

“Memory & Legend in the Middle Ages”  
 T 2-4:45pm  
 Great Room A – West Ambler Johnston  
 Fall 2012

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### **Description**

How do we know the past? How do we understand that which came before? How is legend formed and how does that differ from other ways to talk about the past? In this course, we will examine the fuzzy lines between memory, history, and legend, focusing particularly on how modern scholars have worked to uncover the processes by which people who lived during the European Middle Ages made sense of their world.

Requirements will include attendance and participation in discussions, a plagiarism quiz, a short paper, an abstract & bibliography (tied to the final paper), a rough draft (of the final paper), and a final research paper.

### **Office Hours**

M 3:45-4:30pm (342 Lane Hall)

T 1-2pm (West AJ)

If you can't make this time, just get in touch so we can work something out. I check my email regularly, and can always be reached after class to set up an appointment.

### **ADA Statement**

If you have a university-sanctioned condition that requires my special attention, please come to my office hours or email me to set up an appointment.

### **Course Etiquette: Classroom & Email**

#### Classroom:

- You may eat and drink in class, so long as it isn't a distraction to others.
- You should plan on talking – asking questions, responding to prompts, etc. – in this class. Feel free to disagree with anything either your classmates or I say, but be respectful in your tone.
- Please be sure to turn off all cell phones, iPods, etc. before class begins. Also, feel free to use your computer to take notes but please mute the volume. What you do with VT's wireless network is up to you. You're all adults and I trust that you'll make intelligent choices.
- Be aware, however, that if I determine that your actions are becoming a distraction to your fellow students – for any reason – I will ask you to leave the classroom.

#### Email:

- Email is an essential component of this course and one of the primary means by which I'll communicate with you during the semester. Email, however, is not IM, nor is it Facebook. It's a more formal communication that you will undoubtedly use in your professional life both throughout the rest of our time at VT and in your future workplace.
- Until the end of the semester, I'm not your Dad. I'm not your friend. I'm not your boyfriend. Until the end of the semester, I'm essentially your boss. To that end, be sure the message you're composing is appropriate to the person receiving it (in this case, me).
- If you have any questions, please ask me or take a look at David Shipley and Will Schwalbe's *Send: The Essential Guide to Email for Office and Home* (with website -- <http://www.thinkbeforeyousend.com/>) or the briefer review article [http://www.salon.com/books/feature/2007/07/13/email\\_etiquette/](http://www.salon.com/books/feature/2007/07/13/email_etiquette/).

### ***VT Honor System and Academic Research***

Academic dishonesty (defined as cheating, plagiarism, and falsification) is taken very seriously in this class. Please refer to <http://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/> for a fuller statement of the Honor Code, as well as the Undergraduate Honor System Constitution. Also, consult this online web test for plagiarism at <http://education.indiana.edu/~frick/plagiarism/>.

You may, of course, study together. But everything you turn in should be a product of **your own** understanding and analysis of the material. Be aware that certain sources of information (such as non-academic websites – like SparkNotes.com or Enotes.com – and encyclopedias – like Wikipedia) are **inappropriate** to use for academic research. Also, material you get from other sources **must be cited/referenced properly**, using MLA or Turabian/ Chicago style.

- Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (New York, 2003)
  - basics also at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/> and <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/MLAstyle.pdf>
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago, 1967).
  - basics also at <http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/turabian.html> and <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Chicago-Turabianstyle.pdf>

If you ever have any questions about any of this, please **ASK ME**. I bite only rarely.

### ***A Note on Grading***

Consider a car's speedometer. It is a tool that performs two interrelated functions: (1) It measures speed, and (2) it communicates that information to the driver. In a somewhat similar way, grading is a tool that also performs two interrelated functions: (1) It assesses academic performance, and (2) it communicates that information to the student. When driving, you glance at the speedometer to determine the speed of the vehicle—if it is what you want, you try to maintain it; if not, you make appropriate adjustments. . . It's perfectly normal to desire good grades since they serve as evidence that a student has demonstrated competence in a particular area. But problems arise when students assume that their primary goal in college is to earn good grades so they can achieve or maintain a certain GPA. That is like believing that the primary goal of driving a car is not to reach a particular destination but to achieve or maintain a certain speed.

-- from <http://chronicle.com/article/GradingIts-Discontents/132789/>

### ***Requirements***

The grading breakdown is as follows: class participation & in-class questions (18%), a plagiarism quiz (2%), an abstract & bibliography (tied to the final paper) (10%), a short paper (tied to the final paper) (20%), a first draft (of the final paper) (15%), and a final research paper (35%).

**\*\*\*Items will be considered “late” if not received by 9pm on the day they are due.\*\*\***

**\*\*\*I will not accept ANY late assignments without a written, university-recognized excuse.\*\*\***

- Class Participation & Questions (18%) – Class participation is absolutely required. You must talk in this class because a substantial portion of your grade is determined by your participation in discussion. Consequently, a significant number of absences will adversely effect your grade.
  - Participation **DOES NOT** mean knowing the right answer; it means coming prepared to every class and offering an analysis or asking questions.
  - **Each week you must bring in 2 typed discussion questions** to help us get things going. They can be about something you don't understand, something you found interesting (or “dumb”), etc. **Type** these questions up while doing your reading, bring them to class, and use the extra space on the page to take notes for that day. I'll collect these at the end of each class in order to note that you've completed the assignment.

- Plagiarism Quiz (2%) – A handout will be provided with details. You will only receive points on this assignment if you turn it in on time. If you miss the due date for some reason, you **MUST** still turn it in. Successful completion of this assignment is **ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL** to passing this class.
- Abstract and Bibliography (10%) – This is a short (1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced) summary of what your final paper will be about. It must include a clear thesis statement. Include a thorough, though not necessarily complete, properly-formatted (MLA or Chicago/ Turabian) bibliography on which you'll base your final paper.
  - You will turn this in **electronically**, via Scholar. I will comment on it, electronically, and return it to you again via the "Drop Box." We'll talk about this more in class.
- Short Paper (20%) – This will be a 3 page typed analysis of something related to the subject of the course. A handout for the assignment will be provided with more information. Please also see below (under "Final Research Paper") for more information on paper writing.
  - You will turn this in as a **electronically**, via Scholar.
- First Draft (15%) – The rough draft will be graded on the basis of the amount of work that you have put into it – eg, how coherent your thesis is, how many sources you have gathered, how well you use these sources, etc. The rough draft should be as close to the finished product as possible. It must be **at least 10 pages long**.
  - You will turn this in **electronically** through Scholar. I'll use Microsoft Word to make comments and then put it back in your drop box for you to download and make changes. We'll talk more about this in class.
- Final Research Paper (35%) – The paper must be no less than 13 pages long & no longer than 18.
  - You will turn this in as a **hard copy**.
  - Topic
    - You will pick your topic near the beginning of class. It will be an academic examination of how some person/ event/ phenomenon from the Middle Ages has been remembered and/ or commemorated.
      - This is NOT about retelling/ explaining an event or person. The paper's about how others have retold/ explained that event or person.
    - **YOU MUST HAVE YOUR TOPIC APPROVED** before proceeding.
  - You must consult **AT LEAST 10 ACADEMIC SOURCES** for this assignment (and I would *strongly* suggest more). This means no encyclopedias and websites of dubious merit. At least 75% of your sources must be obtained exclusively from Newman library or ILL.
    - If you have never done a research paper before, see me ASAP.
  - Papers must have a clear thesis, be organized well, be properly referenced/ cited, and be proofread. Please refer to the various handouts given throughout the course, or talk to me for more information.
    - **\*\*NB\*\*** – This is a major assignment that governs a substantial portion of your final grade. You are being asked to quickly become masters of an unfamiliar landscape and produce a thoughtful, critical, analysis of a personage and a period.
    - Begin working on it early. You CANNOT complete it in the last weeks of the semester and expect to do well in this course.

### Readings

Things to buy from Bookstore, BN.com, Amazon.com, etc.

- Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cambridge, 2008). ISBN: 9780521716314
- Gabrielle Spiegel, *The Past as Text*, (Baltimore, 1997). ISBN: 0801862590
- Matthew Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory: The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade* (Oxford, 2011). ISBN: 019959144X

## On-Line Texts (Scholar.VT.edu):

- Almost all of the readings for this course are available online, via Scholar (<http://scholar.vt.edu/>).
  - The appropriate PDFs for each week are in the “Resources” section of Scholar, then in the folder entitled “Weekly Readings,” then in folders labeled by the relevant week of the course.

***Schedule of Lectures & Readings***

**WARNING:** Some of the material covered in this course will be “R-rated.” There will be violence, sex, and bad language (but only in the readings, I hope). We are dealing with a period both familiar and foreign to us and it is our task to try to understand these people on their terms. If, however, you become uncomfortable with one of the readings, please see me ASAP.

**YOU MUST BRING YOUR READINGS TO CLASS EVERY MEETING!**

<b>Week 1</b> 8/28	<b>Introduction: Why does the Past Matter?</b> Syllabus
<b>Week 2</b> 9/4	<b>NO CLASS</b> Review requirements for <b>Paper Assignment &amp; Plagiarism Quiz</b> (online).
<b>**Week 3</b> 9/11	<b>How can the Humanities help us?</b> <b>**PLAGIARISM QUIZ DUE**</b> SCHOLAR Lehrer, <i>Proust was a Neuroscientist</i> , 75-95, 168-89. Koziol, “Is Robert I in Hell?,” pp. 233-63.
<b>Week 4</b> 9/18	<b>Nostalgia</b> Film (we’ll watch in class – please plan on staying a bit late) <i>Pleasantville</i> , dir. Gary Ross SCHOLAR Boyn, “Nostalgia & its Discontents,” pp. 7-18. Booker, <i>Past Convictions</i> , pp. 1-12. Dutton, <i>Politics of Dreaming</i> , pp. 5-22, 195-224.
<b>**Week 5</b> 9/25	<b>Telling Stories</b> Film (we’ll watch in class) <i>Memento</i> , dir. Christopher Nolan SCHOLAR White, “Value of Narrativity,” 1-25
Fri. 9/28	<b>**ABSTRACT &amp; BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE**</b>
<b>Week 6</b> 10/2	<b>The Art of Memory – Theory</b> Carruthers, <i>The Book of Memory</i> , pp. 18-55, 195-273.

- Week 7**  
10/9
- The Art of Memory – Practice**  
Film (we'll watch in class – please plan on staying a bit late)  
*Inception*, dir. Christopher Nolan  
SCHOLAR  
Carruthers & Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory*, pp. 205-14, 255-93.  
Yates, *The Art of Memory*, pp. 129-59.  
OPTIONAL – Reading/ Video on Quantum Matrix Program
- \*\*Week 8**  
10/16
- The Challenge of Postmodernism**  
**\*\*\*GUEST – PROF. JACE STUCKEY (MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY)\*\*\***  
Film (we'll watch in class – please plan on staying a bit late)  
*Total Recall*, dir. Paul Verhoeven  
Spiegel, *Past as Text*, pp. 3-28.  
SCHOLAR  
White, "Historical Emplotment & the Problem of Truth in Historical Representation," pp. 27-42.
- Fri. 10/19
- \*\*SHORT PAPER DUE\*\***
- Week 9**  
10/23
- History & Memory/ Truth & Lies**  
SCHOLAR  
Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution*, pp. 31-58  
Burke, "History as Social Memory," pp. 97-110.  
Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, Chapters 1-2.
- Week 10**  
10/30
- Truth & Lies/ History & Memory**  
Spiegel, *Past as Text*, pp. 83-99, 138-62, 178-94.  
Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, Chapters 4-5.
- \*\*Week 11**  
11/6
- NO CLASS**  
**\*\*ELECTION DAY – VOTE\*\*\***  
Individual meetings about papers this week
- Fri. 11/9
- \*\*FIRST DRAFT DUE\*\***
- Week 12**  
11/13
- NO CLASS**  
Begin revisions of final paper.
- \*\*Week 13**
- THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Week 14**  
11/27

**What does it mean to Remember?**

SCHOLAR

Photo (by Prof. Gabriele)

Blight, *Race and Reunion*, pp. 6-30, 255-99.

Gov. Bob McDonnell (Virginia), "Declaration of Confederate History Month" (2010)

Gov. Sonny Perdue (Georgia), "Declaration of Confederate History Month" (2003 & 2009)

Castelli, *Martyrdom and Memory*, pp. 172-96.

**Week 15**  
12/4

**Ought we to forget?**

\*\*\***PIZZA**\*\*\*

Film (we'll watch in class – please plan on staying a bit late)

"Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," dir. Michel Gondry

SCHOLAR

Vivian, *Public Forgetting*, pp. 39-59.

Lehrer, "The Forgetting Pill," pp. 1-15.

**Week 16**  
Wed. 12/12

**NO CLASS**

**\*\*PAPER DUE BY 5PM @ MY OFFICE\*\***