

History 201Q: Gender and Memory

Seminar in Cross Cultural Women's and gender History, Winter 2008

Professor Victoria Langland
Office Hours: Tues/Thur 10:30-12:00 SSH 3221
Tel: 752-1632
Email: vlangland@ucdavis.edu

Classroom: SSH 4220
Meeting Time: Thur 4:10-7:00

This year's seminar in Cross Cultural Women's and gender History addresses the relationship between gender and memory. Historians of women long ago turned to written and oral memories as a source for otherwise undocumented women's experiences. More recently, historians of diverse interests have come to see memory itself, particularly collective memory, as a critical *object* of historical inquiry. That is to say, historians have come to regard memory as an active process of creating meaning, realizing that memory is not a "mirror" of what happened but is rather one of the things that happens. How people remember the past, or the narratives that they create, sustain or challenge about the past, help to shape and justify their engagement with the present. From state efforts to memorialize national pasts into heroic or patriotic lessons that legitimize existing power structures, to multiple and contentious struggles over memory in the wake of violent conflicts, memory has played an important role in maintaining or overcoming structures of power, and historians have rightfully begun to direct their attention here.

Yet it is only recently that this new wave of scholarship has begun in a sustained way to question the relationship between memory and gender. From the differences in what and how men and women remember, to the ways in which memory serves to reinforce or critique gendered constructions, gender and memory are intimately connected. This seminar will roam widely across cultures and time periods to examine this new wave of literature on gender and memory. Some of the themes to be addressed within this theme include: the politics of race and gender; the relationship between knowledge and power; gendered violence and human rights; the role of domestic labor within various social and political regimes; and the relationship between gender, memory and the state.

Requirements

- Active and informed engagement in seminar discussions
- Opening presentation on one week's readings, and co-participation with the instructor in leading the seminar discussion.
- Written 2-3 page responses to each week's readings, posted on the SmartSite Discussion Forum by 5pm the Wednesday before class. There are two exceptions to this:
 - You need not post a written response the week you present in class.
 - You may choose one week (with the exception of Weeks 9 and 10) to take a "pass" on this assignment. Of course, you will still be expected to come to seminar prepared to discuss the text(s).
- Selection of a bibliographic contribution to our last week's reading assignment. Ideally you should choose this before February 28 (the earlier the better).
- Final paper of 20 pages, due on March 20. This paper can take one of three possible forms:

- A paper on one of the salient themes of the course, based on class readings, and offering a critical comparative perspective.
- A bibliographic review essay of work in your field that deals with the relationship between gender and memory. While your main focus may lie outside of the works discussed in seminar, you should use what you have learned here in order to critically examine the state of research in your area of specialty. For historians, the format of this paper should follow that of review essays in the *American Historical Review*. For others, see me to discuss the most appropriate format.
- A research paper that specifically centralizes the relationship between gender and memory, and that draws on literature discussed in seminar to help interpret your research findings.

Schedule of Readings

Week 1 (Jan 10) INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

Week 2 (Jan 17) HISTORY, MEMORY, AND GENDER: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Susan Crane. "Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory," part of the AHR Forum: History and Memory, *American Historical Review* 102:5; 1997.

Selma Leydesdorff, Luisa Passerini, and Paul Thompson. Introduction to *International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories, Volume IV, Gender and Memory*, (Oxford U Press: 1996).

Elizabeth Jelin. *State Repression and the Labors of Memory* (U Minnesota Press: 2003).

Marianne Hirsch and Valerie Smith. "Feminism and Cultural Memory: An Introduction," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 2002, vol. 28. no. 1, pp. 1-19.

Week 3 (Jan 24) MEMORY AND FORGETTING

Afsaneh Najmabadi. *The Story of the Daughters of Quchan: Gender and National Memory in Iranian History* (Syracuse U Press: 1998).

Alessandro Portelli. "The Death of Luigi Trastulli: Memory and the Event," in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (SUNY Press: 1990).

Optional: The rest of *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories* and Portelli's *The Order Has Been Carried Out: History, Memory and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (Palgrave: 2003).

Week 4 (Jan 31) MNEMONIC REPRESENTATIONS

Beth Baron. *Egypt as a Woman: Nationalism, Gender and Politics* (U California Press: 2005).

Optional: Lucy Noakes. *War and the British: Gender, Memory and National Identity* (I.B.Tauris: 1998).

Week 5 (Feb 7) MASCULINITIES, WAR AND MEMORY

Sabine Frühstück. *Uneasy Warriors: Gender, Memory and Popular Culture in the Japanese Army* (U California Press: 2007).

Marita Sturken. "Masculinity, Courage, Sacrifice" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 2002, vol. 28. no. 1, pp.444-445.

Diana Taylor. "Ground Zero," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 2002, vol. 28. no. 1, pp. 448-450.

Optional: Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (U California: 1997)

Week 6 (Feb 14) GENDER, RACE AND EMPIRE

Tina M. Campt. *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender and Memory in the Third Reich* (U Michigan Press: 2004).

Vron Ware. "Moments of Danger: Race, Gender and Memories of Empire," *History and Theory*, Vol 31. No 4, Beiheft 31: History and Feminist Theory, pp. 116-137.

Optional: Kimberly Gisele Wallace-Sanders. *Mammy: A Century of Race, Gender and Southern Memory* (U Michigan Press: 2007)

Week 7 (Feb 21) TEXTS OF MEMORY

Elisabeth van Houts. *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe, 900-1200* (U Toronto Press: 1999).

Sara R. Horowitz. "Gender, Genocide and Jewish Memory" *Prooftexts* 20 (January 2000) 158-190.

Week 8 (Feb 28) USES OF ORAL HISTORY, I

Daniel James. *Doña Maria's Story: Life History, Memory and Political Identity* (Duke U Press: 2000).

Optional: Alessandro Portelli. *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (U Wisconsin Press: 1997).

Week 9 (Monday, March 3) USES OF ORAL HISTORY, II

Guest of Seminar: Gail Hershatter.

Gail Hershatter. "The Gender of Memory: Rural Chinese Women and the 1950s" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 2002, vol. 28. no. 1.

_____. "Forget Remembering: Rural Women's Narratives of China's Collective Past," in Ching Kwan Lee and Guobin Yang, eds. *Re-envisioning the Chinese Revolution: The Politics and Poetics of Collective Memories in Reform China* (Stanford U Press: 2007).

Week 10 (March 13) CLASS BIBLIOGRAPHY

Readings to be decided by seminar participants.