: Reading and Caregiving in a Time of Plague* (U Chicago P, 2022).

This event is free and open to the public. For questions or ADA accommodations please contact the Romance Languages and Cultures department at Romance.Languages@uvm.edu or call 802- 656-3196.