

Fall 2012
History 615 006:

WAR AND REMEMBRANCE

Thursdays 7:20-10:00 PM
Innovation 134

DR. LAIR

Office: Robinson B346
Tel.: 703-993-2159
E-mail: mLair@gmu.edu

OFFICE HOURS

Thursdays 4:30-6 & by appointment

IMPORTANT DATES

First Day of This Class:	August 30
Last Day to Add/Drop:	September 4 (no tuition liability)
Last Day to Drop:	September 28 (67% tuition liability)
Thanksgiving (No class)	November 22
Last Day of This Class:	December 6

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Saying that something is "etched in stone" is a way of expressing its permanence. In commemorating the past, modern societies have literally etched memories in stone in public memorials, yet interpretations of past conflicts vary among social groups and have changed dramatically over time. This is especially true of how social groups "remember" war, which often plays an important role in the construction of the nation, masculinity, and other forms of identity. In this course, we will examine some of the literature of war and collective memory, in particular how people around the world have constructed memories of war and how those memories have been expressed in literature, popular culture, memorials, consumer goods, and commemorative activities. We will also address various methodological approaches to the study of public or collective memory. As a seminar, class time will be spent entirely engaged in discussion of projects or the week's readings. Students will also conduct an original research project on a US history topic of their choosing. 3 credits. This course fulfills the 1914 to the present distribution requirement in US history.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Skills developed in the course include formal and informal writing, textual analysis, public speaking, framing questions, and critical thinking. Assessment will be based on crafting discussion questions, participation in in-class discussion, book reviews, and an original research paper. Through their written work, students will be able demonstrate the ability to: identify, discuss, and evaluate a book's argument, sources, and methodology; frame discussion and research questions; conduct research in relevant primary and secondary sources; evaluate the quality, credibility, and limitations of the arguments presented by scholars working on similar topics; situate findings within the scholarly literature of the topic; craft a historical argument that is appropriately supported by evidence compiled through research; connect issues in the weekly readings and project research to larger intellectual or social concerns; and effectively communicate ideas orally and in writing.

ASSESSMENT

Grades will be assigned based on completion of the following assignments. Please see the companion Guide to Assignments for more information.

- 5%: Weekly Discussion Questions.
- 35%: Informed, constructive participation in every discussion.
- 20%: Two book reviews, 1000 words each.
- 40%: An original research paper (3,000-3,750 words) on a topic of your choosing.

A NOTE ON GRADES

Grades represent an assessment of your work, not you as a person, and they are not a reward or a sanction. In graduate school, every student is expected to excel. In programs with funding, students get cut off if their GPA dips below a 3.5. As a result, throughout the profession, Bs are generally regarded as a sign that a student is not doing well. Grades of less than a B are a sign that something is seriously wrong. If you have questions or concerns about how you are doing in the course, please come speak to me in office hours. There is no "curve" in the class, so any distribution of grades is possible.

COURSE POLICIES



Academic Integrity

Mason students are bound by an Honor Code (<http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>), which states, "Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously, and violations are treated gravely. In this course, academic integrity means that:

- when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task.
- when you rely on someone else's work in any aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form.
- all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions.
- you will tell the truth about the status of your work.

For a discussion of what constitutes plagiarism, go here:

<http://classweb.gmu.edu/WAC/EnglishGuide/Critical/plagiarism.html>

When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. I will report students suspected of dishonesty to the University's Honor Board for disciplinary action, including failure of the course and even expulsion.



Attendance and Punctuality

Regular attendance is required; you can't participate if you're not in class. Also, please arrive to class on time. If you need to arrive late or leave early, please sit near the door to minimize the disruption. If there is inclement weather, consult the University's homepage for cancellation information. If the University is open, we will be having class and deadlines will be maintained. Lastly, please do not come to class if you have a serious illness, especially an uncontrolled cough or fever.



Communication & Office Hours

I encourage you to meet with me to discuss any facet of the course. Quick questions can be addressed before or after class or in email. More substantive conversations are best reserved for office hours. If you cannot come to regularly scheduled office hours, please contact me about arranging a meeting time that is mutually convenient.

NOTE: I will only be using GMU email addresses to communicate with students. Please write to me from your GMU account, and check your GMU account regularly or have your email forwarded.



Decorum

In every class, students will maintain a professional demeanor and be respectful of others' opinions and contributions. Please refrain from eating, sleeping, editorial body language (heavy sighs, eye rolling, etc.), talking when others have the floor, passing notes, reading newspapers, doing the crossword, doing work for other classes, leaving early, or anything else that demeans our class. Please arrive to class on time and turn off all electronic devices before class begins. Students who behave in an unprofessional manner will be warned the first time and may be dismissed from class if the behavior persists.

Laptops for note taking are ok, but please use them responsibly. Multitasking during class is rude to me, demeaning to the course, distracting to the students around you, and an impediment to you realizing your fullest potential. If the class meets in a lecture-style classroom, students working on laptops are required to sit in the back row. Students vigorously tapping away on laptops during discussion may be asked to spontaneously email me a copy of their class notes. Students caught using laptops inappropriately will be prohibited from using them in class.



Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please talk to me as soon as possible (though you can wait until office hours, in the interest of privacy). <http://ods.gmu.edu>



Late Assignments & Make-ups

Writing assignments will be accepted late, but there will be penalty of one-half of a letter grade for every 24 hours, starting at 10:01 PM on the night an assignment is due. The deductions will continue each day through the weekend, even though I will not be on campus, so I urge you to communicate with me if you plan to turn something in late. In the interest of virus protection, assignments will not be accepted via email without my express approval beforehand. If you do ask for, and receive, permission to submit your paper via email attachment, it must be written in Microsoft Word with the following file name: YOURLASTNAME.HIST615.[PaperAssignment Name].doc(x).

Useful Campus Resources

Patriot Web: <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/>

Blackboard: <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

Writing Center, Robinson A114, 703-993-1200, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), SUB I Room 3129, 703-993-2380, <http://caps.gmu.edu>

Free Academic Skills Workshops: <http://caps.gmu.edu/learningservices/workshops.php>

University Policies

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

REQUIRED READINGS

These books are available in the GMU bookstore and from various online sellers:

David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War and American Memory*
 Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*
 Scott Laderman, *Tours of Vietnam: War, Travel Guides, and Memory*
 Jerry Lembcke, *The Spitting Image: Myth, Memory, and the Legacy of Vietnam*
 Jill Lepore, *The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History*
 George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*
 Carol Reardon, *Pickett's Charge in History and Memory*
 Marita Sturken, *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero*
 Takashi Yoshida, *The Making of the Rape of Nanking: History and Memory in Japan, China, and the United States*

In addition, we will be reading the following articles/chapters for the first night of class:

Maurice Halbwachs, "Historical Memory and Collective Memory," in *The Collective Memory*, pp. 50-87
 Pierre Nora, "General Introduction: Between History and Memory," in Vol. I of *Realms of Memory*, pp. 1-20.
 David Thelen, "Memory and American History," *Journal of American History*, v. 75 (March 1989).

Nora and Halbwachs will be made available via Blackboard. You can access Thelen online via J-Stor.

I encourage you to read the handout *How to Read a History Book*, posted on Blackboard, in order to help you get the most out of your reading in the most efficient way possible.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

Have the readings for each week finished by the time you come to class, including the first night of class.

1. Aug. 30: Introduction to Collective Memory
Halbwachs, "Historical Memory and Collective Memory," in *The Collective Memory*, pp. 50-87
Nora, "General Introduction: Between History and Memory," in Vol. I of *Realms of Memory*, pp. 1-20.¹
Thelen, "Memory and American History"²
2. Sept. 6: Reardon, *Pickett's Charge in History and Memory*
3. Sept. 13: Blight, *Race and Reunion*
4. Sept. 20: Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*
5. Sept. 27: Workshop night: research idea due.
6. Oct. 4: Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers*
7. Oct. 11: Yoshida, *The Making of the Rape of Nanking*
8. Oct. 18: Lembcke, *The Spitting Image*
9. Oct. 25: Workshop night: research proposal and bibliography due.
10. Nov. 1: Laderman, *Tours of Vietnam*
11. Nov. 8: Sturken, *Tourists of History*
12. Nov. 15: Writing Day: No Class
13. Nov. 22: No Class: Happy Thanksgiving!
14. Nov. 29: Lepore, *The Whites of Their Eyes*
15. Dec. 6: No Class: Writing Day
16. Dec. 10 Final papers are due by 5 PM.

¹ The Halbwachs and Nora readings may be found on Blackboard.

² *Journal of American History*, v. 75 (March 1989). Access online with JSTOR via the GMU library.