

MEMORIALS, MONUMENTS AND MEANING

Coordinator: Mark Dichter

Memorials are expressions of officially defined collective memory. They mark events that define our perception of our shared history, culture and ideals. As vehicles for communal mourning, they provide opportunities to gather and reconsider their subjects. This study group explores the history and meaning of memorials from various perspectives: aesthetic, political and cultural. We consider how memorials have changed the language of collective mourning (Maya Lin's Vietnam War memorial), and the ways in which they may provide comfort (Oklahoma City and 9/11 memorials). They probe difficult questions such as memory, war, race and genocide. We analyze the purposes of memorials at the time of their creation, in contemporary society and for the future.

Readings and other Required Materials:

There will be a course pack containing most of the readings. Additional readings will be included in weekly emails and listed internet sites in advance of each class. The course pack will cost approximately \$20.00. Weekly readings will entail about 20 pages.

Mark Dichter has a BSEE from MIT and a FMA from Columbia. He was a recording engineer, director and producer in the film industry. For the past 10 years, he was a producer of videos for musical organizations in NYC.

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Weeks 1, 2 Concepts of Memorials

Course pack: *Upsurge of Memory*, E-Mail: *Monuments and Memory*

Week 3 Memory and Forgetting

Different kinds of memorials and monuments. The dynamics of remembrance and forgetting. Can we choose to forget? Can we choose how to remember?

Weeks 4, 5 Earliest Memorials

First Neolithic thru the Greek and Roman period: Megaliths, Pyramids, Greek Trophies, The Arch of Constantine

Weeks 6, 7 War Memorials up until WWI

National styles, cultural factors and historiography. How have these monuments shaped our history? First Revolutionary War

monument 1776, Monument to the Battle of Nations 1913
Franco Prussian War Memorial in Berlin 1888, in France 1883
War Memorials as Political Memory

Week 8 World War I, The War to End All Wars

Montage of memorials

Shot at Dawn

Week 9, 10 The Mall Up Until The Vietnam Veterans War Memorial

Montage of all Monuments and Memorials on the Mall

Week 11 The Vietnam Veterans War Memorial

A monument to defeat and withdrawal

Week 12 Future Memorials