

**History 315, Section 2: Histories of Violence**  
Fall 2017  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30-10:45, 231 CCC

“We all need histories that no history book can tell.” –Michel-Rolph Trouillot, 1995

“The past is never dead. It isn’t even past.” –William Faulkner, 1951

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469 CCC

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Office Hours: Mondays 11:00-12:00, Tuesdays 2:00-4:00, and by appointment

**Course Description and Learning Outcomes**

This is a course about how human beings make sense of and tell stories about our violent pasts. We will explore many different kinds of stories, told by different kinds of people, in various formats, from many places and time periods. After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Describe several conceptual frameworks for studying historical memory
- Compare and contrast representations of past violence from different world regions
- Explain how and why people have commemorated past violence in specific ways
- Create a well-researched and effective research poster telling a story about past violence

**Required Texts**

Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, *A Human Being Died that Night*, 2004 (HBD)

Akiko Hashimoto, *The Long Defeat: Cultural Trauma, Memory, and Identity in Japan*, 2015 (LD)

Steve Stern, *Remembering Pinochet’s Chile: On the Eve of London 1998*, 2004 (RPC)

**Contacting Me**

*Helping you learn is the **most important and most rewarding** part of my job.* If you have questions about the course, or want to improve your performance, please either visit me during office hours or contact me by email at <rharper@uwsp.edu> to make an appointment. Please include “History 315” in the subject line.

**How to Succeed**

To do well in this class, you must attend and participate regularly, complete all assigned reading, and take effective notes on readings, lectures, and class discussions. Absences from class, either physical or mental, will bring down your grade. As with any three-credit course, you should expect to spend **6-9 hours each week** on coursework outside of class. If you are worried about your progress, please contact me ASAP to discuss how to improve.

## **Grading**

Attendance, participation, and in-class work:	20%
Monument paper:	20%
Research poster:	20%
Explanatory essay:	20%
Take-home exam:	20%

## **Monument Paper**

Choose an existing monument or other public display commemorating a violent event, or people involved in a violent event. Find at least four relevant primary sources (newspaper articles, government documents, pamphlets, speeches) from the time of the monument's creation. In an essay of 3-4 pages, use that evidence to explain how and why people created the monument, why they depicted events as they did, and what people thought of it at the time ("people" is deliberately vague: you can take this assignment in a number of directions).

## **Commemorative Poster and Explanatory Essay**

Choose a violent historical event, or a person/persons involved in such an event. In a 36" x 48" poster, use a combination of images and text to tell a historically accurate and visually effective story about this event/person(s), based on evidence in at least four primary and/or secondary sources. To complete the assignment effectively, the sources you choose should be reasonably diverse: for example, find secondary sources that offer contrasting interpretations, and/or primary sources that provide different kinds of information.

In an essay of 3-4 pages, explain why you chose to tell the story as you did. Your essay must: present evidence to support your interpretation of events (primary and/or secondary sources: see above); explain your choice of what information to include or exclude; and discuss how your interpretation can add to or change the viewer's understanding of the past.

## **Take-Home Exam**

Late in the semester, you will complete a take-home essay exam that requires you to reflect on and synthesize insights from throughout the course.

## **In-Class Work and Attendance**

You must complete each week's readings by Monday, when classes will often begin with a quiz. Each Monday, a small group of 3-4 students will open class discussion by identifying key ideas raised in the readings and presenting questions for class discussion. During the semester, each of you will lead discussions, with different groups, twice.

During in-class quizzes, you may not consult books or electronic devices, but you may consult handwritten notes. If you must miss class, please obtain notes from a classmate. You will receive a zero on any quiz or in-class work you miss. To accommodate scheduling conflicts and emergencies, your two lowest in-class work scores will not count toward the final grade. If you must miss many classes, please see me ASAP to discuss your options.

### **Students with Disabilities**

I will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. Any student requesting such accommodation must first meet with UWSP Disability Services staff. That meeting should take place as early in the semester as possible. No accommodation will be granted until I receive and agree to a formal plan approved by Disability Services.

### **Desire2Learn (D2L)**

All course handouts, supplementary readings, etc. will be posted at <http://www.uwsp.edu/d2l>.

### **Academic Integrity**

Cases of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, will be formally reported following the policies laid out in UWSP's Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures. Plagiarism consists of submitting work created by someone else as your own. For more information on academic integrity, please ask me or consult <http://library.uwsp.edu/Guides/VRD/plagiarism.htm>. Students found to have committed academic misconduct will receive an F for the course.

**Course Schedule:** All readings must be completed before the Monday of the week indicated.  
Week 1, Wednesday, Sept. 6: introductions

#### Unit 1: Stories

- What kinds of stories do people tell (and not tell) about violence?
- What factors influence how people do, or do not, remember and explain past violence?
- What are private, family, and public memory? In what ways are they related?
- What challenges confront historians who study past violence?

Week 2, Monday, Sept. 11, Wednesday, Sept. 13: narratives and silences

- Trouillot, "An Unthinkable History: the Haitian Revolution as a Non-Event," from *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, 1995 (skim 74-89)
- RPC xix-xxxi, 1-5
- LD ch. 1

Key concepts: unthinkability; silences; the archive; memory box; collective trauma; forgetting; Sept. 11, 1973; London 1998; narrative frameworks; culture of memory

Week 3, Monday, Sept. 18, Wednesday, Sept. 20: repair and reconciliation

- LD ch. 2
- HBD ch. 1
- Sturken, "The Wall, the Screen, and the Image: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial," 1991

Key concepts: postmemory; biological repair; Truth and Reconciliation Commission; commemoration; screen; closure

Week 4, Monday, Sept. 25, Wednesday, Sept. 27: storytelling and teaching

- LD chs. 3-4
- Jelin and Kaufman, "Layers of Memories: Twenty Years After in Argentina," from *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, 2000
- Watch *Chile: Obstinate Memory* (1997)

Key concepts: Yasukuni; peace museums; national sacrifice; shadow perpetrators; imperial consciousness; layers of memories; disappearances; "never again"; public and personal memory

### Unit 2: Heroes

- How are heroes made?
- What are the characteristics of heroic narratives?
- Why might historians choose (or not) to explain past violence with heroic narrative?

Week 5, Monday, Oct. 2, Wednesday, Oct. 4: patriots and pioneers

- Purcell, "Heroes and their Audiences," from *Sealed with Blood: War, Sacrifice, and Memory in Revolutionary America*, 2010
- Buss, "'With Strong Hands and Brave Hearts': Remembering the Pioneer," from *Winning the West with Words: Language and Conquest in the Lower Great Lakes*, 2011
- Bodnar, "The National Park Service and History," from *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*, 1992

Week 6, Monday, Oct. 9, Wednesday, Oct. 11: defending heroes

- RPC pp. 7-38
- Blight, "'For Something beyond the Battlefield': Frederick Douglass and the Struggle for the Memory of the Civil War," 1989

Week 7, Monday, Oct. 16, Wednesday, Oct. 18: constructing Reconstruction

- Readings TBA
- Watch *Birth of a Nation* (1915): part II required (starts at 1:31:25), part I optional  
<http://uwsp.kanopystreaming.com/video/birth-nation-0>

**Monument paper due in class Oct. 18**

### Unit 3: Victims and Survivors

- What are the characteristics of victimhood and survival narratives?
- What purposes (literary, political, moral) do such narratives serve?

Week 8, Monday, Oct. 23, Wednesday, Oct. 25: rupture and remorse

- RPC pp. 39-87
- HBD pp. 143-48, 79-103

Week 9, Monday, Oct. 30, Wednesday, Nov. 1: massacres and memories

- Field, "Okinawa: A Supermarket Owner," from *In the Realm of the Dying Emperor: Japan at Century's End*, 1991
- Listen to "Little War on the Prairie," 2012, from *This American Life*  
<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/479/little-war-on-the-prairie>
- Listen to "Mexico's 1968 Massacre: What Really Happened?" from *All Things Considered*, 2008, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97546687>

Week 10, Monday, Nov. 6, Wednesday, Nov. 8: comfort and culpability

- Soh, "Public Sex and the State," from *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan*, 2008
- Longman and Rutagengwa, "Religion, Memory, and Violence in Rwanda," from *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place*, ed. Stier and Landres, 2006
- Shevel, "The Battle for Historical Memory in Postrevolutionary Ukraine," 2016

Week 11, Monday, Nov. 13, Wednesday, Nov. 15: colonialism and cinema

- Watch Neil Diamond (Cree), *Reel Injun*, 2009
- Watch Phillip Noyce, *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, 2003
- Watch Icíar Bollain, *Even the Rain*, 2010

#### Unit 4: Perpetrators

- In histories of violence, how, and on whom, do storytellers place blame?
- In histories of violence, what are the risks and benefits of focusing on perpetrators?
- Is there room in such narratives for forgiveness and reconciliation?

Week 12: Monday, Nov. 20

- HBD chs. 2-3

**Take-home exam due in class Nov. 20**

Week 13: Monday, Nov. 27, Wednesday, Nov. 29

- HBD ch. 4
- RPC pp. 88-103

Week 14: Monday, Dec. 4, Wednesday, Dec. 6

- HBD chs. 6-7, epilogue

Week 15: Monday, Dec. 11, Wednesday, Dec. 13

- Watch *Breaker Morant* (1980). I recommend turning on closed captions.  
<http://uwsp.kanopystreaming.com/video/breaker-morant-0>

**Poster and explanatory essay due Wednesday, Dec. 13**

Final exam period (poster display session): Wednesday, Dec. 20, 8:00-10:00 a.m.