

ENGL 620 Literature and Interdisciplinary Studies: “War and Memory”

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Class time	Monday 4:30-6:50
Class location	THH 109
Office location	THH 404D
Office hours	Tuesday, 2-4 Thursday, 3-4

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. On memory and war, some of the case studies will come from the Holocaust, Hiroshima, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

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

The seminar presentation will be a single or joint presentation with another student. You will be responsible for leading class discussion on the week’s for the first half of the class.

The book review will be a 1000 to 1500 word review of a book on which you are not presenting. The purpose of the review is to give you an exercise in a common academic task, one that many of you will do before you graduate as a relatively easy way to publish and enter into academic conversation. 1000 to 1500 words is about standard for most single-book academic reviews in many academic journals. Consult a leading journal in your field for models. The book review will be due two weeks after the book has been read in class. You can choose the book.

The paper will be a research paper (whose main coverage will not overlap with your book review). You can tailor the paper to your own research needs; it does not have to address themes or topics we deal with in class, although it should deal in some way with war and memory. For those of you in creative writing, you can write the paper as a nonfiction essay; for those of you not in creative writing, you can do the same if you would prefer not to use the standard academic language that you are probably being steeped in. Ten pages, double-spaced, is the average length for a conference presentation of twenty minutes. Think of this as the draft for a paper that you can present at a conference. The paper will be due December 10 via email.

Reading List

1. Jeffrey Blustein, *The Moral Demands of Memory*
2. Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*

3. Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?*
4. Grace Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy and the Forgotten War*
5. Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*
6. Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*
7. Chang-Rae Lee, *The Surrendered*
8. Avishai Margalits, *The Ethics of Memory*
9. Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*
10. WG Sebald, *Austerlitz*
11. Daniel Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory*
12. Marita Sturken, *Tourists of History*
13. Lisa Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*
14. James Young, *The Texture of Memory*

Selected essays as PDFs

Schedule

Week 1 August 23	Introduction
Week 2 August 30	Judith Butler, <i>Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?</i> ; Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics"
Week 3 September 6	Labor Day
Week 4 September 13	Avery Gordon, <i>Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination</i> ; Burke, "History as Social Memory"; Ricoeur, "Preface," "Part I: On Memory and Recollection," Chapter 1, "Memory and Imagination"
Week 5 September 20	Grace Cho, <i>Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy and the Forgotten War</i> ; Nora, "Between Memory and History"; Ricoeur, Chapter 2, "The Exercise of Memory: Uses and Abuses"
Week 6 September 27	Chang-Rae Lee, <i>The Surrendered</i> ; Ashplant, Dawson, and Roper, "The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics"; Ricoeur, Chapter 3, "Personal Memory, Collective Memory"
Week 7 October 4	Maurice Halbwachs, <i>On Collective Memory</i> ; Ricoeur, "Part II: History, Epistemology," "Prelude: History: Remedy or Poison?"

	Chapter 1, “The Documentary Phase: Archived Memory”
Week 8 October 11	Marita Sturken, <i>Tourists of History</i> ; excerpt from Sturken, <i>Tangled Memories</i> ; Ricoeur, Chapter 2, “Explanation, Understanding”
Week 9 October 18	Lisa Yoneyama, <i>Hiroshima Traces</i> ; Winter and Sivan, “Setting the Framework”; Ricoeur, Chapter 3, “The Historian’s Representation”
Week 10 October 25	James Young, <i>The Texture of Memory</i> ; Huysens, introduction to <i>Present Pasts [scrub this]</i> ; Ricoeur, “Part 3, The Historical Condition,” “Prelude: the Burden of History and the Nonhistorical,” Chapter 1, “The Critical Philosophy of History”
Week 11 November 1	WG Sebald, <i>Austerlitz</i> ; Sebald, excerpt from <i>On the Natural History of Destruction</i> ; Ricoeur, Chapter 2, “History and Time”
Week 12 November 8	Avishai Margalits, <i>The Ethics of Memory</i> ; Ricoeur, Chapter 3, “Forgetting”
Week 13 November 15	Jeffrey Blustein, <i>The Moral Demands of Memory</i> ; Ricoeur, Epilogue, “Difficult Forgetting”
Week 14 November 22	Daniel Schacter, <i>The Seven Sins of Memory (out of print)</i> ; Baddeley, “The Psychology of Remembering and Forgetting”; Connerton, “Seven Types of Forgetting”
Week 15 November 29	Svetlana Boym, <i>The Future of Nostalgia</i>