This seminar explores the historical contingencies in which social memory takes shape. We will read a variety of treatments that draw on the role of materiality in social memory, including the ways that culturally constructed landscapes inform social memory. A wide range of phenomena elicit, inform, and help to conserve social memory—monuments, heirlooms passed on within families, exhibits of cultural trophies, archaeological “sites” and ruins, regalia, photographs, buildings, pathways and avenues, keepsakes and war memorabilia—these are but a few of the full gamut of such interrelationships with human memory. The institutionalization of devices that ensure the conservation of social memory such as shrines, the conferral of place names laden with tropic meanings, and subaltern and oppositional perspectives submerged by such devices also capture our attention.

Our concerns will also touch on how social memory is sometimes retained at the expense of weaker histories that do not sustain popularity or are not concertized in the material world. Forgetting is an active process, the counterpart of memory that figures prominently in any social memory retention. We will also examine how social memory is embodied through dramatic performance and dance, ritual performance, masquerades, and gestures. The interplay of sacred places with ritual and other rites also compel inquiry, especially the exclusions of certain social groups thus ensuring forgetting as well as memory retention. A key theoretical concern, right from the beginning of the course and throughout, is the question of whether or not there is a separation between social memory and history. For those who maintain that there is, we pose counter questions: Is not such a separation the consequence of a literary tradition that divides history from the non-material forms of remembering history, and does such a separation help or hinder us from understanding how non-literate peoples sustain social memory in the absence of written history? The silencing of history also enters into our discourse, with an inquiry into how and why certain memories are forgotten while others are valorized and retained.

**Organization and Expectations**

Each seminar participant will be expected to help lead two seminars (one for undergrads) during the semester. This will entail a comprehensive, critical reading of the reading assignment for that particular week, guiding the seminar discussion, and producing a 5-7 page paper (3-5 for undergrads) on the readings; we may sometimes have multiple papers at one seminar. Each graduate
student seminar participant is expected to submit three (3) critical questions to the instructor each week 24 hours in advance of the seminar, e.g. by 5 PM every Monday; each undergraduate will submit 2 questions. These questions will be compiled by the instructor and returned to all participants to use in preparation for the seminar discussion no later than 7 AM the next morning but usually Monday evening between 7 and 11 PM.

All seminar participants will write research papers, preferably on topics that can be researched in the UF community or Gainesville—topics such as the 34th St. wall and its role in social memory; the organization of the Swamp (Ben Hill Griffin Stadium) and collective memory; mnemonics in the household—ceramics as familial social memory; war memorabilia; contemporary ritual embodiments of social memory, pictures as familial/individual memory, etc.

**Grading**

Grading of class assignments:

- Class presentations/Short paper(s) 20%
- Weekly Questions 20%
- Discussion in class 25%
- Research paper: 35%

**Books: For Purchase Online**


**Other Books for possible independent purchase.**


Schedule of Meetings and Readings

Week 1: January 10: Discussion of the Syllabus and Assignments for the semester

Week 2: Jan. 17: The Guiding Light?


Week 3: Jan. 24: The Second Point of Inspiration.


Week 4; Jan. 31: A Separation Between History and Social Memory?


Casey, E. S. 1996. “How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time.” In Senses of Place, pp. 13-52.


Lowenthal, D. 1985. “How We Know the Past.” In The Past is a Foreign Country, pp.185-219 (part of chapter 5). TBP
Cole, J. 2001. “Between Memory and History.” In Forgetting Colonialism?: Sacrifice and the Art of Memory in Madagascar, pp. 102-134 (Chapter 4). TBP


**Week 5; Feb. 7: Week Off:** Researching paper topic, abstract of which is to be presented in class Feb. 14.

**Week 6: Feb. 14: Power, Silencing: History and Social Memory**


**Week 7; Feb. 21: Power, Society, and Monumentalizing**


**Week 8; Feb. 28: The Collective Role of Mnemonics in Social Memory**

Schmidt, P. 2006. “Social Memory, Mnemonics, and Historical Archaeology.” Chapter 4 in Historical Archaeology: Representation, Social Memory, and Oral Traditions. TBP

Lowenthal, D. 1985. “How We Know the Past.” In the Past is a Foreign Country, pp. 238-259 (Sections on Relics, etc). TBP


**Week 9; March 6: Spring Vacation**

**Week 10; March 13: Built Landscape and Social Memory**


Lowenthal, D. “Changing the Past.” In The Past is a Forgotten Country, pp. 263-361. Recommended*

**Week 11: March 20: Landscapes, Remembering History**


Schmidt, P. 2006. “Moving Historical Archaeology to Symbolic Space.” Chapter 6 in Historical Archaeology: Representation, Social Memory, and Oral Traditions. TBP


**Week 12: March 27: Landscape: Sound, Place, and Nature in Social Memory**


**Week 13; April 3: The Embodiment of Social Memory and Forgetting: Ritual and Performance, Present and Past**

Argenti, N. Ephemeral Monuments, Memory and Royal Sempiternity in a Grassfields Kingdom.” In *The Art of Forgetting*, pp. 21-52. TBP


**Week 14; April 10: Social Memory and Trauma**

Webner, R. “INTRODUCTION: Beyond Oblivion: Confronting Memory Crisis.” In *Memory and the Postcolony*, pp. 1-17. TBP
Webner R. “Smoke from the Barrel of a Gun: Postwars of the Dead, Memory and Reinscription in Zimbabwe.” In Memory and the Postcolony, pp. 71-102. TBP


Natzmer, C. 2002. Remembering and Forgetting: Creative Expression and Reconciliation in Post-Pinochet Chile. In Social Memory and History, pp. 161-180. TBP


Week 15; April 17: Presentation of Papers

Week 16; April 24: Presentation of Papers