

Fall/Winter 2018-2019

AP/EN 4050 6.0A (Y)

The Arts of Memory

Course Director:

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Delivery Format:

Seminar

Time:

Tuesday 8:30-11:30am

Description:

Memory Studies has emerged in recent decades as an interdisciplinary field that spans one of the most complicated and political domains of human thought. Our current intellectual and artistic preoccupation with memory is an inheritance of the 20th century, a century which began with a theory of the self built on memory (psychoanalysis), fell into two world-wars and the inevitable sequences of forgetting and remembering that followed, and then saw the development of radically new and sophisticated physical and electronic archives, which threaten, so theory would have it, to replace human memory altogether. We waver between Plato's ancient concern that writing is a poor substitute for living memory, a form of "hypomnesia," and the "hypermnosis" characteristic of our obsessive collecting and memorial practices of the late twentieth century. Beginning with the classic texts of the ars memoria, "The Arts of Memory" will explore contemporary theories of cultural, collective, archival, literary, digital and indigenous memory through transhistoric texts and transgeneric materials that have proven iconic to current configurations of memory studies.

Category:

A

Historical Requirement:

N/A

Requirements:

2 response papers (approx. 750-1000 words) each worth 20% (Fall term)
Leading class discussion, based on response papers 20% (various dates)
Essay Proposal with annotated sources (approximately 2 pages) 10%
1 final essay (approx. 2500 words) worth 30%

Reading List:

Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chapters 1-3) (Chicago); Avishai Margalit, *The Ethics of Memory* (Harvard); Patrick Modiano, *Dora Bruder* ; Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* ; Michael Ondaatje, *Running in the Family* ; Paul Auster, *The Invention of Solitude* ; W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* ; A.R. Luria; *The Mind of a Mnemonist: A Little Book About a Vast Memory*.

Selected chapters and short works by the following authors will be available on line or on library reserve: Aristotle, Plato, Paul Ricoeur, Giorgio Agamben, Danilo Kis, Shoshana Felman, Cathy Caruth, Jonathan Nolan and others.

Students who enroll in this course must be available to attend at least four reasonably-priced productions and galleries in downtown Toronto, scheduled as conveniently as possible.

Other primary and secondary readings will be available electronically on the course Moodle site.

Open To:

YR 4 Honours