

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

Fall 2020 – Remote but not Distant!

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This interdisciplinary class explores the relationships among memory, place, and political power. The course begins with an introduction to 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 the post-communist world. 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.

Course Requirements

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Date Due</i>
Reading Responses	15%	Wednesdays 12 noon Montreal time Weeks 3-11 and 13-14
Conference Participation	10%	Weeks 3-11 and 13-14
Analytic Essay	25%	October 5 12 noon Montreal time
Policy Brief	25%	November 9 12 noon Montreal time
Video or Podcast	25%	November 20 12 noon Montreal time

In the event of (even more) extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Readings

All readings are available on myCourses, and we have hyperlinked many as well (if you are off campus, be sure to activate your VPN to access copyrighted hyperlinked material). Please do the readings for the week before watching the lectures.

Lectures

Lectures and other course video materials will be pre-recorded and posted on myCourses. Please watch them by Tuesday night of the week in which they are assigned. We taught this course in a lecture theatre in Winter 2020 and much of our lecture material can be adapted from those previously recorded lectures. We are using the time saved to offer smaller and more interactive conferences, as well as assignments that go beyond the midterm/final exam structure typical of large lecture courses.

Weekly Reading Responses

We will post discussion questions for each week on myCourses, beginning with Week 3. Please choose ONE of these questions each week to answer in written form, and submit your short, thoughtful response via the *Assignments* link. To receive full credit, responses must be at least 200 words long and must answer the question with explicit reference to the week's reading. No footnotes or bibliography needed - just be sure that you discuss at least one reading in your answer. We will anonymously post ten of the most interesting responses each week on myCourses.

Responses are due by noon each Wednesday and late responses will not be accepted. 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. The responses themselves *are not graded* – you get credit just for writing them. They are designed to encourage you to begin to think through the course material in preparation for conference discussions and longer assignments. There will be 12 opportunities to submit responses (each Wednesday on Weeks 2-11 and 13-14). If you submit *11 or 12* full-credit responses, you will receive an A for this part of the course; 10 responses earn an A-, 9 earn a B+, etc.

Conferences

Conferences will begin during Week 3 and participation is mandatory. Each conference will have a maximum of 14 students enrolled. We will offer several discussion-based conference options on Wednesdays after noon, Thursdays, and Fridays, in up to three different formats:

- 1) *In Person*. If the university gives us permission to do so, we plan to offer one or two in-person conferences. Masks will be required and physical distancing rules must be respected. If the public health situation deteriorates, these will convert to Zoom conferences.
- 2) *Via Zoom*. Most conferences will be conducted at fixed times via Zoom. We will offer these conferences in a range of time slots to accommodate students in multiple time zones.
- 3) *Discussion Board*. If necessary we will organize one conference as a myCourses discussion board open from Wednesday at 5pm through Friday at 5pm Montreal time. *This will only be available for students without regular internet access or who otherwise require this flex-time accommodation - please do not register for this conference unless you fit into this category.*

At the beginning of the semester we will survey the class to identify time zones and gather other relevant information in order to set up our conference schedule. Your conference grade will be based on attendance and the quality of your participation in group discussions. We will distribute specific

guidelines for each kind of conference by Week 2. Please register for a conference time as soon as the schedule is available; you must attend the conference in which you are registered. To encourage attendance and free-flowing discussion, Zoom conferences will not be recorded. Participants should turn on their cameras during the conference as well as unmute their audio when called upon to speak. You can miss one conference during the semester without penalty.

Major Assignments

Further details on each assignment will be distributed early in the semester.

Analytic Essay

You will write a 1,500-1,800 word analytic essay based on one of two prompts provided by the instructors. It should draw primarily on scholarly sources, have a clear thesis, and be well supported by reference to the scholarly literature. It should be double spaced and in 12-point font. Please attach a separate bibliography, not included in the 1,500-1,800 words. The analytic essay is due via myCourses by 12 noon Montreal time on Monday, October 5.

Policy Brief

You will write a 1,200-1,500 word policy brief based on one of two prompts provided by the instructors. Your policy brief should clearly describe your proposed policy recommendation, the rationale for adopting it, and the primary evidence supporting it. The emphasis is on tight, persuasive writing. Please attach a separate reference list, not included in the 1,200-1,500 words. You may also attach relevant tables, charts, pictures, or figures, but be selective. The policy brief is due via myCourses by 12 noon Montreal time on Monday, November 9.

Video or Podcast

You will prepare an informative 10-12 minute video presentation or podcast introducing a site of memory and relating it to one or more themes of the course. Videos/podcasts and full written transcripts must be submitted via myCourses by noon Montreal time on Friday, November 20. The videos/podcasts of your conference mates are the assigned course materials for Week 13.

Late Submission and Assessment Policies

For the analytic essay and policy brief: Late papers submitted up to five days after the due date will receive a maximum grade of B+. Papers submitted after five days but by the last day of fall semester classes (December 7) will receive a maximum grade of C. No papers will be accepted after the last day of classes.

For the video/podcast: As this is a time-sensitive assignment, videos/podcasts will receive a maximum grade of B+ if submitted one day late and B if submitted two days late.

Videos/podcasts submitted after two days but before the last day of classes will receive a maximum grade of C. No videos/podcasts will be accepted after the last day of classes.

Completing all three major assignments by the last day of fall classes (December 7) is a requirement for receiving a passing grade in this course. Please see the [University Student Assessment Policy](#) as well as the [Geography](#) and [Political Science](#) department assessment policies for more information concerning assessment. All regrade requests must be accompanied by a written justification. Marks on regraded assignments may go up, down, or remain the same.

General Information

Grading Scale

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Grade Points</i>	<i>Grade Range</i>
A	4.0	>3.85
A-	3.7	3.51-3.85
B+	3.3	3.16-3.50
B	3.0	2.86-3.15
B-	2.7	2.51-2.85
C+	2.3	2.16-2.50
C	2.0	1.86-2.15
D	1.0	1.0-1.85
F	0.0	<1.0

This course uses the standard 4.0 system for grading. An A on a course component is worth 4 points, an A- is worth 3.7 points, etc. To calculate your final grade, we will multiply the grade points you earn on each course component by the relative weight of that component (e.g., 0.25 for each major assignment), and then add the scores 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.

Copyright

© Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., lectures, slides, notes, summaries, assignments, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

Netiquette

The University recognizes the importance of maintaining teaching spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all involved. To this end, offensive, violent, or harmful language arising in contexts such as the following may be cause for disciplinary action:

1. Username (use only your legal or preferred name)
2. Visual backgrounds
3. "Chat" boxes

To maintain a clear and uninterrupted learning space for all, you should keep your microphone muted unless invited by the instructor to speak. You should follow instructors' directions about the use of the "chat" function on remote learning platforms.

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/ 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/).

Indigenous Land Statement

McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

L'Université McGill est sur un emplacement qui a longtemps servi de lieu de rencontre et d'échange entre les peuples autochtones, y compris les nations Haudenosaunee et Anishinabeg. Nous reconnaissons et remercions les divers peuples autochtones dont les pas ont marqué ce territoire sur lequel les peuples du monde entier se réunissent maintenant.

Schedule of Classes

Please read the assigned material *BEFORE* you view the corresponding lecture. You should do the reading, watch the lectures, and do your weekly response before your weekly conference.

Week 1 (September 2-4)

Lecture 1: Introduction

[Why do we care about statues?](#) 2020. *The Inquiry*, BBC World Service Podcast. June 25.

[Final Report](#), Working Group on Commemoration and Renaming, McGill University, December 2018.

Lecture 2: What and Where is Memory?

Aristotle. 2000. *On Memory and Reminiscence*. J. I. Beare (trans.).

Basso, Keith. 1988. "[Speaking with names](#)": Language and landscape among the Western Apache. *Cultural Anthropology*, 3(2): 99-130.

Week 2 (September 7-11)

Lecture 3: Social Memory

Misztal, Barbara A. 2003. "[Durkheim on Collective Memory](#)" *Journal of Classical Sociology* 3(2): 123-143.

Lecture 4: Place, Memory, and Modernity

Nora, Pierre. "[Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire.](#)" *Representations* 26 (1989): 7-24. [La version française est "Entre mémoire et histoire" (1984) on myCourses]

Porter-Szűcs, Brian. 2016. "[Historians and the Politics of Memory.](#)" December 12.

Minton, Bennett. 2020. "[The lies our textbooks told my generation of Virginians about slavery.](#)" *Washington Post*. July 31. [Note that the scholarly article mentioned in this op-ed is one of the set readings for Lecture 20.]

Lecture 5: Political Power and Collective Memory

Misztal, Barbara. 2005. "[Memory and democracy.](#)" *American Behavioral Scientist*, 48(10), pp.1320-1338.

Dembinska, Magdalena. 2010. "[Building Trust: Managing Common Past and Symbolic Public Spaces in Divided Societies.](#)" *Ethnopolitics* 9(3-4): 311-332.

Wan, William. 2020. "[Historians question Trump's choice of 'heroes' for national garden monument.](#)" *Washington Post*. July 4.

Week 3 (September 14-18)

Weekly Questions and Conferences start this week

Lectures 6 and 7: Monuments and Memory

Harvey, David. 1979. "[Monument and myth.](#)" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 69 (3): 362-381.

Marshall, Debra. 2004. "[Making sense of remembrance.](#)" *Social & Cultural Geography* 5 (1): 37-54.

Young, James E., 2016. "[The memorial's arc: between Berlin's Denkmal and New York City's 9/11 memorial.](#)" *Memory Studies*, 9(3), pp. 325-331.

Week 4 (September 21-25)

Lecture 8: Monuments and Counter-monuments

Young, James E. 1999. "[Memory and counter-memory: The end of the monument in Germany.](#)" *Harvard Design Magazine* 9: 1-10.

Apel, Linde. 2014. "[Stumbling blocks in Germany.](#)" *Rethinking History* 18(2): 181-194.

Stevens, Quentin, Karen Franck, and Ruth Fazakerley, 2012. "[Counter-monuments: the anti-monumental and the dialogic.](#)" *The Journal of Architecture* 17(6): 951-972.

Lecture 9: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial

First watch our short introductory lecture, and then the film [Maya Lin: A Strong, Clear Vision](#)

Wagner-Pacifici, Robin and Barry Schwartz. 1991. "[The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past.](#)" *American Journal of Sociology* 97(2): 376-420.

Week 5 (September 28 – October 2)

Lecture 10: Museums and Memory

Bennett, Tony. 1988. "[The exhibitionary complex](#)." *New Formations* 4: 73-102.

Gardner, James. 2004. "[Contested terrain: History, museums, and the public](#)," *The Public Historian* 26(4): 11-21.

Lecture 11: Redressing Colonial Alienation: The Role of Museums

Guest lecturer: Prof. Catherine Lu

Fanon, Franz. (2008) [1952]. "Introduction" and "The Negro and Language," in *Black skin, white masks*. London: Pluto: 1-27.

Césaire, Aimé. (2007) [1955]. "Discourse on Colonialism," in *Discourse on Colonialism* Marlborough, England: 35-46.

Week 6 (October 5-9)

Analytic Essay Due October 5

Lecture 12: Gender and Commemoration

Weresh, Melissa. 2018. "[Gauzy allegory and the construction of gender](#)." *William and Mary Journal of Race, Gender, and Social Justice*, 25(1), 7-58.

Fox, Nicole. 2019. "[Memory in Interaction: Gender-Based Violence, Genocide, and Commemoration](#)," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 45(1): 123-148.

Khromeychuk, Olga. 2016. "[What place for women in Ukraine's memory politics?](#)" *Open Democracy Russia*, 10.

Gupta, Alisha Haridasani. 2020. "[For Three Suffragists, a Monument Well Past Due](#)," *New York Times*, August 6.

Lecture 13: Memory and Forgetting

Connerton, Paul. 2008. "[Seven Types of Forgetting](#)." *Memory Studies* 1(1): 59-71.

Week 7 (October 13-16)

Lecture 14: The Politics of Post-Communist Memory

Kubik, Jan and Michael Bernhard. 2014. "[A Theory of the Politics of Memory](#)," in Bernhard and Kubik, eds, *Twenty Years after Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1, pp. 7-34.

Lecture 15: Post-Communist Iconoclasm and Transitional Justice

Light, Duncan and Craig Young. 2015. "[Public Memory, Commemoration, and Transitional Justice: Reconfiguring the Past in Public Space](#)." In Nedelsky and Stan, ed., *Post-Communist Transitional Justice: Lessons from Twenty-Five Years of Experience*. Cambridge University Press.

"[The Falling of the Lenins](#)." 2017. 99% Invisible Podcast, 21 March 2017.

Week 8 (October 19-23)

Lecture 16: Commemorating the Soviet Era in Post-Soviet Russia

Forest, Benjamin and Juliet Johnson. 2002. "[Unraveling the threads of history: Soviet-era monuments and post-Soviet national identity in Moscow](#)." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 92, 524-547.

Smith, Kathleen E., 2019. "[A Monument for our Times? Commemorating Victims of Repression in Putin's Russia](#)." *Europe-Asia Studies*, 71(8), pp.1314-1344.

Lecture 17: [Holocaust Remembrance after Communism](#) (Subotic Talk at NYU Jordan Center)

Subotic, Jelena. 2019. "The Politics of Holocaust Remembrance after Communism," Chapter 1 (pp 17-44) of *Yellow Star, Red Star: Holocaust Remembrance after Communism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Week 9 (October 26-30)

Lectures 18 and 19: Postcommunist World War II Memory Wars

Kurilla, Ivan

2015. "[World War II in European Memory](#)," *Russia in Global Affairs* 3.

2020. "[Nationalizing Russian War Memory since 2014](#)." PONARS policy memo.

Siddi, Marco. 2017. "[The Ukraine crisis and European memory politics of the Second World War.](#)" *European Politics and Society*, 18(4): 465-479

Brüggemann, Karsten and Andres Kasekamp. 2008. "[The politics of history and the "War of Monuments" in Estonia.](#)" *Nationalities papers*, 36(3): 425-448.

Eröss, Ágnes, 2016. [In memory of victims": Monument and counter-monument in Liberty Square, Budapest.](#) *Hungarian Geographical Bulletin*, 65(3): 237-254.

Week 10 (November 2-6)

Lecture 20: Confederate Symbolism in the Contemporary U.S.

Webster, Gerry, and Jonathan Leib. 2016. "[Religion, Murder, and the Confederate Battle Flag in South Carolina.](#)" *Southeastern Geographer* 56 (1), 29-37.

Dean, Adam Wesley. 2009. "['Who Controls the Past Controls the Future': The Virginia History Textbook Controversy.](#)" *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 117 (4), 318-355.

There have been many news stories, op-eds, and reports about Confederate monuments and symbols in the last five years. We have selected four from summer 2020 for you to read, but we encourage you to find more if you are interested in this issue.

Berkowitz, Bonnie and Adrian Blanco. 2020. "[Confederate monuments are falling, but hundreds still stand. Here's where.](#)" *Washington Post*. July 2.

Robertson, Noah. 2020. "[Can Richmond imagine a future without Robert E. Lee?](#)" *Christian Science Monitor*. June 2020.

Rojas, Rick. 2020. "[Mississippi lawmakers vote to retire state flag rooted in the Confederacy.](#)" *New York Times*. June 28.

Vozzella, Laura. 2020. "['Miss Confederacy' statue removed as workers rid Richmond of Confederate icons.](#)" *Washington Post*. July 8.

Lecture 21: U.S. Civil Rights Memorials

Dwyer, Owen. 2002. "[Location, politics, and the production of civil rights memorial landscapes.](#)" *Urban Geography* 23 (1), 31-56.

Leib, Jonathan. 2002. "[Separate times, shared spaces: Arthur Ashe, Monument Avenue and the politics of Richmond, Virginia's symbolic landscape.](#)" *cultural geographies*, 9, 286-312.

As with Confederate symbols, there have been extensive media discussions of civil rights monuments in the last few years. We have set one on a recent slavery memorial, and two on the Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial in Washington, DC, but we encourage you to find more if you are interested in this issue.

Kennicott, Philip. 2020. "[A powerful new memorial to U-Va.'s enslaved workers reclaims lost lives and forgotten narratives.](#)" *Washington Post*. August 13.

Tavernise, Sabrina. 2011. "[A dream fulfilled, Martin Luther King memorial opens.](#)" *New York Times*. August 11.

Schmidt, Samantha, Peter Jamison, Hannah Natanson, and Jessica Contrera. 2020. "[Seven days after protesters first gathered in Washington, the uprising is far from finished.](#)" *Washington Post*. June 5.

Week 11 (November 9-13)

Policy Brief due November 9

Lecture 22: The Politics of Indigenous Memory in North America

Freeman, Victoria. 2010. "['Toronto Has No History!' Indigeneity, Settler Colonialism, and Historical Memory in Canada's Largest City.](#)" *Urban History Review-Revue D Histoire Urbaine* 38 (2): 21-35.

Barnes, John. 2008. "[The struggle to control the past: Commemoration, memory, and the Bear River massacre of 1863.](#)" *Public Historian* 30 (1): 81-104.

Gefre, Clayton. 2016 "['We are a testament:' Shoshone commemorate Bear River Massacre anniversary](#)" *HJ News*. January 29.

Lecture 23: Museums and Memory in Canada

Lehrer, Erica, 2015. "[Thinking through the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.](#)" *American Quarterly*, 67(4), pp.1195-1216.

Canadian Museum of History (read in order):

[Civilization museum's \\$25M rebranding to focus on history](#) (watch short embedded CBC news video as well), CBC 2012

[The new Canadian Museum of History: Whose history will it tell?](#), G&M 2012
[Ex-museum CEO calls proposed mandate 'narrow and parochial'](#), CBC 2013

[Canadian Museum of History plans revealed](#), CBC 2013

Canadian Museum of History [Research Strategy 2013](#)

[How Stephen Harper is Rewriting History](#), Maclean's 2013

[The Canadian Museum of History seeks a new narrative](#), Globe & Mail 2016

[Canada's wrinkle in time: Museum puts new twist on national history](#), GM 2016

[Canadian Museum of History Aims to Avoid CBC's Pitfalls](#), Globe & Mail 2017
[The Canadian History Museum unveils its new depiction ...?](#), Hill Times 2017
[New Canadian History Hall Review](#), Unwritten Histories 2017
[Canada has a long, documented history of racism ...](#), Globe & Mail 2020

Week 12 (November 16-20)

No Conferences or Weekly Questions this Week, Videos/Podcasts due November 20

Lecture 24: Monumental Montreal

Gordon, Alan. 2014. Contested Terrain, Contiguous Territory, in *Making Public Pasts: The Contested Terrain of Montreal's Public Memories, 1891-1930*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press: pp. 116-141.

Scott, Marian. 2017. "[Black Rock memorial park: Montreal's Irish community feels betrayed.](#)" *Montreal Gazette* May 25.

Haines, Brayden Jagger. 2020. "[Montreal petition to take down John A. Macdonald statue gains traction.](#)" *Global News* June 10. [Watch the embedded video as well.](#)

Week 13 (November 23-27)

Final Week of Conferences

Session 25: Watch the videos/listen to the podcasts produced by the students in your conference

Week 14 (November 30 – December 2)

Weekly Questions Cover Lectures/Readings 24 and 26

Lecture 26: Can We Remember Forever?

Pasqualetti, Martin J. 1997. "[Landscape Permanence and Nuclear Warnings.](#)" *Geographical Review* 87 (1): 73-91.

Langione, Matt. 2015. [Will Art Save Our Descendants from Radioactive Waste?](#) *JStor Daily*. May 13.

Fountain, Henry. 2017. "[On Nuclear Waste, Finland Shows U.S. How It Can Be Done.](#)" *New York Times*. June 9.

WhiskeyBristles. n.d. "[Rulison Nuclear Test Site](#)" *Atlas Obscura*.