GEOG 420 / POLI 420:
Memory, Place, and Power
Winter 2020

Monday-Tuesday-Thursday: 1:35 – 2:25 p.m.
ARTS WEST 215

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Teaching Assistants: Nesi Altaras and Chris Erl

This interdisciplinary class explores the relationships among memory, place, and political power. The course begins with an introduction to classical, Enlightenment, and contemporary texts on memory and place-making. It then uses this foundation to examine the symbolic transformation of public space, in particular the construction, alteration, and destruction of monuments, memorials, and museums in North America and in post-communist states. This approach emphasizes the social quality of memory, exploring the ways in which political interests, economic resources, and social practices can shape something as ostensibly personal and individual as memory.

We will not enforce Laws 21 and 62 in our classroom, and will do our utmost to prevent anyone else from enforcing it. All students who have come to learn are welcome.

Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly discussion questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Weeks 2-6, 8-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Weeks 2-6, 8-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-home midterm</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Feb 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>TBD – Final Exam Period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You must submit both essays and take the final exam to get a passing grade in this class. Information on university and Geography department policies concerning student assessment can be found at the following website: www.mcgill.ca/geography/studentassessment.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control (e.g., flu pandemic, sharknado, etc.), the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.
Readings
Most readings will be available on myCourses, in compliance with copyright regulations. Most of the texts that are not on myCourses are open access newspaper articles or blogs; you should get those readings on your own. For your convenience, we have hyperlinked nearly all readings on the syllabus below - just click and download. If you are off campus, be sure to activate your VPN first.

Weekly Discussion Questions
We will post discussion questions for each week on our myCourses site, beginning with Week 2. Please choose ONE of these questions each week to answer in written form, and submit your short, thoughtful response via the Assignments link on myCourses. To receive credit, responses must be a minimum of 200 words long and must answer the question with explicit reference to that week's reading(s). No footnote or bibliography needed for this - just be sure that you knowledgeably discuss at least one reading in your answer. Responses are due by noon each Wednesday, and late responses will not be accepted under any circumstances. You can miss one week without penalty - save this freebie for when you get sick, when your computer crashes at 11:50am on a Wednesday, etc. We will post everyone’s responses anonymously on our myCourses page under “Weekly Questions.” The responses themselves are not graded – you get 10% of your grade just for writing them. There will be 11 opportunities to submit responses (each Wednesday on Weeks 2-6, 8-13). If you submit 10 or 11 full-credit responses, you will receive an A for this part of the course; nine responses earn an A-, eight earn a B+, and so on and so forth.

Conference Participation
Your TA and conference leaders will be the great Nesi Altaras (nesi.altaras@mail.mcgill.ca) and terrific Chris Erl (christopher.erl@mail.mcgill.ca). Please register for a conference time on Minerva as soon as possible. Conferences will begin during Week 3 and attendance is mandatory (conferences will replace the Thursday lectures starting that week). Your conference grade will be based on the quality of your participation in group discussions. Please complete all of the readings for the week before coming to conference.

Take-Home Midterm
The take-home midterm essay exam will be introduced in class on Monday, February 10, and is due via MyCourses by noon on Friday, February 21. Late exams will lose half a grade per day (e.g., a B+ exam becomes a B if turned in between noon on Feb 21 and noon on Feb 22), and then a further half each day after that. The midterm is worth 35% of your grade.

Final Examination
The comprehensive final examination will be given on the university-selected date during the regular exam period. The exam will consist of short-answer essay questions closely based on the weekly questions. You should refer to the weekly questions and your collective answers to them when preparing for the exam.
Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
<th>Grade Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>&gt;3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.51-3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.16-3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.86-3.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.51-2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.16-2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.86-2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0-1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>&lt;1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This course uses the standard 4.0 system for grading. An A on an assignment is worth 4 points, an A- is worth 3.7 points, etc. To calculate your final grade, we will first multiply the grade points you have earned on each assignment by the relative weight of that assignment (e.g., 0.2 for each essay), and then add the scores together to get your final grade-point average. That average will determine your final letter grade for the course (refer the grade range column). For example, if your overall grade-point average is a 3.4, you would earn a B+ in the course.

The following two statements are required by University policy:

**Language**

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

**Academic Integrity**

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).

L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/)).

**Copyright**

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Schedule of Classes

Week 1

January 6: Introduction

January 7: Memory in Classical Thought


January 9: Social Memory


Week 2 - Weekly Questions start this week

January 13: Place, Memory, and Modernity


January 14 and 16: Monuments and Memory


**Week 3 - Conferences start this week**

*January 20: Political Power and Collective Memory*


*January 21: Museums and Memory*


**Week 4**

*January 27: Redressing Colonial Alienation: The Role of Museums*

*Guest lecturer: Prof. Catherine Lu*


*January 28: Monuments and Counter-monuments*


**Week 5**

*February 3: Maya Lin and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial I*

*In-class film: Maya Lin: A Strong, Clear Vision [start]*

**February 4: Maya Lin and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial II**

*In-class film:* Maya Lin: A Strong, Clear Vision [conclusion]


**Week 6**

**February 10: Gender and Commemoration**


Khromeychuk, O., 2016. "What place for women in Ukraine’s memory politics?" Open Democracy Russia, 10.

**February 11: Memory and Forgetting**


**Week 7 (No conferences this week)**

**February 17: The Politics of Post-Communist Memory**


**February 18: Post-Communist Iconoclasm and Transitional Justice**


February 21: Take-Home Midterm Due

Week 8

February 24: Soviet-Era Monuments and Memory in Russia


February 25: Post-Communist Nostalgia and Aspiration


----------Winter Break----------

Week 9

March 9 and 10: Postcommunist World War II Memory Wars


Week 10

March 16: Confederate Symbolism in the Contemporary U.S.


March 17: U.S. Civil Rights Memorials


Week 11

March 23: Remembering 9/11: (Re)placing Terrorism


March 24: Canadian War Memorials


Week 12

March 30: The Politics of Indigenous Memory in North America


Gefre, C. 2016 “'We are a testament:' Shoshone commemorate Bear River Massacre anniversary” *HJ News*. January 29.


March 31: A Tale of Two Museums


*Canadian Museum of History:*
  - [Canadian Museum of History plans revealed](#), CBC News
  - [Canadian Museum of History Research Strategy](#)
  - [How Stephen Harper is Rewriting History](#), Maclean’s
  - [The new Canadian Museum of History: Whose history will it tell?](#), Globe & Mail
  - [Canada’s wrinkle in time: Museum puts new twist on national history](#), G&M
  - [The Canadian Museum of History seeks a new narrative](#), Globe & Mail
  - [Canadian Museum of History Aims to Avoid CBC’s Pitfalls](#), Globe & Mail

Week 13

April 6: Monumental Montreal


April 7: Can We Remember Forever?


