The Politics of National Memory
Archer Center, Fall 2016 (August 23-November 29)
Dr. Joel L. Swerdlow

Washington’s Monument
Walt Whitman, February 1885

Ah, not this marble, dead and cold:
Far from its base and shaft expanding—the round zones circling,

Thou, Washington, art all the world's, the continents' entire—
not yours alone, America,

Europe's as well, in every part, castle of lord or laborer's cot,
Or frozen North, or sultry South—the African's—the Arab's in
his tent,

Old Asia's there with venerable smile, seated amid her ruins;
(Greets the antique the hero new? 'tis but the same—the heir
legitimate, continued ever,

The indomitable heart and arm—proofs of the never-broken
line,

Courage, alertness, patience, faith, the same—e'en in defeat
defeated not, the same)

Wherever sails a ship, or house is built on land, or day or night,
Through teeming cities' streets, indoors or out, factories or farms,
Now, or to come, or past—where patriot wills existed or exist,
Wherever Freedom, pois'd by Toleration, sway'd by Law,
Stands or is rising thy true monument.
The Politics of National Memory – Fall 2016

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*Please put “Archer” in subject line for emails.*
I will always return your email or telephone call within 24 hours. If you do not hear from me, please assume your message or email never arrived, and call or write again.

**Office Hours:** Monday 11AM-2PM and 4-6 PM; and Wednesday, 7-9 AM and 11AM-2PM—and any day by appointment.

**Course Pre-requisites and Other Restrictions:** Acceptance into the Archer Fellowship Program

**Course Description**
This course focuses on the politics of national memory by fostering an ongoing conversation about the meaning of the American Republic and the historical memory found in memorials, monuments and museums in Washington, D.C. The course will explore political and artistic controversies that have shaped the design and building of many museums, monuments and memorials that define the architectural landscape of the nation’s capital. Along with visiting many of these sites, the course will involve a critical discussion in the classroom of the monuments, museums and memorials in light of primary texts. Students will engage in critical reflection about their personal experience of Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and many of the structures that do so much to define this city and national memory today.

**Student Learning Objectives & Outcomes**
After completing the course students will be able to:

1. Describe and explain the development of Washington, D.C., and the National Mall as places of historical memory.
2. Describe the political controversies that have shaped the building of major national monuments, memorials, and museums in Washington, D.C.
3. Critically evaluate the goals and objectives of national monuments in light of different political and historical contexts.
4. Understand through personal participation the process through which complex ideas, historic evidence and personal experience are woven together to formulate a useful and testable overall theory that stimulates discussion and invites improvements.

**Required Texts**
Readings—mostly primary source documents—will be assigned with every module below. Note that the skills at experiencing a place and reading a document run parallel and augment each other. Readings (some via links) will be provided to you.
**Additional Requirement:** You must obtain a Readers Card at the Library of Congress and bring your card to the first class.

**Grading Policy and Participation**
The core of this class is your journal and class discussions. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material. The model for this class is a graduate seminar. You are expected to participate in class with questions and ideas, and by engaging in debates and discussions. More opportunities to participate will come by volunteering to make presentations; read from your journal; and take the lead in activities we will conduct during class.

It is assumed you are all honors-level students who will attend all classes and complete your journal and all other assignments satisfactorily and in a timely manner. All excuses for compelling personal or work-related reasons must be granted beforehand. Even one unexcused absence or late work will result in lower grades. Students will at all times conduct themselves according to their home University’s rules.

Half of your grade will come from your journal and half from class discussions.

Midterm grades will be discussed with each student 7-8 weeks into the semester.

Final grades will be reported to your home UT System institution by December 9, 2016, and posted in accordance with their respective grade submission deadlines.

There will be no scheduled tests, but unannounced quizzes will be conducted to help ensure that students are keeping up-to-date will all assignments.

**Electronics in Class**
You may take notes on your laptop or mobile device and with prior permission use a laptop or phone to explore something related to class discussion (simply raise your hand and ask). A zero-tolerance policy for other uses of electronics will be enforced. You will be asked to leave immediately if you break this rule.

**Invited Speakers**
Experts or other notable people will be invited to speak for a portion of a class if their experiences and accomplishments relate to the class agenda. All speakers will be able to help students to network.

**Site Visits and Classes at the Archer Center**
The semester is divided into classes held as a museum, monument or memorial, and classroom discussion that focus on questions and issues raised during these site visits. Often, before, during or after a class at a site, you will be required to visit other sites. These “not-in-class” visits are mandatory. Unexcused failures to visit assigned sites will result in a lower grade.
Journals
Students will each keep a journal that focuses on what you think, feel and experience at each of the sites you visit as part of this class.

Among the goals is for you to have a memoir of your semester in Washington, DC.

Please note:
1. All entries must be in the same email thread with me (each Archer has his or her own thread);
2. Questions and assignments will augment journal entries at various sites;
3. All content must be in the body of the email, not sent as attachments; photos and videos (which you may include) can be attached;
4. Your journal will be kept confidential; I may ask you to share an idea, etc. with the class;
5. There are no length limits; journal entries can be as short or long, or as visual, as you want;
6. My responses to journal entries will focus on content, not writing—which is expected to meet basic standards of grammar and clarity.

Adjustments Due to Weather
For our visits to outdoor sites, please be prepared for outdoor conditions by dressing appropriately (e.g. rain protection and comfortable walking shoes). In cases of extreme weather, classes will be at The Archer Center; you will be notified via text message or email by 3 pm the day of the site visit. Whether we meet outside, or inside a museum, you must be on time so the entire class does not have to wait. Plan your travel; the subway running late, or that you got lost are not valid excuses.

Class Discussions
Discussions—in the classroom and at the sites we visit— are modeled on a graduate seminar; you are expected to participate and may be called upon even when you do not volunteer. Discussions will not be dominated only by the people who are eager to talk.
Calendar

August 23 (Tuesday). JOINT CLASS. Bus trip from Archer Center to see the Enola Gay at the Air & Space Museum in Dulles, Arlington National Cemetery; and 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon.
Readings (to be read aloud to you on the bus):
• Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass (excerpt)
• James Madison, Federalist 10 and 51

August 25 (Thursday). JOINT CLASS. Archer Center
Framework for the Class: “Washington, D.C. and Historic Memory”
Invited speaker: Dr. Edward J. Harpham, Associate Provost, University of Texas at Dallas
A recap of the development of Washington, D.C. as the nation’s capital, including a discussion of the evolving visions, plans, and controversies for the city as a whole, the National Mall and the city’s memorials, monuments and museums in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. This lecture will present the guiding theory for the class; we will weave it into our discussions during each module below.

August 25 (12:30 pm): Group visit to top of the Washington Monument. This provides a physical perspective on the area we will using as our textbook (Arlington Cemetery to Capitol Hill)—which is unlike any other place, anywhere, at any time in history.

September 7 (Wed; 6:30 PM). JOINT CLASS. Meet at the top steps of the Lincoln Memorial

Before this class, visit: Rotunda for the Chapters of Freedom at the National Archives; and the Emancipation Memorial in Lincoln Park.

Before this class, read:
• Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address
• Abraham Lincoln, 1862 Annual Message to Congress
• Frederick Douglass, “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln”
• Martin Luther King, Jr., “The American Dream” (1961)

September 13-(Tuesday; 6:30 PM). JOINT CLASS. Meet at top steps of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial; and walk around Tidal Basin to George Mason Memorial, Franklin D Roosevelt Memorial, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

Before this class, read:
• George Mason, Virginia Declaration of Rights
• Ronald Reagan, “Economic Bill of Rights”
• FDR, “Economic Bill of Rights”
• MLK, Jr., “Poor People’s Campaign” (Dec 4, 1967 press conference)
September 19-20 (Mon-Tues). Discussion at the Archer Center

Before this class, visit:
• Veterans with Lifetime Disabilities Memorial
• Site of Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial
• Ulysses S. Grant Memorial

Before this class, read:
• Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, excerpt
• Alexis de Tocqueville, “Why the Americans Raise Some Insignificant Monuments and Others that are Very Grand”
• Henry James, “The Moral Equivalent of War”
• John F. Kennedy, “Announcing the U.S. Military Attack on Cuba” (never delivered)

September 26 (Monday). JOINT CLASS. Meet at the statue of the three soldiers at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; we will walk to the Korean War Memorial, World War I Memorial, and World War II Memorial.

Before this class, read:
• Norman Thomas, “America and the War”
• Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Farewell Address to the Nation”

October 6 (Thursday). JOINT CLASS. Play at Ford's Theater and walk on the route of Lincoln’s never-completed return to the White House

Before this class, read:
• *Survival in a Nuclear Attack* (excerpt)
• Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* and *White Jacket* (excerpts)
• *9/11 Commission Report*, excerpt

October 8 (Saturday). JOINT CLASS. Meet at Main Entrance to African-American History Museum

Before this class, visit:
• Japanese-American Internment Memorial

Before this class, read:
• Frederick Douglass, *Autobiography* (excerpt)
• Mark Twain, “The United States of Lyncherdom”
• James J. Kilpatrick, *The Southern Case for School Segregation* (excerpt)
• *Kerner Commission Report* (excerpt)
October 17-18 (Mon/Tues). Discussion at the Archer Center

Before this class, read:
• Susan B. Anthony, “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?”
• Reader and Guide for New Americans (excerpt)

NOTE: Class A and Class B will SWITCH class meeting days starting OCTOBER 24/25!!

October 29 (Saturday). JOINT CLASS. Meet at Air & Space Museum; Natural History Museum

Before this class, visit:
• U.S. Botanical Garden

Before this class, read
• Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Ode”
• Alfred Wallace to Charles Darwin, “Survival of the Fittest”
• Robert F. Kennedy, “A Tiny Ripple of Hope”

October 31/November 1 (Mon-Tues) Discussions at the Archer Center

November 5 (Saturday, 10AM). JOINT CLASS. Newseum; meet at the group entrance

Before this class, read:
• Plato, The Republic (excerpt)
• James Bryce, The American Commonwealth (excerpt)
• Ronald Reagan, “Tear Down This Wall”

November 7 (Monday) and November 9 (Wednesday) Archer Center
Pre and Post Election Discussions – Attendance required on both days.

Note: Dr. Chin and Dr. Swerdlow are joining classes this week. Students are required to attend class both days. Class A and Class B will meet jointly with a guest speaker from 6:30-7:30, followed by discussion sections facilitated separately by Dr. Chin and Dr. Swerdlow. The readings and questions for consideration listed below pertain only to Dr. Chin’s class.

• Review readings from prior weeks and any of the following election analysis/political report resources:
  o http://cookpolitical.com/
  o http://rothenberggonzales.com/
  o http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/
  o https://texaspolitics.utexas.edu/
November 19 (Saturday). JOINT CLASS. Meet outside the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on the Eisenhower Plaza

Before this class, visit:
• American Indian Museum

Before this class, read:
• Mary Berg, Warsaw Ghetto Diary (excerpt)
• Simon Wiesenthal, The Sunflower (excerpt)
• Primo Levi-Paul Steinberg dialogue, Speak You Also and If This is a Man (excerpts)

November 21-22 (Mon-Tues): Summary and Final Discussion at the Archer Center

November 28-29 (Mon-Tues): Possible class in case weather problems have disrupted the above schedule

CONGRATULATIONS!!!! ENJOY YOUR VACATION!!!!!