This seminar will examine the changing status of the portrait in nineteenth-century France. This period, which was marked by significant changes in technologies, also saw attendant shifts in the conception of subjectivity and the individual. By contextualizing portraiture (royal, bourgeois, commissioned and not) within these and other historical frames, we will seek to understand the ways in which these images were uniquely tied not just to the personal, but also to the social and political. We will thus consider the role of portraiture in constructing and subverting notions of subjectivity and identity; class; ethnicity; masculinity and femininity, celebrity, etc. Readings will address from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives the complex dynamics of the portrait and its processes.