



MEMORY POLITICS – PSC 335 – 2F

Dr. Claire Greenstein

COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the field of memory politics and focuses on the memorials, monuments, museums, and sites of historical significance. We will examine the politics of how governments and different segments of society decide to memorialize historical human rights abuses, the perpetrators of those abuses, and the individuals who were directly affected by those abuses. In addition to learning about different theoretical frameworks of memory politics, students will examine real-world examples of memorials, monuments, museums and historical sites that invite people to remember historical human rights abuses. We will also (COVID permitting) visit local memorials, monuments, museums, and historical sites in order to see how memory politics is playing out in the city of Birmingham. By studying the design, creation, use, and destruction of memorials, monuments, museums, and historical sites, students will learn how to interpret the political signals that these structures send, to identify the political motivations behind the supporters and opponents of memory sites, and to understand how physical structures affect political culture, democracy, reconciliation, and security.

Content Warning:

Please note that many of the memorials, museums, and sites of memory we will be talking about are places that aim to remember horrific human rights abuses. Many of the readings will discuss atrocities. Some will include disturbing images. If you want specifics about the potentially upsetting content of any of the assigned readings / videos before you complete them, do not hesitate to ask me. You may opt to skip a reading here or there, and that's fine—your mental and emotional wellbeing are more important than completing an assignment. That said, if you are not currently able to complete at least 75% of the readings or participate in discussions of those

readings due to content concerns, I strongly encourage you to enroll in a different course. Take care of yourself. Choose classes that will push you to grow in a positive way, not ones that cause you undue distress.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the political motivations behind designing, constructing, and/or preserving different memorials, museums, and other historical sites of memory
- Identify circumstances and characteristics that make physical sites of memory either politically effective or ineffective
- Understand how politicians and members of society use (and misuse) memorials, monuments, and memory sites
- Evaluate the effects that memorialization projects have on political culture, democracy, reconciliation, and security
- Develop an assessment of what kinds of memorials, monuments, and memory sites would promote democracy and reconciliation in a particular country, given that country's unique political, cultural, economic, and historical context

Required Text and Course Materials:

There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, you will be reading journal articles and some articles from newspapers and other outlets. Almost all of these will be posted on Canvas and/or the links will be provided in the syllabus. Some texts are also available through the UAB library. It is your responsibility to check Canvas to make sure you have read everything assigned for a given class. If there are any links on the syllabus do not work for you, use the titles and authors provided in the syllabus to google the articles and find them that way. If that still doesn't work, ask me for help.

Graded Assignments & Activities Overview:

Assignments & Activities	Percentage
Participation	10
Reading Reactions (10 of them)	30
Experience + Guest Lecture Writeups	25
Final Project Step 1	1
Final Project Step 2	9

Assignments & Activities	Percentage
Final Project Step 3	10
Final Exam (your final presentation)	15
	100

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE:

Introduction and Theory

August 24—Go over syllabus, introductions

August 26—Introduction—Memorials, monuments, museums, and sites of memory: Why do we have them, and what do they do?

Have read (36pp. pp = “pages”):

1. Essays 1- 4 (pp. 1-36) of James W. Lowen’s *Lies Across America; What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong*. The New Press. 1999.
 - 2 copies available in Sterne Library; most of the text is also available for free on Google Books. You can also get used copies online for about \$4-10.

August 31—Ontological Security: Example of China and Japan

Have read (20pp):

1. Read pages 125-133 of Foote, Kenneth E., and Maoz Azaryahu. 2007. “Toward a Geography of Memory: Geographical Dimensions of Public Memory and Commemoration.” *Journal of Political & Military Sociology*, 35(1): 125-144. (8 pages)
2. Gustafsson, Karl. 2014. “Memory Politics and Ontological Security in Sino-Japanese Relations.” *Asian Studies Review*, 38(1): 71-86. (14pp)

National Memory Narratives

September 2—Poland

Have read and watched (17pp of reading, 26min of a radio story):

~You will understand these 5 readings best if you go in the order listed~

1. Gwozdz-Palokat, Magdalena. 2019. [“When Poland Was Lost: The Soviet Invasion 80 Years Ago.”](#) *Deutsche Welle*, 17 September. (3pp)

2. Kaufman, Michael T. 1989. "[Stalin's House on a Soft Foundation.](#)" *The New York Times*, 18 August. (4pp)
3. Drozdowska-McGuire, Amy. 2011 "[Solidarity For Never.](#)" *This American Life*, Episode 453: Nemeses. 26 minutes. Ask me if you want a transcript.
4. Mazzini, Mateusz. 2019. "[Poland's Revisionism Is Pushing It Into Moscow's Arms.](#)" *Foreign Policy*, 12 February. (8pp)
5. Sieradzka, Monika. 2016. "[Poland Plans to Tear Down Hundreds of Soviet Memorials.](#)" *Deutsche Welle*, 13 April. (2pp)

September 7—Guest Lecture on Turkey from Dr. Katie Aha

Have read:

1. Start watching *Tickling Giants*, available through Kanopy (go to the UAB Library website, then go to Databases, search for Kanopy, then search for Tickling Giants. The film is 2 hours long, so try to watch an hour by Sept 7 in preparation for our class on Sept 9.)

September 9—Egypt

Have finished watching *Tickling Giants* (2 hourlong film) on Kanopy

Monuments and Memorials: The Politics of Putting Them Up

Sept 14—Memorialization and Democracy

*****Guest Lecture Writeup 1 (Dr. Aha) Due*****

Have read the following article (33pp):

1. Brett, Sebastian, Louis Bickford, Liz Ševčenko, and Marcela Rios. 2007. [Memorialization and Democracy: State Policy and Civic Action.](#) International Center for Transitional Justice, pp. 1-32 (if you read this by clicking on the link, it will be pages 7-38 of the pdf file).

September 16—Uganda and Peru

Have read **either**:

1. Hopwood, Julian. 2011. "[We Can't Be Sure Who Killed Us: Memory and Memorialization in Post-Conflict Northern Uganda.](#)" *International Center for Transitional Justice: Justice and Reconciliation Project*, pp. 3-22.

~OR~

Hite, Katherine. 2007. "[The Eye that Cries](#)" *The Politics of Representing Victims in Contemporary Peru.* *A Contra Corriente: A*

Journal on Social History and Literature in Latin America, 5 (1): 108-134.

*****If you want to read both, that's great, too!**

September 21—Holocaust and WWII Memorials: Germany—Jewish Memorials

Read and watch:

1. "[A Jew Among the Germans](#)," Frontline PBS (55 minutes)
2. Young, James E. 2002. "[Germany's Holocaust Memorial Problem—and Mine](#)," *The Public Historian*, 24(4): 65-80. (15pp)

September 23—Germany—Memorials for Sinti and Roma

Have read and watched (about 20pp and 8 min of video):

1. "[#RomaRemember: Joint International Campaign for Roma and Sinti Holocaust Remembrance 2020](#)." 2020. *European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture*, 3 August. (3 minutes)
2. McGroarty, Patrick. 2008. "[How Many More Monuments for Berlin?](#)" *Spiegel*, 29 January. (4 pages, with pictures)
3. Berg, Stefan. 2010. "[The Unending Battle over Berlin's Sinti and Roma Memorial](#)." *Spiegel*, 28 December. (6 pages, with pictures)
4. "[Chancellor Merkel Inaugurates a Memorial to Roma and Sinti](#)." 2012. *Deutsche Welle*, 24 October. (2 pages, with pictures)
5. Görtz, Birgit. "[Can a Memorial End Discrimination?](#)" *Deutsche Welle*, 23 October. (3 pages, with pictures)
6. Watch: "[Romani Rose: Face of Germany's Sinti and Roma | People & Politics](#)." 2012. *Deutsche Welle*, 26 October. (5 minutes)
7. Popp, Maximilian. 2012. "[Report Blasts Berlin's Inaction](#)," *Deutsche Welle*, 12 December. (5 pages, with pictures)
8. Either watch [this video \(it's 2 minutes long\)](#) or read the article: Von Richthofen, Luisa, and Grzegorz Szymanowski. 2020. "[Sinti and Roma Fear for their Holocaust Memorial in Berlin](#)." *Deutsche Welle*, 31 July.

September 28—Colombia

Watch (46 minutes):

1. "[How Colombia's War on Drugs Escalated to Full-Blown Civil War](#)." 2014. *BBC and Journeyman Pictures*, 21 January. 22 minutes.
Content Warning: Some graphic imagery. Use your discretion
2. Salcedo, Doris. 2020. "[Fragmentos](#)." *Museo Nacional de Colombia*, 27 July. 24 minutes. *****Content Warning**: This video is about a memorial to women harmed by sexual violence in Colombia's internal conflict. If

watching this will negatively affect your wellbeing, you do not have to watch it.***

Memorials and Monuments: The Politics of Taking Them Down

Sept 30—No Class; I will be at the American Political Science Association Conference

Oct 5—Former USSR

*****Due date for Final Project Step 1*****

Read (26 pages):

1. Frigerio, Alberto. 2019. "[The Fate of Statues of Stalin in Post-Soviet Countries: Some Critical Reflections on the Management of Contested Cultural Heritage.](#)" *Heritage & Society*, 12(2-3): 136-150. (12 pages)
2. Radchenko, Sergey. 2020. "[Vladimir Putin Wants to Rewrite the History of World War II.](#)" *Foreign Policy*, 21 January. (4 pages)
3. Hartog, Eva. 2019. "[Is Stalin Making a Comeback in Russia?](#)" *The Atlantic*, 28 May. (5 pages)
4. Higgins, Andrew. 2020. "[In Russia, They Tore Down Lots of Statues, But Little Changed.](#)" *The New York Times*, 7 July. (5 pages)

Oct 7—South Africa

Have read (27 pages, there are lots of photographs):

1. Fairbanks, Eve. 2015. "[The Birth of Rhodes Must Fall.](#)" *The Guardian*, 18 November. (15 pages, with photos)
2. Matebeni, Zethu. 2018. "[#RhodesMustFall – It Was Never Just About the Statue.](#)" *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*, 19 February. (4pp, with photos)
3. Ramaru, Kealeboga. 2017. "[Feminist Reflections on the Rhodes Must Fall Movement.](#)" *Feminist Africa*, 22: 89-96. (8pp)

Oct 12—United States; Field Trip Day to visit Linn Park and Jefferson County Courthouse

1. Read the article "[A Confederate Statue Graveyard Could Help Bury the Old South.](#)" by Jordan Brasher and Derek H. Alderman. Then, either watch this PBS documentary **or** read the **3** articles listed below it:
 - a. [The Neutral Ground](#), a POV Documentary from PBS. *****Warning:** This film contains graphic imagery, offensive language, violence, and discussions of police brutality, slavery, and racism against Black and Jewish Americans. If that will negatively affect your wellbeing, then read the following three articles instead: ***

- b. Parks, Miles. 2017. "[Confederate Statues Were Built to Further a 'White Supremacist Future,'](#)" *NPR*, 20 August. (5 pages, includes photos)
- c. Best, Ryan. 2020. "[Confederate Statues Were Never Really About Preserving History,](#)" *FiveThirtyEight*, 8 July. (5 pages, includes photos)
- d. Chapter 2 ("The Distortion-of-History Approach : The Cult of the Lost Cause") of Roger C. Hartley's *Monumental Harm: Reckoning with Jim Crow Era Confederate Monuments*, published in 2021 by University of South Carolina Press. (30pp, includes photos)

Museums

Oct 14—Introduction to Museums

Have read (29 pages):

- 1. Sodaro, Amy. 2018. *Exhibiting Atrocity: Memorial Museums and the Politics of Past Violence*. Rutgers University Press.
 - a. "[Introduction,](#)" pp. 1-11
 - b. "[Memorial Museums: The Emergence of a New Form,](#)" pp. 12-29

Oct 19—Case Study 1: Vietnam

Field Trip Writeup (Linn Park) Due

Have read (14 pages):

- 1. Logan, William. 2009. "[Hoa Lo Museum, Hanoi: Changing Attitudes to a Vietnamese Place of Pain and Shame,](#)" in *Places of Pain and Shame: Dealing with "Difficult Heritage."* Routledge: 182-197. (14 pages)

Oct 21—Case Study 2: Alabama

Alabama- Guest Lecture or Field Trip to Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in class today (TBD)

Have read (29pp + look at a website):

- 1. Cooper, Priscilla Hancock. 2018. "A City Embraces Its Past, Looks to the Future: A Perspective on the Evolution of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute." *The Public Historian*, 40(3): 211-231. (20pp, includes photos)
- 2. Robertson, Campbell. 2018. "[A Lynching Memorial Is Opening. The Country Has Never Seen Anything Like It,](#)" *The New York Times*, 25 April. (9 pages, mostly pictures)

3. Check out [the website for the Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration](#)

Oct 26—Case Study 3: Rwanda

*****Guest Lecture Writeup/Field Trip Writeup 2 (BCRI or guest lecture)**

Due***

Have read (28 pages):

1. Sodaro, Amy. 2018. "[The Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre: Building a 'Lasting Peace,'](#)" pp. 84-110 of Amy Sodaro's book *Exhibiting Atrocity: Memorial Museums and the Politics of Past Violence*.

Oct 28—Case Study 4: Chile

*****Due date for Final Project Step 2*****

Have read (28pp):

1. "[The Museum of Memory and Human Rights: 'A Living Museum for Chile's Memory.'](#)" pp. 111-137 of Amy Sodaro's book *Exhibiting Atrocity: Memorial Museums and the Politics of Past Violence*.

November 2—Case Study 5: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Guest Lecture from Dr. Steve Luckart of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Have read (27pp):

1. "[The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: The Creation of a 'Living Memorial,'](#)" pp. 30-57 of Amy Sodaro's book *Exhibiting Atrocity: Memorial Museums and the Politics of Past Violence*.

Historical Sites

November 4—Cambodia: Killing Fields

Have read (22pp):

1. Bickford, Louis. 2009. "[Transforming a Legacy of Genocide: Pedagogy and Tourism at the Killing Fields of Choeung Ek,](#)" *International Center for Transitional Justice*, pp. 4-26. (22 pages)

Nov 9—Argentina: ESMA—Guest Lecture from Dr. Santiago Anria

*****Guest Lecture Writeup 3 (Dr. Luckart, USHMM) Due*****

Have read (46 pages—I know it's a lot, but it's from a non-fiction book written for a general audience, and you have from Friday until Tuesday afternoon to read it. Read about 10 pages a day and you'll finish on time):

1. Excerpts from Chapter 2, “The Good Sailor,” from journalist Tina Rosenberg’s 1991 book *Children of Cain: Violence and the Violent in Latin America*. Read pages 79-104 and 120-141. *****WARNING** that this reading contains disturbing descriptions of torture and mentions of sexual assault, including rape. If you are unable to read the excerpt for these reasons, contact me for an alternate assignment. Use your best judgment about how to protect your own wellbeing.***

November 11—United States: Manzanar

*****Due date for Final Project Step 3*****

Have read (23pp):

1. Hayashi, Robert T. 2003. “[Transfigured Patterns: Contesting Memories at the Manzanar National Historic Site.](#)” *The Public Historian*, 25(4): 51-71.

Student Presentations

November 16—Student presentations

*****Guest Lecture Writeup 3 (Dr. Anria) Due*****

November 18—Student presentations

Nov 23 and 25—No Class (Fall + Thanksgiving Break)

Nov 30—Student presentations

Dec 2—Student presentations