**History 81/European Studies 76**

**wAR AND rEMEMBRANCE:**

**cOMPARING THE ALGERIAN AND VIETNAM WARS**

Prof. Kathryn Edwards Thurs 2:00-3:50

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203b Morgan Hall

Office Hours: Tues 2-4 or by appointment

**Course Description**

How and why are traumatic national events remembered or forgotten? What do we mean by ‘collective memory’? Who shapes and maintains it? How is that memory transmitted to a broader public and future generations? What does this ‘memory’ reveal about contemporary society and national identity?

This seminar will explore the creation and transmission of collective memory through a comparison of two particularly traumatic twentieth-century conflicts: the French-Algerian War and the US-Vietnam War. We will begin by studying the similarities between these "undeclared" wars: the use of guerrilla tactics and the targeting of civilians, the use of torture, consequences for colonial populations that sided with French or American forces, protest movements, refugee crises, and the experiences of veterans. The majority of the course will then be spent examining the processes of ‘memory-building’. We will address state-sponsored commemoration and monuments, including the role of veteran activism, as well as the less ‘official’ vectors of memory like education, film and fiction.

The goals for the seminar are to develop a fuller understanding of the wars themselves, as well as their similarities and differences; to understand the ways in which societies shape particular narratives of the past, and the ways in which these narratives are transmitted; to understand the broader implications of these narratives, or collective memories.

**Course Books**

The seminar readings are comprised of both books and articles. The books are available at Amherst Books; all of the articles listed in the reading schedule are available in the course reader or e-reserves. The two-part course reader is available in the History Department office, 11 Chapin Hall.

Benjamin Stora, *Algeria, 1830-2000: A Short History* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004).

George Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 4th edition

(McGraw-Hill, 2001).

Jo McCormack, *Collective Memory: France and the Algerian War, 1954-1962* (Lanham, MD:

Lexington Books, 2007).

Henri Alleg, *The Question* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006)

In addition, large sections of Patrick Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory: Veterans, Memorials and the Politics of Healing* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009) are assigned. Given problems with ordering the book, 4 copies will be on reserve at Frost. In addition, there are limited numbers of copies available on Amazon.

**Course Requirements:**

We will meet once a week for two hours. Our meetings will be heavily oriented toward discussion, and you are all expected to come to class prepared and ready to contribute. At times, I may use some class time to provide extra background information on the material.

Your attendance and participation are crucial components of your grade and your seminar experience. You are expected to notify me ahead of time if you are unable to attend tutorial due to emergency (family, medical, or otherwise).

**Assignments**

Attendance and Participation: 30%

Response Papers (x3): 10%

Presentation: 10%

Short paper (5-6 pages): 15%

Research Paper (20-25 pages): 35%

Presentation

Each week, one or two students will give a short presentation on the week’s readings to the rest of the class. In addition to providing a brief overview of the readings and the connections between them, you should be prepared to present a critique of the works. You will also be asked to prepare questions for discussion. You are also welcome to make use of short clips or images for analysis if it’s appropriate. Presentations (questions excepted) should be about 15-20 min (a little shorter if there are two presentations that day).

Response Papers

Students are responsible for writing three 2-page response papers over the course of the semester, each addressing the readings from a single day. The aim is to analyze the documents individually, particularly the arguments of the authors, and to draw out the links between the pieces. It’s up to you when you submit your response papers, although at least one must be submitted by week 4 (February 17). Papers **must** be submitted in class the day that the readings are due, and only one paper is to be submitted per week. Late response papers will not be accepted.

Research Paper

You are required to prepare a major research paper (20-25 pages), based on significant research and analysis of primary and secondary sources. The goal is to allow you to explore a particular topic in considerable detail; you are free to choose whatever topic you like, as long as it falls within the parameters of the course. Each of you will meet with me in week 5 (February 24th ) to discuss your topic, and submit a proposal in week 6 (March 3rd) that includes a description of your topic (research question, possible approaches) and a preliminary bibliography of 10-15 sources. You **must** submit the proposal in order for your research paper to be accepted and graded at the end of the semester.

Short Paper

As preparation for your final research paper, you will write a 5-6 page paper. There are two approaches to choose from:

1. A focused analysis of one (or a small number) of primary sources. You might choose a memoir, a novel, a film, a photograph (or set of images), museum exhibit, or another type of source.

2. A literature review of several (3-5) key works that inform your research project. See William Cohen’s “The Algerian War and French Memory” for an example of a multi-book review.

**Late Work**

There will be a late penalty of 3% per day for all written work, including weekends. If your work is late and you wish to submit over the weekend, you may submit an email copy of the assignment, but it **must be followed by a hard copy.** Assignments that are more than 5 days late will receive a zero.

**Film Screenings**

We will watch several films outside of classroom hours; we will decide as a class whether to watch them together, or whether to screen them independently. All will be available on e-reserve.

*The Battle of Algiers* (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1966)

*Little Soldier* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1963)

*The Deer Hunter* (Michael Cimino, 1978)

*Platoon* (Oliver Stone, 1986)

**Weekly Schedule and Reading List**

**Week 1 ~ Jan 27 ~ Introduction**

**Week 2 ~ Feb 3 ~ Overview of the Algerian War**

Benjamin Stora, *Algeria, 1830-2000: A Short History* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2004).

**Week 3 ~ Feb 10 ~ Overview of the Vietnam War**

George Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 4th edition

(McGraw-Hill, 2001).

**Week 4 ~ Feb 17 ~ The Politics of War Memory**

TG Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, “The Politics of War Memory and

Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics,” in TG Ashplant et al, eds., *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London: Routledge, 2000), 3-85.

Mark Taylor, Chp 1 “Telling True War Stories,” *The Vietnam War in History, Literature and*

*Film* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 10-32.

Rick Berg and John Carlos Rowe, “The Vietnam War and American Memory,” in Berg and Rowe, eds., *The Vietnam War and American Culture* (New York, Columbia UP, 1991), 1-17.

Anne Donadey, ‘ “*Une certaine idée de la France*”: The Algerian Syndrome and Struggles Over

French Identity’, in Steven Unger and Tom Conley, eds., *Identity Papers: Contested Nationhood in Twentieth Century France* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1996), 215-233.

**Week 5 ~ Feb 24 ~ The Experience of War: Soldiers, Civilians and Intellectuals**

Chp 15 “Officer Corps Veterans” and Chp 16 “Anti-War Activists,” in Martin Alexander, Martin

Evans and JFV Keiger, eds., *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-1962: Experiences, Images, Testimonies* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 225-264.

Chp 9 “Memoirs,” in Stewart O’Nan, *The Vietnam Reader* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 459-

502.

Martin Evans, Chp 4 “The Impact of Ideas,” *The Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to*

*the Algerian War (1954-1962)* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1997), 73-100.

David Schalk, Chp 4 “Vietnam: The Acid Test of an Intellectual Generation,” *Vietnam and the*

*Ivory Tower: Algeria and Vietnam* (New York: Oxford UP, 1991), 112-161.

**Meet with professor to discuss research topic**

**Week 6 ~ Mar 3 ~ Monuments, Commemoration and Memory: Vietnam**

Patrick Hagopian, Introduction “A Noble Cause,” Chp 3 “The Discourse of Healing and the

‘Black Gash of Shame’: The Design of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial,” Chp 4 “A

‘Dangerous Political Issue’: The War about Memory in 1982,” Chp 9 “ ‘Today We Are One People: The Family Drama of Race and Gender in Commemorative Statuary of the Vietnam War” and Chp 9 “The Wall is for All of Us: Patterns of Public Response to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial,” *The Vietnam War in American Memory: Veterans, Memorials and the Politics of Healing* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).

Julia Bleakney, Chp 3 “Moving Walls,” *Revisiting Vietnam: Memoirs, Memorials, Museums*

(New York: Routledge, 2006), 71-106.

**Research Proposal Due**

**Week 7 ~ Mar 10 ~ Monuments, Commemoration and Memory: Algeria**

Robert Aldrich, excerpt from Chp 3, “Memorialization and the ‘Algerian Syndrome’,” *Vestiges*

*of the Colonial Empire in France: Monuments, Museums and Colonial Memories* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 133-156.

David Schalk, ‘Of Memories and Monuments: Paris and Algeria, Frejus and Indochina’,

*Historical Reflections,* 28 no.2 (2002), 241-253.

William Cohen, “The Algerian War, the French State and Official Memory,” *Historical Reflections* 28 no.2 (2002), 219- 239.

William Cohen, “The Algerian War and French Memory,” *Contemporary European History* 9

no.3 (Nov. 2000), 489-500.

**Week 8 ~ SPRING RECESS**

**Week 9 ~ Mar 24 ~ The Transmission of Memory**

Jo MacCormack, *Collective Memory: France and the Algerian War, 1954-1962* (Lanham, MD:

Lexington Books, 2007).

Antoine Prost, “The Algerian War in French Collective Memory,” in Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, eds, *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 2000), 161-176.

**Week 10 ~ Mar 31 ~ Veterans, Activism and the Politics of Memory**

Patrick Hagopian, Chp 7 “No Shame or Stigma: The Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program,”

*The Vietnam War in American Memory*, 202-230.

Gerald Nicosia, Chp 11 “The Price of War: Settlement of the Class Action Lawsuit and ‘One

Small Step Toward Resolution’,” *Home to War: A History of the Vietnam Veterans' Movement* (NewYork: Crown Publishers, 2000), 556-619.

H. Bruce Franklin, ‘A National Religion?’ in Chp 1 “Prisoners of Myth” and Chp 3 “The

Missing of Peace,” *MIA or Mythmaking in America* (New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1992), 3-11, 79-126.

### Martin Evans, “Rehabilitating the traumatized war veteran: The case of French conscripts from

### the Algerian War, 1954–1962,” in Martin Evans and Ken Lunn, eds., *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1997), 73-85.

**Short Paper Due**

**Week 11 ~ Apr 7 ~ The Torture Controversy**

Neil MacMaster, “The Torture Controversy (1998-2002): Towards a ‘New History’ of the

Algerian War?”, *Modern and Contemporary France* 10 no.4 (2002), 449-459.

Henri Alleg, *The Question* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006)

Paul Aussaresses, Preface by Robert Miller, Author’s Foreword, Chp 8 “The Mission,” Chp 10

“2000 Leopards,” Chp 13 “Villa des Tourelles,” Chp 14 “The Terror,” *The Battle of the Casbah: Counter-Terrorism and Torture* (New York: Enigma Books, 2005), iii-x, xx-xxi, 74-80, 92-103, 117-131.

Kendrick Oliver, Chp 6 “Remembering Atrocity,” *The My Lai Massacre in*

*American History and Memory* (Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 2006), 231-281.

James S. Olson and Randy Roberts, eds., *My Lai: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford St Martin’s, 1998), excerpt from Introduction “The Road to My Lai,” “Eugene

Kotouc, Testimony to Peers Commission,” “Denis Conti, Testimony to Peers Commission,” “William L. Calley, Testimony at Court-Martial,” “William C. Westmoreland, From *A Soldier Reports*,” 10-25, 59-61, 76-78, 182-186, 193-199.

**Week 12 ~ Apr 14 ~ The Algerian War in Fiction and Film**

Philip Dine, Introduction “The Algerian War: History and Ideology, Mythology and Fiction,”

Chp 5 “ ‘La Quille, bordel!’: Recalling *Le Rappel*” and Chp 6 “The Will to Belong: The Myths of the Pieds-Noirs,” in *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954–1962* (Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 1994), 1-19, 109-145, 146-177.

Philip Dine, ‘(Still) *A la recherche de l’Algérie perdue:* French Fiction and Film 1992-2004’,

*Historical Reflections,* 28 no.2 (2002), 255-275.

Philip Dine, ‘Reading and Remembering *La Guerre des mythes*: French Literary Representations

of the Algerian War’, *MCF,* 2.2 (1994), 141-150.

David Prochaska, “That Was Then, This Is Now: The *Battle of Algiers* and After,” *Radical*

*History Review,* 85 (Winter 2003), 133-149.

**Film: *The Battle of Algiers***

**Week 13 ~ Apr 21 ~ The Vietnam War in Fiction and Film**

Linda Dittmar and Gene Michaud, “American’s Vietnam War Films: Marching Toward Denial,”

*From Hanoi to Hollywood: The Vietnam War in American Film* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers UP, 1990), 1-15.

Michael Klein, “Historical Memory, Film, and the Vietnam Era,” in Linda Dittmar and Gene

Michaud, eds., *From Hanoi to Hollywood: The Vietnam War in American Film* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers UP, 1990), 19-40.

Thomas Slater, “Teaching Vietnam: The Politics of Documentary,” in Michael Anderegg, ed.,

*Inventing Vietnam: The War in Film and Television* (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1991), 269-290.

Katherine Kinney, Chp 4 “Grunts: The Vernacular of Postmodernism,” *Friendly Fire: American*

*Images of the Vietnam War* (2000), 105-142.

**Film: *Platoon***

**Week 14 ~ Apr 28 ~ Representing War: Museums, Exhibits and Photography**

Julia Bleakney, Chp 4, “Objects of War and Remembrance,” *Revisiting Vietnam: Memoirs,*

*Memorials, Museums* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 107-146.

Scott Laderman, Chp 5 “ ‘The Other Side of the War’: Memory and Meaning at the War

Remnants Museum,” *Tours of Vietnam: War, Travel Guides and Memory* (Durham: Duke UP, 2009), 151-182.

Christina Schwenkel, “Exhibiting War, Reconciling Pasts: Photographic Representation and

Transnational Commemoration in Contemporary Vietnam,” *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* 3 no.1 (2008), 36-77.

**NB** *Requiem: by the photographers who died in Vietnam and Indochina* by Horst Faas and Tim Page is the book that inspired the photography exhibit discussed in Schwenkel’s article; a copy is on reserve at Frost, which you are strongly encouraged to consult before class.

**Week 15 ~ May 5 ~ Wrap-up and Sharing of Research Projects**

**Final Research Paper Due on Monday, May 9th.**