

Instructor: Yen Le Espiritu

Office: SSB 228

Office Hours: Tues. 1-3; Thurs. 10-11

Phone: (858) 534-5206

Email: yespiritu@ucsd.edu

Course Description

Over the last twenty-five years, “memory” has become a central concept for analyzing problems of historical representation and identities. In this course, we will analyze the specific ways in which the concepts of power and memory have been appropriated in diverse narrative forms – including literature, theater, personal testimonies, monuments, museums, and memorials. We will focus especially on those writings that examine the ways in which the mutually-constituted processes of remembering and forgetting work in the production of official discourses of nationalism, history of colonialism, and memory of violence, as well as in the construction of subaltern subjectivities. We will grapple with the difficulties and risks inherent in the methods and techniques of reading and of listening to “ghost stories”—that is, to “truths” that are unspoken or unspeakable. By paying special attention to histories whose traumatic consequences are still actively evolving in today’s world, this course, to cite Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, “is looking not so much for answers as for new *enabling questions*, questions that would open new directions for research and new conceptual spaces for the yet unborn answers.”

Course Requirement

1. Intensive preparation and active participation in seminar discussion--this goes without saying!

2. Response Papers:

Each week, you’ll write a half-page response to and 3 discussion questions on the assigned materials and email them to the class by Sunday evening.

3. Class Presentation. Students will work in pairs (or more, depending on class size) for one class presentation. In your presentation, characterize the stakes, methods, and objectives of the book and/or group of articles. Rather than summarize the assigned readings or offer your likes/dislikes, engage others by discussing the intervention made by the critical work(s); i.e., into which historical moment and intellectual debates are the pieces intervening, how and why, and for what ends? Which disciplinary or theoretical conventions are being criticized, and which employed? You are encouraged to discuss the relationships between, and divergences among, the critical concepts and approaches represented by different readings, or what they may provide for your own work or projects. You are welcome to bring in additional materials, if relevant.

4. Seminar Paper:

A 15 page research paper that draws on the course themes and materials is due March 16 (Weds, finals week). Papers may be entirely theoretical (a critical literature review) or combine theory and the analysis of a cultural artifact (memoir, film, photographs,

museums etc.) Turn in a one-page paper proposal on Jan 18 (wk. 3) and a one-page progress report on Feb 15 (wk. 8).

Required Readings:

Books (available at Groundwork Books on campus)

- 1) Felman, Shoshana and Dori Laub. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- 2) Jenny Edkins. *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- 3) Diana Taylor. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
- 4) Susan Najita. *Decolonizing Cultures in the Pacific: Reading History and Trauma in Contemporary Fiction*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- 5) le thi diem thuy. *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*. Anchor, 2004.
- 6) Saidiya Hartman. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. Oxford University Press, 1997
- 7) Patchen Markell. *Bound by Recognition*. Princeton University Press, 2003.
- 8) Lisa Yoneyama. *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory*. UC Press, 1999.
- 9) Ethnic Studies Reader -- on E-Reserve

Schedule of Readings

Week 1

Jan 4-- Introduction

Recommended -- Video "History and Memory" Rea Tajiri, 1991

Week 2

Jan 11-- History, Memory and Questions of Power – Part I

Benjamin, Walter. "Theses on the Philosophy of History." In *Illuminations*. edited by Hannah Arendt and translated by Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books 1969, pp.243-256.

Michel Foucault. "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." Translated by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, edited and introduction by Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 139-164.

Michel Foucault "Film and Popular Memory." Translated by Martin Jordin. In *Foucault Live* (Interviews, 1966-84), edited by Sylvere Lotringer and translated by John Johnston. New York: Semiotext(e), 1989, pp. 89-106.

Klein, KL. (2000). "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse." *Representations* 69: 127-50.

Pierre Nora. "Between Memory and History." *Representations* no. 26 (Spring 1989).

Joan Scott. "The Evidence of Experience" in James Chandler, Arnold I. Davidson and Harry Harootunian, eds. *Questions of Evidence, Proof, Practice, and Persuasion Across the Disciplines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 363-387.

Ernest Renan. "What Is a Nation?" In Homi Bhabha's *Nation and Narration*.

Week 3

Jan 18-- History, Memory and Questions of Power – Part II

Hanson, Ellis. "Undead." In *Inside/Out*. Ed. Diana Fuss. New York: Routledge, 1991.

Toni Morrison, "Memory, Creation, and Writing," in James McConkey, ed., *The Anatomy of Memory* (Oxford University Press, 1996), pp.212-225.

Tiya Miles. Ch. 2 (pp. 25-43) and Appendix one: Research Methods and Challenges (pp. 207-213) in *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom*. UC Press, 2005).

Caroline Chung Simpson. " 'That Faint and Elusive Insinuation': Remembering Internment and the Dawn of the Postwar." Ch. 1 (pp. 12-42) in *An Absent Presence: Japanese Americans in Postwar American Culture, 1945-1960*. Duke UP.

Yen Le Espiritu. "The We-Win-Even-When-We-Lose Syndrome," *American Quarterly* 58: 2 (June 2006): 329-352.

Carole McGranahan. "Truth, Fear, and Lies: Exile Politics and Arrested Histories of the Tibetan Resistance." *Cultural Anthropology* 20 (4); 570-600, 2005.

Macarena Gomez-Barris and Herman Gray, "Toward a Sociology of the Trace." Pp. 1-16 in *Toward a Sociology of the Trace*, edited by Herman Gray and Macarena Gomez-Barris. University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Week 4.

Jan 25 --Crises of Testimony: Literature, Theater, and Psychoanalysis

Felman, Shoshana and Dori Laub. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

Allen Feldman, "Memory Theaters, Virtual Witnessing, and the Trauma-Aesthetic." *Biography* 27.1 (Winter 2004): 163-202.

Gillian Whitlock, "Testimony Incarnate: Read My Lips," Pp. 69-86 in *Soft Weapons: Autobiography in Transit*. University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Week 5

Feb 1 --Landscapes of Remembering: Monuments, Museums & Memorials

Jenny Edkins. *Trauma and the Memory of Politics*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Marita Sturken. "Conversations with the Dead: Bearing Witness in the AIDS Memorial Quilt," Ch. 6 (pp. 183-219) in Marita Sturken's *Tangled Memories*.

Lisa Yoneyama. "For Transformative Knowledge and Postnationalist Public Spheres: The Smithsonian Enola Gay Controversy." In Fujitani et al *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*. Duke UP.

Karen Till. "Aestheticizing the Rupture" in *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*. University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

Week 6

Feb 8 -- Embodied Memory: Performance and Remembering

Diana Taylor. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 20.

Martin Manalansan. "'To Play with the World': The Pageantry of Identities." Ch. 5 in Manalansan's *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (126-151).

Week 7

Feb 15 -- Reading History and Trauma

Susan Najita. *Decolonizing Cultures in the Pacific: Reading History and Trauma in Contemporary Fiction*. New York: Routledge, 2006

le thi diem thuy -- *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*

Thu Huong Nguyen Vo. "Forking Paths: How Shall We Mourn the Dead?" *Amerasia Journal* 31:2 (2005): 157-175.

Week 8

Feb 22 -- Memory and the Body

Saidiya Hartman. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. Oxford University Press, 1997

Avery Gordon. "The Other Door, It's Flood of Tears With Consolation Enclosed." Ch. 3 in *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, pp. 63-135.

Week 9

March 1-- The Politics of Redress, Reparation, and Recognition

Patchen Markell. *Bound by Recognition*. Princeton University Press, 2003.

Hyunah Yang. 1997. "Revisiting the Issue of Korean 'Military Comfort Women': The Question of Truth and Positionality," *The Comfort Women: Colonialism, War and Sex*, ed. Chungmoo Choi, special issues of *Positions* 5 (1): 51-71.

Norma Field. 1997. "War and Apology: Japan, Asia, the Fiftieth, and After," *The Comfort Women: Colonialism, War and Sex*, ed. Chungmoo Choi, special issues of *Positions* 5 (1): 1-49.

Week 10

March 8 -- The Dialectics of Memory

Lisa Yoneyama. *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space, and the Dialectics of Memory*. UC Press, 1999.