

# GRADUATE SEMINAR: PUBLIC MEMORY

AMST 502T

Spring 2007, Monday 7:00-9:45

Room: UH-333

Wayne Hobson

**Office Hours (UH-415):**

Mondays 12:00-1:00; 6:00-7:00 & Wednesdays: 12:00-1:00

Phone & Voice Mail: (714) 278-3225

Email: hobson@fullerton.edu (Subject: AMST502T)

## Required Texts:

Robert Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past : The Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History*

Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*

Mike Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory*

Edward T. Linenthal, *Sacred Ground: Americans and Their Battlefields*

Emily Rosenberg, *A Date Which Will Live: Pearl Harbor in American Memory*

Erica Rand, *The Ellis Island Snow Globe*

Art Spiegelman, *In the Shadow of No Towers*

Texts are available for purchase at **Little Professor Book Center**, 725 N. Placentia Ave., Fullerton

## About the course:

The study of public memory, or collective memory as it is sometimes called, has become a “hot” interdisciplinary topic in recent years, reflecting widespread recognition that stories about the past play a central role in social movements, national politics, and personal lives. A key assumption in public memory studies is that citizens in modern societies are exposed to a complex set of narratives about the past, only some of which derive from academia. These narratives about the past are transmitted, reinforced, and challenged in a variety of ways: by stories told in schoolrooms and in school textbooks, by stories told at family gatherings, by stories told in movies, television series and other forms of popular culture, and by images and emotions evoked by memorials, museum exhibits, and historic tourist and preservation sites.

We will study this complex process of collective memory creation, recreation, and revision, examining the cultural politics of public memory, the role of public memory in forming group, regional, and national identity, and the conflict and cooperation between professional historians and popular memory purveyors. We will also consider how different modes of representation (movies, museums, photographs, historic buildings) create distinctive forms of historical understanding.

## Requirements:

**Assigned reading & weekly seminar meetings:** Active student participation is required. Read all assigned class material and come to every class meeting prepared to raise questions about the reading, to relate the readings to each other, and to relate the readings to broader issues in public memory studies.

**Summary and critique of supplemental material:** You are required to make one short (10-15 minute) presentation to the class on a cultural memory document. A list of possible topics will be provided.

**Research paper:** You will spend the entire semester conducting primary and secondary source research and writing a 20-25 page analytical research paper. The paper may be on any public memory topic (a full assignment instruction sheet will be distributed separately). The research paper assignment includes: a conference with the instructor by February 12, a prospectus due March 12, a fully-referenced first draft that will be read by all members of the seminar and critiqued in class on April 23, 30, or May 7, and a final draft submitted by May 18.

## Grading:

Assignment	Percent of Final Grade	Grading Scale
Research paper final draft	50%	A = 90-100
Presentation	20%	B = 80-89
Class participation	30%	C = 65-79
		D = 50-64

Note: The +/- grading system will be used.

## Discussion Topics and Reading Assignments:

### Jan. 22

Introduction to the Course and Assignments

View in class: "Who Owns the Past?"

### Jan. 29

Film Images and the Construction of Cultural Memory

Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past*, 1-79, 198-246

Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 1-43

Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*, 249-268

Conferences with instructor about your research paper—schedule at least one conference before

Feb. 12 class meeting

### Feb. 5

Civil War Memory and American Identity

View episodes 1, 5, & 9 of Ken Burns's *Civil War* series. Available in CSUF Library, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, call number is E468/C58/1989—must view in the Library

Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, 1-7, 87-126, 213-217, 222-223

### Feb. 12

History of the Second Degree: Structure of the Past within the Present

Rosenberg, *A Date Which Will Live*, 1-97

Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, 175-212

**Feb. 19** -- No class (Campus Closed for Presidents' Day)

### Feb. 26

History of the Second Degree (II)

Rosenberg, *A Date Which Will Live*, 99-189

Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*, 269-318

### March 5

The Presence of the Past: Sense of Place and Community, Activism, and the Preservation Movement

Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*, 177-246

Northern OC buildings, artifacts & documents

### March 12

The History Museum Movement and the Packaging of Public Memory

Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*, viii-xiv, 3-174

Prospectus Due—research paper statement of topic, questions being asked, and research strategy;  
primary source bibliographic essay; secondary source bibliography

### **March 19**

Sacred Ground: Creating Memorials

Linenthal, *Sacred Ground*, 11-86, 129-171

View in class: “Paper Clips”

## **SPRING BREAK**

### **April 2**

Challenging Silences and the Trappings of Respect and Reverence in the Sanctioned Story of American Immigration; Enlisting the Unserious and Impolite to Raise Some Rude (and Necessary) Questions

Rand, *Ellis Island Snow Globe*, selected chapters

### **April 9**

Healing and Enduring: Vietnam and America

Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 44-144

Maya Lin, “Making the Memorial” – on reserve

View in class: “Regret to Inform”

### **April 16**

Memorial Ground: The Mall and Ground Zero

Spiegelman, *In the Shadow of No Towers*

Images of memorials on the Mall & lecture on the cultural politics of the Lincoln Memorial, US Holocaust Museum, and the Ground Zero competition

Class collective project: Suggest an appropriate memorial for Ground Zero

### **April 23, April 30, May 7 (May 14)**

Student Research Presentations and Seminar Critiques

Sign up for one of the first three dates; Submit a best-effort first draft (full documentation required) by Thursday night before your presentation session (i.e., by April 19 for the April 23 meeting).  
Submit via e-mail or on disk. Your draft will be placed on the course web site in PDF format.

Everyone in the seminar is required to read each paper in its entirety and prepare a critique to be given orally during our class meeting. We will discuss criteria for critiques and the goals we are trying to accomplish. Our primary goal is to help everyone in the class write the best possible research-based analytical paper possible.

### **May 18**

**Final draft of the research essay is due** (include a stamped, addressed envelope so that your essay can be mailed back to you)