How Societies Remember: History and Memory in 20th Century Europe and the Soviet Union

How are major historical events experienced, understood, represented, and remembered by individuals, groups, and societies? How is our understanding of the past shaped by the books we read, the films we watch, the people we pass our time with, and the political, educational, and cultural institutions that shape our society? How does our understanding of past events influence our attitudes toward present ones? Are controversies over memory a reflection of current issues and priorities, with history serving as a convenient substitute for fighting contemporary battles? Focusing on major episodes in twentieth century European history such as the Bolshevik revolution, World Wars I and II, the Holocaust, and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, this course will address these questions and others related to national identity, memory, and the politics of historical representation in twentieth century Europe. Utilizing a variety of sources from historical and sociological scholarship to memoir, oral history, literature, film, art, and museum exhibits we will examine how the past has been constructed and memorialized in both official and unofficial practices and on national and local levels. In the process we will explore how societies deal with both collective trauma and collective responsibility and consider the political stakes involved in and controversies surrounding commemorative practices and the representation of the past. We will also explore how remembering has served as a source of resistance and catharsis for groups and individuals.

Required Readings
Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (Oxford University Press, 2000)
Jan Gross, Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland (Penguin 2002)
Sara Nomberg-Przytyk, Auschwitz: Tales from a Grotesque Land (University of North Carolina Press, 1985)
Nina Tumarkin, The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia (Basic Books, 1994)

Class Participation and Reading Questions (20%)
This course is based on the belief that learning is a cooperative and interactive activity. You are expected to participate actively in class discussion; therefore it is essential that readings are completed prior to each class meeting. Expressing doubt or confusion about or asking for clarification on the readings are important and useful ways of contributing
to the discussion, providing opportunities for critically evaluating the materials under investigation. The evening prior to each class meeting students are required to post 2-3 questions about the readings on blackboard (these questions must be posted by 8 pm so that your colleagues will have ample time to read and reflect on them). You are exempt from three postings over the course of the semester. You are allowed 3 unexcused absences. For classes missed beyond these 3, you are expected to write a 1-2 page evaluation of the readings.

**Group Presentation and Discussion Facilitation (15%)**
The class will be divided into 4 groups, each of which will be responsible for presenting and leading class discussion on a specified topic. This will involve preparing a general (30-40 minute) presentation on the topic as well as leading discussion on the common reading. I will offer suggestions on sources you can use in preparing your presentation and in selecting your common reading, so please see me well in advance of your presentation. Those presenting are exempt from posting questions.

**Midterm Exam (30%)**
The midterm exam will be in class on October 18 and will involve writing one or two essays on topics covered in class.

**Research Paper (35% total: proposal; 5%)**
A research paper of 15 pages, typed and double spaced will be due on December 20 (please note that the paper will replace the final exam). You should use at least six sources, excluding course readings, one of which can be a website. You may select any topic related to history and memory in Europe (defined broadly to include Russia and the Soviet Union). On October 4 you will submit a 1-2 page (double spaced, 12 pt font, typed) research proposal outlining the issue or problem you plan to investigate. Your proposal should be framed around a broader question (e.g. how has World War II been represented in British film) and should include the issues you plan on addressing in answering this question (e.g. how does film serve to promote or reinforce national glory, ethnic and class harmony, traditional notions of gender). You should also include the sources you will be consulting, explaining briefly how these materials will aid you in your research and analysis. Please feel free to consult with me as you prepare your proposal.

**Grading Scale**

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<tr>
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Late assignments will be marked down 1/3 of a grade per day (B to B-). Extensions will be granted in cases of documented personal illness and family emergency.
**Honor Code** All work is governed by the Honor Code. Any student found cheating, plagiarizing, turning in another’s work as his/her own or otherwise violating the instructor’s explicit or implicit instructions will be subject to a hearing before the Student Honor Committee. To learn more about the code, please go to:

**Services for Students with Disabilities**
If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course please contact Jane Boomer, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in G27 Peters Hall, ext. 58467.

**Week I**

**Sept 4: Course Introduction**

**Sept. 6: Theorizing Memory and History**
Marita Sturken, “Reenactment, Fantasy and the Paranoia of History: Oliver Stone's Docudramas,” *History and Theory*, 36 (Dec., 1997), 64-79. at:
http://links.jstor.org/sici?siici=0018-2656%281997%2936%3A4%3C64%3ARFATPO%3E2.0.CO%3B2-8

Barbie Zelizer, “Reading the Past against the Grain: The Shape of Memory Studies,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Jun 1995)


Martin Harwit And The *Enola Gay* Exhibit
http://www.oberlin.edu/alummag/oampast/oamfall97/Features/dreamjob.html

**Week II: The Great War: The First Modern War**

**Sept. 11: The Great War: The First Modern War**
Fussel, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, chaps. 1-2 and pp. 75-90
Recommended for background on WWI: Brose, “The Great War and Beyond” e-reserve

**Sept. 13: The Great War: Literary, Popular, and Commercial Representations**
Fussel, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, pp. 114-144; chapt. 5
War Poems (handouts)
(Make sure to view *All Quiet on the Western Front* for Sept 20)

Week III: The Great War

**Sept. 18: Gendering the Great War**
http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0021-9371%28199704%2936%3A2%3C178%3AWFAWMF%3E2.0.CO%3B2-C


**Sept. 20: Memorializing War, Mourning the Dead**
Modris Eksteins, “All Quiet on the Western Front,” *History Today* 45, no. 11 (November 1995): 29-34 e-reserve

Week IV: World War I/Representations of the Revolution

**Sept. 25: Guest Lecture on Postwar Art in Weimar Germany: James van Dyke, Dept. of Art History**

**Sept. 27: Telling October: Interpretations of the Bolshevik Revolution**

Week V: Representing the Revolution

**Oct. 2: Representing the Revolution**

** viewing of *October* Oct 2 or 3 for Thursday (we’ll decide collectively on a time and date)**

**Oct 4: Filming the Revolution**
discuss *October*
**Paper proposals due**
Week VI: Coming to Terms with the Past

Oct. 9: Group 1: Remembering Stalin’s Victims: The Great Purges in Russian Memory

Oct. 11: Coming to Terms with the Past: Historicizing the Nazi Regime in East and West Germany
Sources on the Historikerstreit and the Goldhagen Debate

Week VII: Coming to Terms with the Past

Oct. 16: Coming to Terms with the Past: Gender, Sexuality, and Nazism


Oct. 18: Midterm Exam

Week VIII——Fall Recess

Week IX: Gender and the Holocaust

Oct. 30: Gender and the Holocaust
Read all of: Sara Nomberg-Przytyk, *Auschwitz: Tales from a Grotesque Land*

Nov. 1: Whose Stories Count? Gender, Sexuality, and the Holocaust
Joan Ringelbaum, “The Split between Gender and the Holocaust” pp. 340-350 e-reserve
Week X: The Holocaust and World War II

Nov. 6: Group 2: The Holocaust in Film

Nov. 8: Repressed Memories: Vichy and World War II in French Memory
TBA

Week XI: Memory and Totalitarianism: World War II in the Soviet Union

Nov. 13: Memory and Totalitarianism: World War II in the Soviet Union
Nina Tumarkin, The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia, chaps. 1-4

Nov. 15: Memory as Resistance under Totalitarianism
Nina Tumarkin, The Living and the Dead, chaps. 5-9

Week XII: Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 20: No Class

Week XIII: World War II and the Holocaust in the Collective Memory of Poland

Nov. 27: The Holocaust in Poland
Jan Gross, Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland

Nov. 29: The “Neighbors” Debate
at:
http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/pdf.cgi/Tymowski_Andrzej_W.pdf?issn=08883254&issue=v16i0001&article=291_afjam


Week XIV: Memory and the Collapse of Communism

Dec. 4: Mobilizing the Past: Memory, National Identity, and war in the former Yugoslavia
TBA

Dec. 6: Reworking the Past in post-communist Eastern Europe
Week XV: Group Presentations

Dec 11: Group 3: Nostalgia in Post-Communist Russia and Eastern Europe

Dec 13: Group 4: Memorials and Museums as Sites of Memory

Final Papers due Thursday, December 20, 9 p.m. via e-mail.