

**University of Calgary**  
**Department of Communication, Media and Film**

Communication and Media Studies COMS 591 S01  
**Senior Seminar in Communication and Media Studies**

**Media and Memory**

Fall 2018

Thurs., Sept 6 – Thurs., Dec. 6 (excluding Nov. 13 & 15)

Lecture: T & Th 9:30-10:45

**Instructor:** Dr. S. Thrift  
**Office:** SS 210  
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**Web Page:** D2L available through MyUofC portal  
**Office Hours:** T 11:30-1:30

**Course Description**

In this seminar, students will examine memory as a mediated phenomenon. From photographic images, roadside memorials to virtual memorials, we study how memory does not reside in objects, per se, but is constituted by a set of cultural practices and communicative activities. Contrary to assumptions that memory is incidental, students will investigate how memory is purposeful and selective – and therefore political. This informs contemporary debates surrounding collective modes of remembrance, including public memorials and monuments that raise questions about whose histories are deemed worthy of remembrance and whose are not. Students will also consider the ways in which mass media technologies and, significantly, digital media have inspired two, apparently contradictory, claims: that we are a society experiencing both a “crisis of memory” and a “memory boom.” Do digital media technologies weaken our memory muscles and create amnesiac societies? Or, with the proliferation of digital storage devices, has it become impossible to forget? To answer these questions, students will study historical and current examples through the lens of key themes and concepts from media memory studies.

**Additional Information**

A combination of lecture, class discussion, and student presentations will comprise the weekly meetings of this course.

**Objectives of the Course**

1. To integrate communication knowledge and skills gained from formal and informal learning at the postsecondary level.
2. To differentiate and assess key debates and theories of memory based on changing media environments.
3. To identify, describe and interpret the political and cultural significance of memorials.
4. To build communication skills and understanding through multimedia project design, presentations, and written expression.

## Textbooks and Readings

A digital course pack has been prepared and will be made available on the COMS 591 S01 course website.

## Internet and electronic communication device information

The in-class use of computers for activities other than note-taking purposes is not permitted, unless directed by the instructor. Therefore, mobile phones and other electronic communication devices must be set to mute or shut off upon entering the classroom and should not be used in the classroom or during class time. If students engage in non-course related online activity during class, the professor will request that they power down their device for the remainder of class time.

No audio or video recording of any kind is allowed in class without the explicit permission of the instructor.

## Email

When corresponding with the instructor via email, students should include the course name (Media & Memory or “COMS 591”) in the subject line. If you do not include the course name in your email’s subject line, your message may get overlooked in the instructor’s inbox and go unread! Please maintain a respectful tone in your correspondence with the instructor.

Email is most useful for short, specific inquiries. If you have detailed questions on the course material, assignments, or grades, visit the instructor during office hours.

The instructor will respond to emails during the week, usually on a first-come, first-served basis. Emails sent in the evening or on weekends will not be read (or replied to) until the next working day.

NOTE: Email submissions of work will not be accepted unless otherwise specified.

## Assignments and Evaluation

NOTE: All assignments and exams must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course.

Weight	Course components	Due:
10%	Participation	Sept. 18, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, Nov. 22
25%	Multimedia Memoir & Presentation	TBD
30%	Memorial Study	Oct. 11
20%	Looking into the Past, Part I	Nov. 8
10%	Looking into the Past, Part II	Nov. 29
5%	Looking into the Past, Part III	Dec. 4-6

**Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No**

**Participation (10%)** due: Sept. 18, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, Nov. 22

One purpose of a seminar like this is to encourage students to form their own ideas and share them with their peers. The very work of the course consists of engaging in a discussion of ideas. To this end, students must come to class having carefully read the day's assigned readings, be ready and willing to discuss issues raised in the readings, offer informed, critical responses to video screenings, listen to classmates' remarks attentively and responding in a constructive, respectful manner.

Participation will be evaluated based on in-class reflections. Students will write four in-class reflections that will be administered at any point during class on the specified dates. The reflection may be based on the day's reading or class discussion. Each reflection is worth 2.5 points.

Please note that in-class reflections will only be deferred in the case of illness, bereavement, or varsity team travel. **These graded activities will not be rescheduled due to travel and vacation plans, work obligations, or other scheduling conflicts.**

**Multimedia Memoir & Presentation (25%)** due: Oct. 2 through Nov. 27 (excl. Oct. 18)

The seminar will also include presentation of your multimedia memoirs, in which you attempt to capture or render a vivid memory of an important event or person or scene in your life, using at least two media formats. You might, for example, begin by writing about a vividly remembered event in your life; then recording the piece of writing in your own (or multiple) voices; then illustrating it with visual images; then adding a sound track and producing the entire piece as a digital file on a USB. You will have 10-15 minutes to do your presentation based on this memoir, and you must hand-in a copy of your memoir (on USB key or other format appropriate to your memoir) to the professor. More details provided in class.

**Memorial Study (30%)** due: October 11

Recently, debates over the cultural and political significance of memorials have led to the reconsideration of planned monuments, the removal of existing statuary, or the creation of countermonuments. These controversies highlight the politics of memorials, as they raise questions about what events and individuals are deemed worthy of remembrance in Canadian society and whose histories are erased from collective memory.

Drawing on an example from the list provided below, students must write a 6-8 page essay analyzing the politics of memorials, keeping in mind the following questions: what memory is being preserved? How is it being done and in whose name? What are the consequences of the memory? And what are the consequences of *not* remembering?

These questions stem from one of our course readings (Young 2002), which you will be required to cite in your analysis. You must also draw on two additional scholarly readings, one of which must be an assigned course reading (Winter 2010 strongly recommended). More details provided in class.

- a) "Mother Canada Monument," Cape Breton Highlands National Park, N.S. (2016)
- b) "John A. Macdonald," City of Victoria, B.C. (2018)

- c) "Memorial to the Victims of Communism – Canada, a Land of Refuge," Ottawa, ON (2007-present)

### **"Looking into the Past" Interactive Campus Map Assignment**

#### **Part I: Photograph & Short Essay (20%) due: November 8**

Students will select a "vintage" photograph of the University of Calgary campus and create a "looking into the past" photograph. A written essay (4-5 pages) will accompany the submission of the photograph. The essay will synopsise the site or event depicted in the image, as well as analyze the 'memory effect' created by the juxtaposition of past and present in the photograph. Since this assignment may require archival research, students will be given a workshop at the University Special Collections and Archives. (If students identify a photograph of an off-campus site they'd like to use, they must get permission from the professor before proceeding). To avoid duplication, students must confirm their photograph selection by October 23rd.

#### **Part II: Interactive Map Entry & Post (10%) due: November 29**

For Part II, students will "map" their chosen sites on an interactive digital map of campus and surrounding area by November 29. The map entry will consist of the "Looking..." image as well as a short synopsis of the site (250-500 words). The synopsis should provide the viewer with a clear understanding of the image's context (ex. the location, time period, and identifiable individuals/groups) as well as its broader significance.

The goal is to generate an interactive archive of these "Looking into the Past" images, through which students can share and navigate through the images and historical stories provoked by the Looking into the Past photographs they created. The interactive digital map will also be featured in the planned exhibit of this class project.

#### **Part III: Exhibition & Launch (5%) due: December 4-6**

The "Looking into the Past" images and interactive digital map produced in Parts I and II of this assignment will be mounted in an end-of-term exhibition. In addition to the digital map, students' individual images (and synopses) will be displayed. Students will assist in the creation of this exhibition by ensuring that their final images and revised synopses are available for use in the exhibition, which is scheduled for the last week of class.

**Submission of Assignments:** Please hand in your essays directly to your tutor or instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Please include your name and ID number on all assignments, and be prepared to provide picture ID to pick up assignments or look at marked final exams in SS 320. Personal information is collected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act*. For more information, see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/foip-hia>

**Note:** It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment and to ensure that the proper version is submitted (particularly in courses requiring electronic submission). Including a version date in your file name may be useful.

## Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

## Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

- Students seeking accommodation for transient illnesses (e.g., the flu) should contact their instructors. Whenever possible, students should advise their instructors in advance if they will be missing quizzes, presentations, in-class assignments, or group meetings.
- When accommodations are granted, they may take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test.
- For information on Deferrals of Final Exams and Term Work, see sections G.6 and G.7 of the *University Calendar* at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html> and <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

## Grading & Department of Communication, Media and Film Grade Scale

Final grades are reported as letter grades. In this course, percentage grades will be used to evaluate essays and raw point scores will be used to evaluate in-class reflections. Letter grades will be used for presentations.

The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. The following chart outlines the grade scale percentage equivalents used in the Department of Communication, Media and Film. In calculating final grades in this course, letter grades will be converted to the midpoint of the percentage range, as shown in the final column of the table below.

Grade Point Value	Description	Grade	Dept of CMF grade scale equivalents*	Letter grade % equivalent for calculations* *
<b>4.00</b>	Outstanding performance	<b>A+</b>	96 - 100%	98.0%
<b>4.00</b>	Excellent performance	<b>A</b>	90 - 95.99%	93.0%
<b>3.70</b>	Approaching excellent performance	<b>A -</b>	85 - 89.99%	87.5%
<b>3.30</b>	Exceeding good performance	<b>B+</b>	80 - 84.99%	82.5%
<b>3.00</b>	Good performance	<b>B</b>	75 - 79.99%	77.5%
<b>2.70</b>	Approaching good performance	<b>B-</b>	70 - 74.99%	72.5%

<b>2.30</b>	Exceeding satisfactory performance	<b>C+</b>	65 - 69.99%	67.5%
<b>2.00</b>	Satisfactory performance	<b>C</b>	60 - 64.99%	62.5%
<b>1.70</b>	Approaching satisfactory performance	<b>C-</b>	55 - 59.99%	57.5%
<b>1.30</b>	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	<b>D+</b>	53 - 54.99%	54.0%
<b>1.00</b>	Minimal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject	<b>D</b>	50 - 52.99%	51.5%
<b>0.00</b>	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.	<b>F</b>	0 - 49.99%	0%

\* If percentages are used to calculate final grades, then grades falling within these ranges will be translated to the corresponding letter grades.

\*\* These percentage equivalents will be used for calculating final grades unless an alternative method of final grade calculation is outlined above.

### Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources used in research papers must be properly documented. If you need help with your writing, you may use the writing support services in the Student Success Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Taylor Family Digital Library). Visit the website for more details: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

### Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. In-text citations must be provided, and readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. Wording taken directly from a source must be enclosed within quotation marks (or, for long quotations, presented in the format prescribed by the documentation style you are using). Paraphrased information must not follow the original wording and sentence structure with only slight word substitutions here and there. These requirements apply to all assignments and sources, including those in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media.

For information on citation and documentation styles (including APA, Chicago, IEEE, MLA, and others), visit the links provided at <https://ucalgary.ca/ssc/resources/writing-support/436>. Research and citation resources are also available on the website of the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/> If you have questions about how to document sources, please consult your instructor or visit the writing support services in the Student Success Centre (3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Taylor Family Digital Library, at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

### Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

## Research Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (e.g., surveys, interviews, or observations) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/research/resources/ethics>

## Important information, services, and contacts for students

For information about . . .	Visit or contact . . .
<b>ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING (ASC)</b>	SS 102 403-220-3580 <a href="mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca">artsads@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>CAMPUS SECURITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calgary Police Service</li> <li>• Emergency Text Messaging</li> <li>• Emergency Evacuation &amp; Assembly</li> <li>• Safewalk Program</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a> <b>403-220-5333</b> <b>403-266-1234</b> <b>Emergency: call 911</b> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/textmessage</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints">http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints</a> If you feel uncomfortable walking alone at any time, call Campus Security for an escort (220-5333). For more information, see <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/</a>
<b>DESIRE2LEARN (D2L) Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT help line</li> </ul>	<a href="http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students">http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/desire2learn/home/students</a> 403-220-5555 or <a href="mailto:itsupport@ucalgary.ca">itsupport@ucalgary.ca</a>
<b>STUDENT SUCCESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Support Services</li> <li>• Student Services Mobile App</li> </ul>	<a href="http://ucalgary.ca/ssc">http://ucalgary.ca/ssc</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support">http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents">http://ucalgary.ca/currentstudents</a>
<b>STUDENTS' UNION CONTACTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty of Arts Reps</li> <li>• Student Ombudsman</li> </ul>	<a href="https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/">https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/about/who-we-are/elected-officials/</a> <a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds">http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds</a>
<b>SU WELLNESS CENTRE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• Health Services</li> <li>• Distress centre 24/7 CRISIS LINE</li> <li>• Online resources and tips</li> </ul>	<b>403-210-9355</b> (MSC 370), M-F, 9:00–4:30 pm <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/counselling</a> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/health</a> <b>403-266-HELP (4357)</b> <a href="http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus">http://ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/healthycampus</a> If you're concerned about a friend or your own well-being, it is important to seek help early. Call or visit the SU Wellness Centre or the 24-hour crisis line.

## Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

Lecture Date	Topic & Reading	Deadlines
Sept 6	<b>Course Introduction</b>	
Sept 11-13	<b>Personal Memory</b> Jose van Dijk. 2007. "Memory Matters in the Digital Age." In <i>Mediated Memories in the Digital Age</i> , 27-52. Stanford University Press.	
Sept 18-20	<b>Communities of Memory</b> Iwona Irwin-Zarecka. 1994. "Communities of Memory." <i>Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory</i> . Transaction Publishers.	In-Class Reflection, Sept. 18
Sept 25-27	<b>lieux de mémoire</b> Jay Winter. 2010. "Sites of Memory and the Shadow of War." In <i>A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook</i> , edited by Astrid Erll, Ansgar Nünning, and Sara Young, 61-74. Berlin: De Gruyter.  James Young. 2002. "Memory, Countermemory, and the End of the Monument." In <i>At Memory's Edge: After Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture</i> , 90-119. New Haven: Yale University Press.	
Oct 2-4	<b>Memory as Commodity</b> Alison Landsberg. 2004. "Prosthetic Memory." In <i>Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture</i> , 25-48. Columbia: Columbia University Press.	In-class Reflection, Oct. 4
Oct 9-11	<b>Mediated Nostalgia</b> Ryan Lizardi. 2016. "The 'Looking Into the Past' Photographs: Comparing and Sharing the Past." <i>Visual Communication Quarterly</i> 23, no. 3 (July): 135-146.	Memorial Study, Oct. 11
Oct 16-18	<b>The Archive as Memory Keeper</b> Joan M. Schwarz and Terry Cook. 2002. "Archives, Records and Power: The Making of Modern Memory." <i>Archival Science</i> 2: 1-19.	Special Collections and Archives Workshop, Oct. 18



Oct 23-25	<p><b>Flashbulb Memories</b>  Alison Winter. "Flashbulb Memories." In <i>Memories: Fragments of a Modern History</i>, 157-178. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.</p>	Confirm "Looking into the Past" site selection, Oct. 23.
Oct 30-Nov 1	<p><b>Activist Frames of Remembrance</b>  Sharon Rosenberg. 2003. "Neither Forgotten nor Fully Remembered: Tracing an Ambivalent Public Memory on the Anniversary of the Montréal Massacre." <i>Feminist Theory</i> 4, no.5: 5-27.</p>	In-Class Reflection, Nov. 1
Nov 6-8	<p><b>Journalism and Memory</b>  Michael Schudson. 2014. "Journalism as a Vehicle of Non-Commemorative Cultural Memory." In <i>Journalism and Memory</i>, edited by Barbie Zelizer and Karen Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 85-96. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.</p> <p>Jill A. Edy. 2014. "Collective Memory in a Post-Broadcast World." <i>Journalism and Memory</i> edited by Barbie Zelizer and Karen Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 66-84. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.</p>	"Looking..." essays and photo due, Nov. 8
Nov 13-15	<b>No Class (Reading Week)</b>	
Nov 20-22	<p><b>Affect &amp; Public Mourning</b>  Erica Doss. 2010. "Grief: Temporary Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning." In <i>Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America</i>, 61-116. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.</p>	In-Class Reflection, Nov. 22
Nov 27-29	<p><b>Virtual Memorials</b>  Alice Marwick &amp; Nicole B. Ellison. 2012. "'There Isn't WiFi in Heaven!': Negotiating Visibility on Facebook Memorial Pages." <i>Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media</i> 56, no. 3: 378-400.</p>	Post "Looking..." entry to map, Nov. 27
Dec 4-6	<b>'Looking into the Past' Exhibition &amp; Launch</b>	Final version of "Looking..." entry prepared, Dec. 4