

ENGL 595 Literary Studies Across Cultures: “War and Memory”

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Class time Tuesday 4:30-7 PM

Description

This course surveys theories of memory and problems in the relation of memory to war. On memory in general, the course traces the arc of memory studies, which gained momentum after the 1960s and has culminated in what some critics call a “memory boom” and a “memory industry.” We begin with Chris Marker’s premise, that “the function of remembering is not the opposite of forgetting, but rather its lining,” and consider the ethical, political, and aesthetic challenges for remembering and forgetting, both of which are necessary to confront war and its related traumas. Along the way, we will read some of the most important and influential books and essays in memory studies, with readings from Paul Ricoeur’s monumental *Memory, History, Forgetting* and *The Collective Memory Reader* dispersed throughout the semester. On memory and war, some of the case studies will come from World War I, the Holocaust, Japanese American internment, World War II, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War. Syllabus subject to change at instructor’s discretion.

Requirements: a seminar presentation (30%), a book review (20%) and a 10 page paper (50%).

Reading List

1. Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember*
2. Paul Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets*
3. Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*
4. Charles Griswold, *Forgiveness: A Philosophical Exploration*
5. Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*
6. Chris Marker, *Sans Soleil* (film screening)
7. Jeffrey Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, Daniel Levy, eds. *The Collective Memory Reader*
8. Julie Otsuka, *The Buddha in the Attic*
9. Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*
10. Art Spiegelman, *Maus I and II*
11. Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*
12. WG Sebald, *Austerlitz*
13. Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories : The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*
14. Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Crises of Memory and the Second World War*
15. Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera’s Eye*