

HISTORY 9721A
THE NATURE OF DECOLONIAL MEMORY
FALL 2023

Instructor: Professor Ruramisai Charumbira

Office Hours: TBA
Department of History, Office: Lawson Hall 1220
Email: rcharumb@uwo.ca

This is a (barebones) draft syllabus—June 2023.

Opening Invocation: To the Sun, in whose tight embrace we and other planets and moons travel the Cosmos free of charge, we are grateful. To the Earth, the ground of our being, we are grateful. To all fellow creatures on this planet, on land, in the air, and waters, we are grateful; we apologize that our human ways have ravaged your ways of life. To our personal and collective ancestors, we are grateful. *We are grateful to, and acknowledge the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnonton Nations, among others, whose traditional territories are where this course takes place.*

Course Description and Objectives: Is the study of history an exercise of memory or is memory an historical exercise? If you have ever wondered about this chicken-and-egg or seed-and-plant question, then this may well be the course for you. This graduate course considers the nature of historical memory, with a focus on cultures in the Global South who hold nature as central to their lives and histories. Overall, the course is designed to inspire students (including the instructor) out of their comfort zones into the world of daring scholarship. Indigenous, feminist, and decolonial standpoints are the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological perspectives we will engage with in reading the course material and doing research on the nature of memory in our work. The instructor invites students to the practice of creating and holding joyful space for rigorous learning.

Course Syllabus: This course is open to all graduate students across disciplinary backgrounds interested in the study of history and memory in their fields—though priority is given to History Graduate students in terms of enrollment. The underlying assumption is that everything has a history—and therefore a memory.

Methods of Evaluation: (60% individual work*; 40% teamwork**)

- * 40% - Original Research Paper*
- * 20% - Review Essay and Proposal*
- * 20% - Team Research and Presentation**
- * 20% - Seminar Attendance and Participation**

Course Readings

(NB: this list is a **sample** of texts from which I may select the readings, please **do not** purchase any yet)

- Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*
- David William Cohen, *The Combing of History*
- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Something Torn and New: An African Renaissance*
- Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*
- Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*
- Maurice Halbwachs, (trans., ed., Lewis Coser), *On Collective Memory*
- Diawara, Lategan and Rüsen, eds., *Historical Memory in Africa*
- White, Miescher and Cohen, eds., *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History*
- Brett Ashley Kaplan, ed., *Critical Memory Studies New Approaches*
- Vandana Shiva, *Reclaiming the Commons: Biodiversity, Traditional Knowledge...*
- Lee Maracle, *Memory Serves: Oratories*
- Wangari Maathai, *Replenishing the Earth*
- Altınay, Contreras, Hirsch, Howard, Karaca, and Solomon, eds., *Women Mobilizing Memory*
- Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye*
- Marie Noelle Bourguet, et al, eds., *Between Memory and History*
- Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, eds., *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*
- Selected Documentary and Feature Films will be part of class and research material.

COURSE SCHEDULE

PART I: THINKING MEMORY—Individual and Collective Reading and Analyses

Week 01: Classes begin September X, no class

Week 02: Welcome and Introduction to Course and One Another
Decolonizing the Human

Week 03: The Nature of Memory—Definitions and Conceptual Frameworks

Week 04: Debates and Theoretical Perspectives

Week 05: Method, Methodologies, Ways of Knowing

Week 06: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 07: Ancestral Memory? Can the Archive be Trusted?

PART II: DOING MEMORY—Team and Individual Research, and Presentations

Week 08: Doing History, Shaping Memory, Doing History....

Week 09: READING WEEK

Week 10: Disciplinary, Interdisciplinary, Transdisciplinary

Week 11: Individual, Social, and Collective Memory

Week 12: History and Memory, In Fact and Fiction

Week 13: Individual Research Paper Revisions

Week 14: Recap and Final Paper Due.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Additional Statements

Accessibility Options:

You may also wish to contact Accessible Education (formerly known as Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. See: [Accessible Education - Academic Support & Engagement - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/accessible-education)

Request for Accommodations/Medical Issues

Students are entitled to their privacy and consequently they do not need to disclose personal information to their course professors. In the event that students feel the need to discuss personal information, they should see the graduate chair. Unlike undergraduate students, graduate students cannot be referred to Social Science Academic Counselling to have their medical or non-medical circumstances evaluated and to receive a recommendation for accommodation. Those facilities are for undergraduates only, and there is no process beyond the department to secure recommendations for accommodation. Our process is that faculty should deal with routine requests for extensions. However, a student's request for accommodation (on medical, non-medical, compassionate grounds) should go to the graduate chair, Prof. Eli Nathans (enathans@uwo.ca) who will consult and communicate with faculty. Additionally, faculty and students should communicate with the grad chair about any case in which work is not submitted before grades are due. In the event that the graduate chair is also the course professor, then a request for accommodation can be taken to the department chair.

Copyright

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, wiki material, and other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without my written consent.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage 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 offense.

For more information on plagiarism and other scholastic offenses at the graduate level see:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of Publication and page number. Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B. In adopting other writer's ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source; these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks are necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.

If a History graduate course professor suspects course work of possible plagiarism, or if a graduate supervisor suspects a cognate or thesis of possible plagiarism, the faculty member will meet with the student. If the issue is not resolved, the student then meets with the graduate chair to discuss this situation, and so that the student can present or respond to evidence. Afterwards the graduate chair will make a decision about whether misconduct has occurred and any penalties; this will be communicated in writing to the student within 3 weeks. The student may appeal this decision to the Vice-Provost (Graduate) within 3 weeks of the issuance of the chair's decision. If the student does not appeal, the Vice-Provost will review the case. The Vice-Provost may confirm, affirm, vary, or overturn the graduate chair's decision or penalty. Information on the appeals procedures for graduate students can be found here:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsgrad.pdf

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their **health and wellness** a priority.

- Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Please check out the Faculty of Music web page <http://www.music.uwo.ca/> and our own McIntosh Gallery <http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>
- Information regarding health- and wellness-related services available to students may be found at <http://www.health.uwo.ca/>
- Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html

UWO has many services and programs that support the personal, physical, social, and academic needs of students, in a confidential environment. The Student Development Centre

(SDC) has trained staff and an array of services to help students achieve their personal, academic and professional goals. See: [Academic Support & Engagement - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://www.uwo.ca/academic-support)

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact, Heidi Van Galen, Department Manager, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84963 or e-mail vangalen@uwo.ca.