

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of History  
2013-2014

**History 9809B - Social Memory in Europe and North America**

Prof. Jonathan F. Vance ( [jvance@uwo.ca](mailto:jvance@uwo.ca) )  
Lawson Hall 2247  
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Candlemas (or Hilary) Term  
Monday 9:30 - 11:30  
Lawson Hall 2270C

This research course is an introduction to the phenomenon of social memory in various modern societies. It will address such matters as the commemoration of historical events and the meanings conferred on them, conflicts over different versions of history, the construction of collective identities around historical events, and the influence of historical events on modern nationalisms. In each case, there will be an attempt to understand the continuing impact of the past on the present. The seminar readings will be divided into themes, with each week's readings examining a different case study of the theme.

**Texts:**

Students are not required to purchase texts for this course. All readings are available on the course website, in the periodicals section of the D.B.Weldon Library, or on two-hour reserve in the D.B.Weldon Library.

**Assignments:**

The Blue Plaque	(due 3 February)	20%
Major research essay	(due date TBA)	70%
Participation / Presentation		10%

**The Blue Plaque:** In the United Kingdom, the organization English Heritage uses the Blue Plaque to signify a place (usually a birthplace or long-term residence) that is connected to a person of historical significance. You should select any person, from any city in the world, and prepare a document (of no more than five pages) supporting the installation of a Blue Plaque at a specific site. It should outline the individual's significance and the reasons why that particular site has been selected. In preparing your rationale for commemoration, you should try to anticipate objections that might be raised by community groups or individuals, on whatever grounds. In selecting your subject, you should avoid people who have already been so recognized and people who, for want of a better phrase, are famous simply for being famous.

**Major Research Essay:** Students will write a major research paper (based on significant work in primary materials) on a topic of their choice, to be arrived at in consultation with the instructor. In selecting an essay topic, you should be as imaginative and innovative as possible while bearing in mind the availability of relevant primary sources and the soundness of the topic in a theoretical sense. The final draft of the paper should be 20-25 pages in length and must be presented in proper scholarly format. The due date will be announced in January. As part of the assignment, a two-page outline must be submitted on 24 February.

**Participation / Presentation:** The success of the seminar depends on the willingness of students to keep up with the readings on a weekly basis and to take part fully in the discussion. Your participation will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the term. In addition, each student will make a short presentation on an aspect of the week's reading (the precise topic will be given to you the week before your presentation). You should sign up on the sheet on my office door for the week of your choice.

## Seminar Schedule

6 January - Introduction

13 January - How Societies Remember

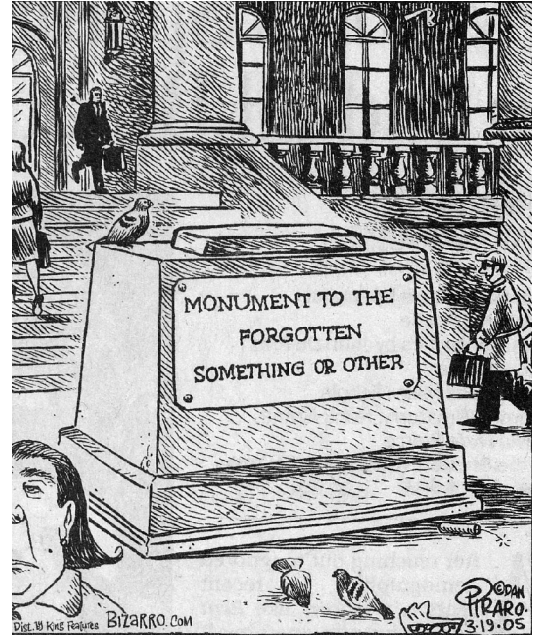
John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (1992): 13-20

Peter Burke, "History as Social Memory" in Thomas Butler, ed., *Memory: History, Culture and the Mind* (1989): 97-113

Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (1991): 3-14

Malcolm Chase and Christopher Shaw, eds., *The Imagined Past: History and Nostalgia* (1989): 1-32

Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, eds., *The Myths We Live By* (1990): 1-22



## MEMORY AND THE MARKETPLACE

20 January - The *Titanic*

Steven Biel, *Down With the Old Canoe: A Cultural History of the Titanic Disaster* (1996): part II

John Wilson Foster, "Imagining the Titanic" in Eve Patten, ed., *Returning to Ourselves: Second Volume of Papers from the John Hewitt International Summer School* (1995): 325-43

James Guimond, "The *Titanic* and the Commodification of Catastrophe" in Peter Gray and Kendrick Oliver, eds., *The Memory of Catastrophe* (2004): 79-90

27 January - Memory and Public History

Irene Furlong, "Excavating the Emerald Isle: The Use of the Past in Irish Tourism" in Terence Dooley, ed., *Ireland's Polemical Past* (2010): 160-75

Stephen Gapps, "On Being a Mobile Monument: Historical Reenactments and Commemorations," in Iain McCalman and Paul Pickering, eds., *Historical Reenactment: From Realism to the Affective Turn* (2010): 50-62

Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (1997): ch. 2 & 9

J. Geraint Jenkins, *Getting Yesterday Right: Interpreting the Heritage of Wales* (1992): ch. 1

James W. Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (1999): 15-50

3 February - Touring the Third Reich \*\*Blue Plaque due\*\*

Ulrike Dittrich, "Pieces of the Past: Souvenirs from Nazi Sites – The Example of Peenemünde" in Bill Niven and Chloe Paver, eds., *Memorialization in Germany since 1945* (2010): 114-23

Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (1998): ch. 6

Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (1997): ch. 4

John Lennon and Malcolm Foley, *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* (2000): ch. 3 & 4

Sharon Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond* (2009): ch. 7

## CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY

10 February - Gunfighter Nation

David Hamilton Murdoch, *The American West: The Invention of a Myth* (2001): ch. 6 & 7

Randy Roberts and James S. Olson, *A Line in the Sand: The Alamo in Blood and Memory* (2001): ch. 8 & 9

Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890* (1985): ch. 1 & 2

Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (1992): ch.2

17 February - No class - Conference Week

24 February - Scottishness \*\* essay outline due \*\*

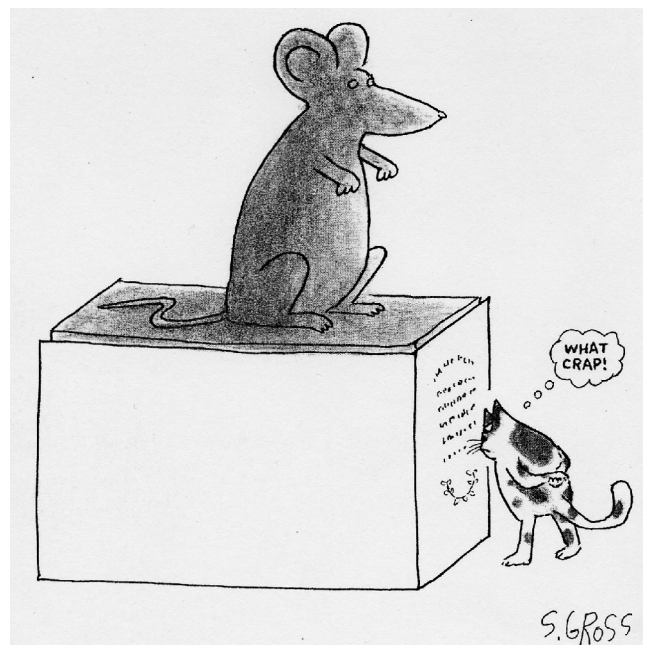
John R. Gold and Margaret M. Gold, "The Graves of the Gallant Highlanders": Memory, Interpretation and Narratives of Culloden," *History and Memory* 19/1 (2007)

Laurence Gouriévidis, "Representing the Disputed Past of Northern Scotland," *History and Memory* 12/2 (2000)

David McCrone, Angela Morris, and Richard Kiely, *Scotland – The Brand: The Making of Scottish Heritage* (1995): 73-109

Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland" in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (1983): 15-41.

Charles Withers, "The Historical Creation of the Scottish Highlands" in Ian Donnachie and Christopher Watley, eds., *The Manufacture of Scottish History* (1992): 143-56



3 March - Centennial and Bicentennial

John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (1992): 226-44

Robert G. Hartje, *Bicentennial USA: Pathways to Celebration* (1973): 3-31

Peter H. Aykroyd, *The Anniversary Compulsion: Canada's Centennial Celebrations* (1992): 89-126, 177-201

Jonathan F. Vance, *Building Canada: People and Projects That Shaped the Nation* (2006): 123-147

## WAR AND MEMORY

10 March - The War to End War

Alfred Herbert John Andrews diary, at

<http://www.canadianletters.ca/collectionsSoldier.php?collectionid=328&warid=3>

Max Arthur, *Last Post: The Final Word from Our First World War Soldiers* (2006): 89-105

Teresa Iacobelli, "A Participants' History?: The CBC and the Making of In Flanders' Fields"

17 March - Enola Gay

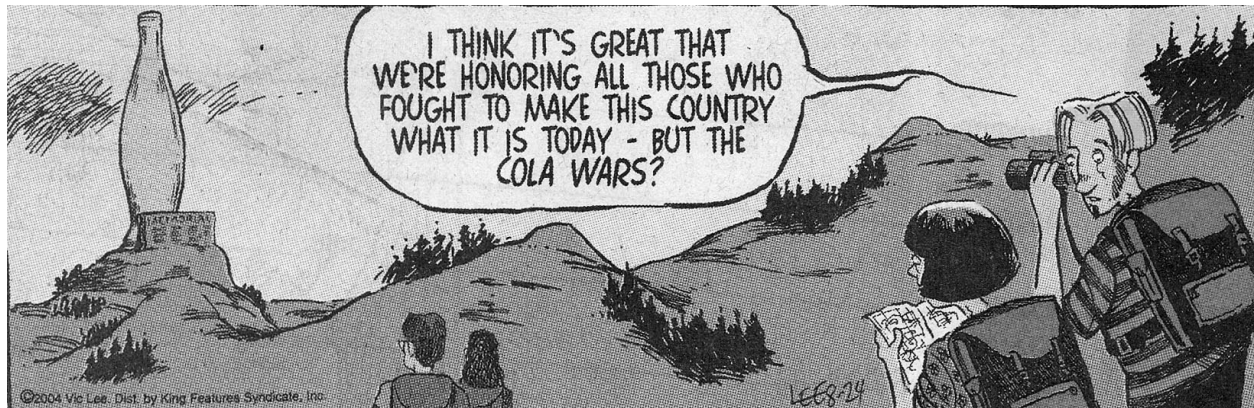
Stephen C. Dubin, *Displays of Power: Controversy in the American Museum from the Enola Gay to Sensation* (1999): ch.6

Martin Harwit, "How Lobbying Changed the History of Enola Gay," *Japan Quarterly* 44/3 (1997): 48-59

Michael J. Hogan, "The Enola Gay Controversy: History, Memory, and the Politics of Presentation," in Michael J. Hogan, ed., *Hiroshima in History and Memory* (1996): 200-32

Otto Mayr, "The Enola Gay Fiasco: History, Politics and the Museum," *Technology and Culture* 39/3 (1998): 462-73

Mike Wallace, "The Battle of the Enola Gay," in *Mickey Mouse History and Other Essays on American Memory* (1996): 269-312



24 March - Pearl Harbor and 9/11

Mick Broderick and Mark Gibson, "Mourning, Monomyth and Memorabilia: Consumer Logics of Collecting 9/11," in Dana Heller, ed., *The Selling of 9/11: How a National Tragedy Became a Commodity* (2005): 200-20

Emily S. Rosenberg, *A Date Which Will Live: Pearl Harbor in American Memory* (2003): part II  
Geoffrey M. White, "National Subjects: September 11 and Pearl Harbor," *American Ethnologist*  
31/3 (2004): 293-310

31 March - Vietnam

Albert Boime, *The Unveiling of the National Icons: A Plea for Patriotic Iconoclasm in a  
Nationalist Era* (1998): epilogue

Fred Turner, *Echoes of Combat: Trauma, Memory, and the Vietnam War* (2001): ch. 8

Jerry Lembcke, *The Spitting Image: Myth, Memory and the Legacy of Vietnam* (1998): ch. 9

Lawrence A. Tritle, "Monument to Defeat: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in American Culture  
and Society," in Polly Low, Graham Oliver and P.J. Rhodes, eds., *Cultures of  
Commemoration: War Memorials Ancient and Modern* (2012): 159-79

"Vietnam Veterans Memorial," *National Geographic* 167/5 (May 1985): 552-73

7 April - Conclusion

Please note the University Senate's statement on plagiarism: "Students must write their own essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever a student takes an idea or a passage of a text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see the Scholastic Academic Offence Policy in the University's academic calendar). The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for this purpose."