Course Description:
Visual culture and memory studies have emerged over the last few decades as interdisciplinary, transnational fields of study in which vital scholarship is being produced. While memory studies originated in literary studies and history, it now crosses such fields and disciplines as anthropology, art and design, media studies, and sociology. The study of visual culture emerged out of an expansion of art history, yet is now fully realized at the intersections of art, media, and design. These fields intersect in important ways, drawing on Holocaust studies, trauma studies, psychoanalysis, cultural studies, and architecture/design with visuality and images playing a key role in memory culture and memory playing a key role in the realm of images and visuality. While the culture of memory has its origins in national meaning, theories and aesthetics of memory are transnational and circulate globally. Visual culture studies is also increasingly global in its reach, as visual culture defines a global context of image circulation, digital media, viral networks, and virtual worlds.

This course examines theories of memory in relation to global visual culture, looking in particular at the intersections of memory with media forms such as film and television, photography, art, architecture, and design. We will look at the foundational concepts of cultural memory and at technologies of memory, critical visuality, artistic engagements with memory, and memory’s remediation in digital media.

The course will address questions such as: What role has the photograph played in concepts of modern history? How are historical narratives told through the media of film and television? What issues are raised by the form of the historical docudrama? How is cultural memory produced and circulated through television and film and photography? What is the difference between history and cultural memory? How cultural memory is experienced through aesthetics, how artists are engaging with memory, and the interrelationship of media forms with the politics of memory will be our primary focuses.
Course Requirements:
Students are required to attend all seminars, to undertake the reading assignments seriously, and to participate fully in seminar discussions. Readings will be prioritized each week. Each week 3-4 students will be assigned to bring questions to class for discussion or to report on an additional reading. Students will do either (1) a short paper every two weeks on a topic related to the course material for a total of 5 short papers, or (2) one short paper mid-semester of 5-7 pages, and one more in-depth research paper, 10-12 pages, by the end of the semester. Grades will consider class participation 10% and (1) 4 short papers of 15% each and the last short paper 30%, or (2) paper 1 30%, paper 2 60%.

Required Texts:
All other readings are posted in pdf on NYU Classes.

Academic Integrity:
Academic integrity is the guiding principle for all that you do, from taking exams, making oral presentations to writing term papers. It requires that you recognize and acknowledge information derived from others, and take credit only for ideas and work that are yours. You violate the principle of academic integrity when you cheat on an exam, submit the same work for two different courses without prior permission from your professors, receive help on a take-home examination that calls for independent work, or plagiarize.

When taking this class, you enter into a contract that states that all the work you are turning in has been your own and no one else’s, and that you have not turned in any work for which you have received credit in another class, and that you have properly cited other people’s work and ideas. Do not take this policy lightly! Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade in the course. If you have questions about these policies, or proper citation of scholarship, please come speak with me in person. (see http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity)

Student Resources
- Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.
- Writing Center (Washington Square): 411 Lafayette, 4th Floor. Schedule an appointment online at https://nyu.mywconline.com or just walk-in.

MCC’s Writing Program
MCC’s Writing Coach, Dr. Kari Hensley, is here to support grad students in the writing and revising process. You are encouraged to make an appointment with her whether you are interested in refining your voice or are struggling to find it. Through individual
sessions, she can work with you on papers, thesis/dissertations, conference papers, cover letters, and more. For more info and to make an appointment, visit: https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/mcc/masters/writing

Weekly Schedule

Week 1—September 6
Introduction

Week 2—September 13
Theorizing Memory
Reading:
Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History” (excerpt)
Sigmund Freud, “A Note Upon the Mystic Writing Pad” (excerpt)
Maurice Halbwachs, “The Collective Memory” (excerpt)
Marita Sturken, Tangled Memories, Introduction
Andreas Huyssen, “Present Pasts”
Bill Schwarz, “Memory, Temporality, Modernity” (excerpt)

Week 3—September 20
Modernity and Colonial Visuality
Reading:
Nicholas Mirzoeff, The Right to Look (Introduction and Chapter 1)
Kristin Ross, Fast Cars, Clean Bodies (Introduction and Chapter 2)
Anne Friedberg, “The Mobilized and Virtual Gaze in Modernity”
Ben Singer, “Modernity, Hyperstimulus, and the Rise of Popular Sensationalism”
Vanessa Schwartz, “Public Visits to the Morgue”
Wolfgang Schivelbush, “Panoramic Travel” (excerpt)

Week 4—September 27
Nostalgia/Irony/Return
Reading:
Svetlana Boym, The Future of Nostalgia (excerpt)
Jonathan Bach, “The Taste Remains”
Michael Rothberg, Multidirectional Memory, excerpts
Neil Levy and Michael Rothberg, “Memory Studies in a Moment of Danger: Fascism, Postfascism, and the Contemporary Political Imaginary”
Judith Butler, Precarious Life, Chapter 2: Violence, Mourning, Politics
Week 5—October 4
Photography and Memory
Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (excerpts)
Leo Spitzer, “The Album and the Crossing”
Ernst van Alphen, *Staging the Archive*: Intro and Chapter 6: Depletion
Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer, “School Photos and Their Afterlives”
Geoffrey Batchen, *Forget Me Not* (excerpt)

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Week 6—October 11
Dana Polan guest lecture: Cinema and Memory: Biopics and Docudramas
Reading:
Hayden White, “The Modernist Event”
Marita Sturken, “Reenactment, Fantasy and the Paranoia of History”
Susannah Radstone, “Cinema and Memory”

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Week 7—October 18
The Image Icon and the Visual Atlas
Reading:
Susan Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe* (excerpt)
Georges Didi-Huberman, *The Surviving Image* (excerpt)
Robert Harriman and John Lucaites, *No Caption Needed* (excerpt)
Marita Sturken, Tourists of History, chapter 4
Ulric Neisser and Nicole Harsch, “Phantom Flashbulbs”

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Week 8—October 25
Memory, Mass Culture and Digital Remediation
Reading:
Alison Landsberg, Introduction to *Prosthetic Memory*
Alison Landsberg, *Engaging the Past*: Introduction and Chapter 1
Andrew Hoskins, “Memory of the Multitude: The End of Collective Memory”
Timothy Barker, “Television In and Out of Time”
Alex Lambert et al, “Algorithmic Memorial Videos”
Week 9—November 1
The Politics of Memorials
Reading:
James Young, “The Memorial Arc: Between Berlin’s Denkmal and New York City’s 9/11 Memorial” and “Memory, Countermemory, and the End of Monument”
Katherine Hite, *Politics and the Art of Commemoration*, excerpt
Shelly Hornstein, “Memorializing Site”
Jonathan Bach, “The Wall After the Wall”

Field Trip to 9/11 Memorial and Museum

Week 10—November 8
The Memory Museum
Reading:
Marita Sturken, “The Objects that Lived”
Lana Lin, “Reparative Objects in the Freudian Archives”
Orphan Pamuk, “The Innocence of Objects”
Katherine Hite, “Revisiting the Cold War through 21st Century Museums of Memory of the Americas”
Jens Andermann, “Returning to the Site of Horror: On the Reclaiming of Clandestine Concentration Camps in Argentina”

Week 11—November 15
Memory, Race, Slavery
Reading:
Tina M. Campt, *Listening to Images* (excerpts)
Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (excerpts)
Cheryl Finley “Authenticating Dungeons, Whitewashing Castles: The Former Sites of Slave Trade on the Ghanian Coast”
Eric Foner, “Confederate Statues and ‘Our’ History”
Group of articles on Confederate Monuments
Group of articles on the National Lynching memorial

Week of November 22, no class, Thanksgiving
Week 12—November 29
The Historical Graphic Novel and the Historical Musical
Reading:
Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*
Hillary Chute and Art Spiegelman, “Why Comics?” from MetaMaus
Marianne Hirsch, “Mourning and Post-Memory”
Group of articles on Hamilton

Week 13—December 6
Memory and Human Rights
Reading:
Adam Rosenblatt, “Aparición con vida: Disappearance and the Politics of the Counterfactual from Argentina to Ayotzinapa”
Mark Ungar and Katherine Hite, “The Arc of Human Rights”
Katherine Hite, “Empathic Unsettlement and the Outsider Within Argentine Spaces of Memory”
Andreas Huyssen, “International Human Rights and the Politics of Memory”
Gonzalo Conte, “A Topography of Memory: Reconstructing the Architectures of Terror in the Argentine Dictatorship”

Week 14—December 13
Memory Commodity, Tourism, and Performance
Reading:
Marita Sturken, “Pilgrimages, Reenactment, and Souvenirs”
Diana Taylor, “Trauma as Durational Performance”
Diana Taylor, “You Are Here: HIJOS and the DNA of Performance” From *The Archive and the Repertoire*
Laurie Beth Clark, “Ethical Spaces: Ethics and Propriety in Trauma Tourism”