

History 395, Section 1: American Memory Wars

Fall 2020

Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30-4:45, Virtual Classroom

“Who controls the past, controls the future.” —George Orwell, *1984* (1949)

“The past is never dead. It isn’t even past.” —William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun* (1951)

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Office Hours: Mondays, 1:00-2:00; Wednesdays, 1:00-3:00, and by appointment.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

This class is about historical memory: the ways people collectively explain and tell stories about the past. We will focus in particular on “memory wars”: conflicts over how to tell the story of the past, especially in public. We’ll talk both about how to analyze and interpret past and present-day debates over memory and how to learn from these debates as we figure out how to commemorate our past today. After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Define historical memory and explain its significance in your life
- Describe past and present controversies over American historical memory, including participants, arguments, social and political context, and relationships to divergent narratives of the American past.
- Identify and explain specific strategies marginalized groups have used to challenge prevailing historical narratives.
- Locate and critically interpret appropriate primary sources for the study of historical memory debates.
- Become more disposed to see themselves as potential contributors to present-day and future public memory debates.

Required Materials

- All readings and links to films will be posted on Canvas.
- You will need a reliable Internet connection capable of supporting video conferencing.
- You will need to attend our synchronous class meetings on Zoom OR make other arrangements with me, in advance.
- During our synchronous class meetings, you will need to move back and forth between Zoom and Canvas, and sometimes you will need to submit work on Canvas during class.

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 visit me during office hours or contact me by email at <rharper@uwsp.edu> to make an appointment. Please include “History 395” 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. As with any three-credit course, you should expect to spend **6-9 hours each week** on coursework outside of class. If you must miss class, please obtain notes from a classmate and check for that day's Zoom recording on Canvas. You will receive a zero on any quiz or in-class work you miss, unless you make other arrangements with me in advance. To accommodate scheduling conflicts and emergencies, your two lowest in-class work scores will not count toward the final grade.

Grading

Attendance, participation, in-class work:	20%
Reflection papers and group discussions:	20%
Short paper #1:	20%
Short paper #2:	20%
Final group project:	20%

Assignments

You will complete two short papers, 5-6 double-spaced pages each, in which you use primary sources to analyze specific past debates over historical memory. Rather than showing that one side was right or wrong, the goal of these assignments is to explain how and why these debates arose, and why they unfolded as they did. Specific assignment guidelines and rubrics will be posted on Canvas.

For your final projects, you will work in small groups (3-4 students each) to develop an electronic presentation of a chosen topic in the history of American memory wars. Your group will get to choose your topic and medium of presentation. These presentations will be suitable for inclusion in the College of Letters and Science's annual undergraduate research symposium (held in April).

You will also complete an array of smaller assignments, in and out of class meetings, individually and in groups. Please refer to Canvas for details and updates. Assignments will generally appear on Canvas at least one week before they are due.

Students with Disabilities

I will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the needs of students of all abilities. Any student requesting such accommodation must first meet with staff in the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (DATC). 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 DATC.

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

Specific reading assignments and deadlines will undoubtedly be adjusted as we go. For assignment details, guidelines, and revisions, please refer to the schedule of assignments on Canvas.

Week 1

Wednesday, Sept. 2: introductions

Week 2

Monday, Sept. 7: Forget the Alamo

Due to Labor Day there is no synchronous class meeting on Sept. 7, but there is an assignment due.

- Watch John Sayles, *Lone Star* (1996)
- **“Forget the Alamo” discussion due**

Wednesday, Sept. 9: Minds and Monuments

- Blatz and Ross, “Historical Memories” (2009), 223-37
- Read or watch Trump, “Remarks at South Dakota’s 2020 Mount Rushmore Fireworks Celebration” (2020), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-south-dakotas-2020-mount-rushmore-fireworks-celebration-keystone-south-dakota/>

Unit 1: Causes, lost and found

Week 3

Monday, Sept. 14: Birth of a Lost Cause

- Kytte and Roberts, “Cradle of the Lost Cause” (2018)
- Rutherford, “A Measuring Rod” (1919)
- Minton, “The lies our textbooks told” WaPo (2020), https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/slavery-history-virginia-textbook/2020/07/31/d8571eda-d1f0-11ea-8c55-61e7fa5e82ab_story.html

Wednesday, Sept. 16: Contesting the myth

- Cram and Gray, *Birth of a Movement* (2017, 54 minutes), https://fod-infobase-com.ezproxy.uwsp.edu/p_ViewVideo.aspx?xtid=151251
- Zimmerman, “Struggles over Race and Sectionalism” (2002)
- Wilson, Dubois excerpts?

Week 4

Monday, Sept. 21: Multiculturalism and its Critics

- Zimmerman, “Brown-ing the American Textbook” (2004)
- “Great Textbook War” (2010), <http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/textbooks/>

Wednesday, Sept. 23: God in the Constitution

- Fea, “History for the Faithful” (2011), 57-75
- Chancey, “Rewriting History for a Christian America” (2014), 325-53

Week 5

Monday, Sept. 28: Messing with Texas

- Thurman, *The Revisionaries* (2013, 93 minutes)
- “Texas officials: Schools should teach that slavery was ‘side issue’ to Civil War” (2015), https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/150-years-later-schools-are-still-a-battlefield-for-interpreting-civil-war/2015/07/05/e8fbd57e-2001-11e5-bf41-c23f5d3face1_story.html
- “Two States. Eight Textbooks” (2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/01/12/us/texas-vs-california-history-textbooks.html>
- “Students Push Texas to Adopt an Anti-Racist Curriculum” (2020), <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/education-news/2020/07/02/377209/students-push-texas-state-board-of-curriculum-to-adopt-anti-racist-curriculum/>

Wednesday, Sept. 30: The Enduring Lost Cause

- Palmer and Wessler, “The Costs of the Confederacy” (2018), <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/costs-confederacy-special-report-180970731/>
- Jordan, “Plantations of Charleston, SC” (2013), <https://youtu.be/-bqRsIpig14>
- Biser, “I Used to Lead Tours at a Plantation” (2017), <https://www.vox.com/2015/6/29/8847385/what-i-learned-from-leading-tours-about-slavery-at-a-plantation>

Unit 2: Flipping scripts

Week 6

Monday, Oct. 5: centering the enslaved

- Watch “America’s First Museum Dedicated to Telling the Story of Slavery” (2016, 12 minutes), <https://youtu.be/tcUgM-NLuHo>
- Listen to Thomas, “US Plantation Tourism” (2019, 5 minutes), <https://soundcloud.com/haleyethomas/us-plantation-tourism>
- Twitty, “Dear Disgruntled White Plantation Visitors, Sit Down” (2019), <https://afroculinaria.com/2019/08/09/dear-disgruntled-white-plantation-visitors-sit-down/>
- Watch Baker, “Wessyngton Plantation Tour Presentation” (2016, 30 minutes), <https://youtu.be/y-BbHul7mm8>
- Listen to “‘Somebody Knew Them’: New Monument Will Honor ‘(Un)Known’ Enslaved People” (2020, 3 minutes)
- Watch Dungey, “Ask a Slave,” episode 4 (2013, 4 minutes), <https://youtu.be/ik-fXNjxw58>
- Watch “Planning a Plantation Wedding,” *The Nightly Show* (2016, 5 minutes), <https://youtu.be/Tt84wWSh55M>
- Williams, “My Body Is a Confederate Monument” (2020), <https://nyti.ms/383rugG>

Wednesday, Oct. 7: Freedom Fighters

- Schneider, “The haunted houses” (2019), https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/the-haunted-houses-legacy-of-nat-turners-slave-rebellion-lingers-but-reminders-are-disappearing/2019/04/29/d267d814-5d68-11e9-842d-7d3ed7eb3957_story.html
- Prosser monument debate, 2000, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2000/12/04/countys-past-is-divisive-in-present/012c5d0f-b2de-4443-bce5-4edeb4dd8e06/>
- Weaver, “Hear These Activists on Gabriel’s Failed Slave Rebellion” (2018), <https://catapult.co/stories/hear-these-richmond-activists-on-gabriels-failed-slave-rebellion>
- Sachs, “Devils, Saints, and Denmark Vesey” (2014), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/devils-saints-and-denmark_b_4870022
- KY monument (2020), <https://www.npr.org/2020/08/01/897550494/somebody-knew-them-new-monument-will-honor-un-known-en-slaved-people>
- “America’s Largest Slave Revolt Brought Back to Life” (2019), <https://youtu.be/v2to3S0iabE>
- PBS report on SRR (2019), <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/largest-slave-revolt-in-u-s-history-lives-on-in-reenactment>

Week 7

Short paper #1 due

Monday, Oct. 12: whose day?

- Ruberto and Sciorra, “Columbus Might Be Dwarfed to Obscurity” (2020), 61-93
- Watch Klain (Navajo), *Columbus Day Legacy* (2011, 26 minutes)
- Onondaga Nation, Statement on Columbus Statue in Downtown Syracuse (2020), <https://www.onondaganation.org/news/2020/onondaga-nation-statement-on-columbus-statue-in-downtown-syracuse/>

Wednesday, Oct. 14: Remembering the Arrow Shirt

- Buchholtz, “Reverberations” (2012), 101-30
- Watch excerpt of *They Died with their Boots on* (1941, 3 minutes), <https://youtu.be/15VecGrp58g>
- Watch excerpt of *Little Big Man* (1970, 4 minutes), <https://youtu.be/kpbq6nGbs50>
- Deloria (Lakota), “Indian Humor,” from *Custer Died for your Sins* (1969)

Week 8

Monday, Oct. 19: Clashing over Custer

- Braatz, “Clash of Cultures” (2004)
- Inbody, “No Question Too Awkward” (2018), <https://www.greatfallsribune.com/story/news/2018/06/18/indian-battle-tours-little-bighorn-battlefield-local-guide-crow-northern-cheyenne-olivia-williamson/710882002/>

Wednesday, Oct. 21:

- Flores, “Memory Place, Meaning, and the Alamo” (1998), 428-45
- Roberts and Olson, “The Third Battle of the Alamo” (2001), 294-314

Week 9

Monday, Oct. 26:

- Jones, “How New York’s new monument whitewashes the women’s rights movement” (2019), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/03/22/how-new-yorks-new-monument-whitewashes-womens-rights-movement/>
- Small, “Historians Raise Concerns Over Central Park’s Suffragist Monument” (2019), <https://hyperallergic.com/514079/historians-raise-concerns-over-central-parks-suffragist-monument/>
- McGreevy, “Why the First Monument of Real Women in Central Park Matters – and Why It’s Controversial” (2020), <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/monument-controversy-women-pioneer-central-park-180975662/>
- Kitchener, “Was Susan B. Anthony antiabortion?” (2020), <https://www.thelily.com/was-susan-b-anthony-antiabortion-two-sides-are-dueling-over-the-answer-and-the-definition-of-feminism/>
- Hughes, “On news of a presidential pardon for Susan B. Anthony” (2020), <https://susanb.org/on-news-of-a-presidential-pardon-for-susan-b-anthony-on-august-18-2020/>

Wednesday, Oct. 28: Controlling Birth Control

- “Margaret Sanger is Awarded Medal” (1931)
- Gordon, “Remembering Margaret Sanger’s Legacy” (2014), <https://www.oah.org/tah/issues/2014/november/margaret-sanger/>
- Katz, “Interpreting Margaret Sanger” (1995), 41-50
- “Conservative Members of Congress Demand Immediate Removal of Margaret Sanger Bust from Display” (2015), https://www.cruz.senate.gov/?p=press_release&id=2476
- “Planned Parenthood in N.Y. Disavows Margaret Sanger Over Eugenics” (2020), <https://nyti.ms/3hpxPGG>

Week 10

Monday, Nov. 2: Fables and Forgetting

- Harding, “Beyond Amnesia” (1987), 468-76
- Theoharis, “How history got the Rosa Parks story wrong” (2015), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/12/01/how-history-got-the-rosa-parks-story-wrong/>
- Raiford and Romano, “The Struggle over Memory” (2005), xi-xxii
- Vowell, “You, Sir, are no Rosa Parks” (2001), <http://content.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,96988,00.html>
OR listen to the audio version at <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/226/reruns/act-three-0>

Wednesday, Nov. 4: Memory at the Movies

- Fuller, “Debating the Present through the Past” (2005), 167-92

Week 11

Monday, Nov. 9: forget the lunch counters

- Lavelle, "Distancing and Rejection" (2015), 87-124

Wednesday, Nov. 11:

- Excerpt from *Eyes on the Prize*, episode 1 (1986, 10 minutes), https://youtu.be/ie5Jnt_OWVs
- Burch, "Emmett Till's Murder, and How America Remembers Its Darkest Moments" (2019), <https://nyti.ms/2HRbSRf>
- Mitchell, "Questions Remain" (2020), <https://www.mississippicir.org/news/a-year-after-an-instagram-photo-of-ole-miss-frats-hoisting-guns-in-front-of-a-bullet-riddled-emmett-till-sign-went-viral-questions-remain>

Week 12:

Short paper #2 due

Monday, Nov. 16: a bridge to somewhere

- Watch DuVernay, *Selma* (2014, 128 minutes), <https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/uwsp299375/watch/C4C94081D1BE02CA>

Wednesday, Nov. 18: Who ought to be the hero?

- Califano, "The Movie 'Selma' has a Glaring Flaw" (2014), https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-movie-selma-has-a-glaring-historical-inaccuracy/2014/12/26/70ad3ea2-8aa4-11e4-a085-34e9b9f09a58_story.html
- Sorkin, "Why 'Selma' is More than Fair to L.B.J." (2015),
- Joseph, "'Selma' Backlash Misses The Point" (2015), <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2015/01/10/376081786/selma-backlash-misses-the-point>

Week 13:

Monday, Nov. 23: Gratitude and Mourning

- Silverman, *This Land is Their Land* (2019), introduction and epilogue
- O'Brien and Blee, "What Is a Monument to Massasoit Doing in Kansas City?" (2014), 635-50

Week 14: TBA

Week 15: TBA

Final project: due during final exam period, Tuesday, Dec. 15, 8:00-10:00 am.