

Dr Françoise De Backer
History 362G (Spring 2011)

Office: GAR 2.138
Office Hours: T-Th 8:30-9:30 + appt.

REMEMBERING WORLD WAR II SITES OF MEMORY

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines how WWII is remembered today in monuments, memorials, museums and cemeteries in the United States and in Europe. We will first explore the multiple manifestations of war memory in our everyday life in news, novels, movies, art, family stories. How do they define WWII for contemporary audiences? As an important component of our program involves the visit of history museums, monuments and memorials in four different countries, our second goal will be to research national and international sites of war memory in order to compare their narrative strategies and choices for depicting/staging their history.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Class work consists of **lectures and discussions of books, news articles, museums and memorials' websites, films and testimonies.**

***Note:* 1) In accordance with the rules of the NSP, students will be permitted only three unexcused absences and three tardy arrivals to class (no more than 10 minutes).**

2) Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

GRADING:

15% Group presentation January 28th, 2011. 5 groups of students will stage an exhibit using the documents compiled on week 1. Determine your specific target audience and underlying message. Design a power point presentation using diverse media or stage creatively your exhibit.

25% 2 Research assignments on war-related articles and museums/memorials websites due in March 29 and April 12

30% Research and Presentation on memory sites due the first two weeks of March

30% Active participation to discussions and attendance

REQUIRED BOOKS AND READINGS:

The Texture of Memory, James Young

List of News articles on WWII

List of Museums, monuments and memorials on WWII

Package of readings available on eres

LECTURES & ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1: Introduction to War museums. Preparing an exhibit on war: our combined stories

Assignment: Gather historical documents, testimonies, photographs, memorabilia, quotes, music, video to create the NSP 2011 war exhibit

Week 2: Museums - Data organizing, classification, ordering, visual rhetoric

Assignment: Group presentations. Strategies for staging an overall narrative

Reading: "Contested Terrain: History, Museums and the Public". James Gardner (eres)

January 31st: whole day field trip to Fredericksburg

Week 3 : War museums and memorials on War in the Pacific

Guest Speaker: the Chief Curator, National Museum for the Pacific War, Fredericksburg

Readings: "Exhibiting WWII in Japan and the United States" L. Hein and A. Takenaka, *Pacific Historical Review*, 76 (February 2007):61-94

"Revising the past, complicating the future: the Yushukan War Museum in Modern Japanese History" Takashi Yoshida (eres)

Assignment: research Pacific war Museums and Memorials websites in List of War Museums and Memorials (eres)/ prepare questions for speaker

Week 4: The Holocaust Monuments, Counter-monuments, Memorials

Readings: *The Texture of Memory*, James Young. 2003 Intro + Part I, pp. 17-79

Assignment: questions for class discussion provided

Week 5: The ambiguities of memory

Readings: *The Texture of Memory*, James Young. 2003 Chapters 3, 4, 5, pp. 81-154

"Letter from Dresden: Embers – Will a prideful city finally confront its past?" George Packer, in eres

Greg Castillo, "Promoting Socialist Cities and Citizens: East Germany's National Building Program" in, Pamela E. Swett, S. Jonathan Wiesen, and Jonathan R. Zatlin, editors, *Selling Modernity. Advertising in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 287-306 (in eres)

Assignment: questions for class discussion provided

Week 6 : America: Memory and the Politics of identity

Reading: "The Texture of Memory" James.E. Young, 2003 Chapter 11-12

Assignment : questions for class discussion provided

Week 7: Presentations on European museums, memorials and cemeteries

Assignment: 15 minutes power point presentations on the sites we will be visiting abroad (sign up sheet will be provided on week 2).

Week 8: Presentations on European museums, memorials and cemeteries

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: National Memory cultures in France and Germany

Reading: Holocaust monuments and National memory cultures in France and Germany since 1989, Peter Carrier 2002 pp.45-153

Week 10: WWII in contemporary media

Reading: List of News Articles

http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/subjects/w/world_war_ii/index.html

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/secondworldwar>

Assignment: Based on an overview of articles published in the last year, what are the recurrent issues? Pick up two topics and read 4 articles for each. Bring to class for each article, a DEJ listing 2-3 key points and your responses, linking the point to other academic material, current events, or personal experiences and opinions

Due: Research assignment #1

Week 11: France: Issues of representation: Oradour sur Glane

Readings: 1. Collective Memory, in *Theories of Memory- A Reader*, edited by M. Rossington and A. Whitehead, 2007 pp 134-156

2. Martyred Village, Sarah Farmer, Introduction and Chapter 1

Week 12: History in context and challenges of commemoration

Reading: Martyred Village, Sarah Farmer, Chapter 2 and 3

Due: Research Assignment #2

Week 13: Art and war

Assignment: visit of war-related art at the Blanton

Week 14: Cultural and linguistic preparation before touring Europe

Week 15: Cultural and linguistic preparation before touring Europe