“How Societies Remember?”
(Tentative Syllabus)

How do societies establish their collective identities? How do they remember their origins and publicly share important turning points in their history? How are new traditions invented to memorialize recent events and what makes their memorialization successful? How are collective memories transformed over time? What is the role of memorials and museums? What is the meaning of “homeland” for diasporic communities and what is “heritage tourism”? How are wars commemorated? What is the impact of traumatic memory on survivors and their children? These are some of the questions that we will address in this seminar as we explore cultural memory and the ways in which it is created, transmitted, contested, and reshaped. Readings for the course represent a wide range of cross-cultural examples that highlight the interplay between local, national, and global trends. We will have an onsite trip to the 9/11 memorial site where students will be able to make their own observations and analysis of a more recent site of memory.

Students’ research projects are an important component of the course. Each student will choose a topic related to cultural memory early on in consultation with me. Work will be structured and developed during the course of the semester, leading from a brief proposal and preliminary bibliography to a short paper and culminating in students’ presentations and a final paper. Learning from one’s own research and others will give you a direct experience of the richness and diversity of the field of collective memory.

Learning Goals:

- S1: Communicate complex ideas effectively
- U: Evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly
- V: Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights
- Learn key concepts and analytical approaches in memory studies
- Learn how to plan and pursue independent research
- Produce well-written, original papers based on research and readings

Course Requirements:

(1) **Attendance** in class and assigned screenings is required. In case of sickness, students must notify the instructor and provide medical documentation.

(2) **Readings and class participation**: Students are expected to come prepared to discuss the assigned readings and participate in class discussions.

(3) **Research Project**:
   - Topic: to be discussed and approved by instructor by February 3.
   - Project proposal (2 pages + bibliography) by February 22
   - Short Paper (5 pp + bibliography) – by March 28
   - Final paper (8-10 pp + bibliography) – by May 6
Academic Integrity

Students are required to follow current Academic Integrity Policy as indicated in the website: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml. Violations include cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. For further information on how to avoid plagiarism in your work, see http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml and take a 20 min. interactive-tutorial on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity at http://sccweb.scc-net.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/Intro.html

Grading

- Attendance, reading assignments and class participation………30%
- Project proposal (2 pages + bibliography)…………………………15%
- Short paper (5 pages+ bibliography)…………………………….25%
- Final paper (8-10 pages + bibliography)…………………………40%

Readings

- All readings are available on the sakai website under “resources” and are ordered alphabetically by author’s last name

Class Schedule and Assignments

I. Social Processes of Collective Remembrance

- Jan. 20 -- Introduction
  Review of course plan and goals; key questions and themes in the study of collective memory; discussion of research project.

- Jan. 25 – What is “Collective Memory”
  Maurice Halbwachs, Jeffrey K. Olick et als. eds., The Collective Memory Reader. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, 139-49

- Jan. 27 – Transmitting Social Memories

*** Research Topic to be discussed and approved by February 3
- **Feb. 1 – Memory and Invented Tradition**

- **Feb. 3 – National Memory and Collective Identity**

- **Feb. 8 – Social Amnesia**

*** Class discussion includes students’ selected research topics and project plans
*** Research proposals due Feb. 22

- **Feb. 10 – Social Amnesia (cont.)**
  Orlando Patterson, “From Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study,” in Olick, *Collective Memory Reader*, 279-82

- **Feb. 15 – Commemorative Narratives and Plot Structures**

- **Feb. 17 – Counternarratives and their Sites in Time and Space**

**II. Hybrid Identities, Diasporic Memories and Heritage Tourism**

- **Feb. 22 – The Search for Roots: The Case of Black Atlantic Memory**
  *** Research proposals due today

- **Feb. 24 – cont.**
• **Feb. 29 – Diasporic Memories and and Hybrid Identities**

• **Mar. 2 – Heritage Tourism**

• **Mar. 7 – Museums as a Site of Memory**

• **Mar. 9 – Individual meetings on research projects**

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*** Spring Break ***

*** Reminders: 1) Get a copy and read Art Spielberg’s Maus***

2) **Short Paper is due on March 28**

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**III. Witnessing and Representations of Traumatic Events**

• **Mar. 21 – Testimonies and the Role of the Witness**

• **Mar. 23 – Traumatic Memory and Postmemory**

• **Mar. 28 – Family Memories**

*** **Short Papers are due today**

*Screening of film on family suppression and rediscovery of memory*
• Mar. 30 – **Artistic Representation of Postmemory**
  **Art Spielberg, Maus. New York: Pantheon Books, 1973 -- bring your own copy of book to class**

• Apr 4 – Individual meetings about research projects

• Apr. 6 – **War Monuments**

• Apr. 11 – **Public Memorials of Traumatic Events**

  *Segments of documentary film in class*

• Apr. 13 – no class. Trip to museum visit below.

  **Class trip to Ground Zero and 9/11 Memorial and Museum**
  **(Friday, April 15 – keep the date)**

• Apr. 18 – Discussion of visit to the 9/11 Memorial Park and Museum
  *Students bring to class their notes from the fieldtrip to the site*

• Apr. 20 – **Food, Dance and Music as Sites of Memory**

• Apr. 25 – Students’ presentations

• Apr. 27 – Students’ presentations

• May 2 – wrap up

***Final Paper ix due May 6 by noon***