HON 342                                        Spring 2012
The Digital Archive: Memory, Media, Image

Catalog Description:
Prerequisite: acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor.
What is the contemporary relationship between image and memory? How are they
shaped in terms of cultural experience? Using a variety of approaches, we explore
cinema, photography and digital media asking, has our recent dependence on visual
archiving changed the way in which culture experiences memory? (Offered as needed.)
3 credits.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Identify and explore the development of key cultural strategies used to situate
   memory (in terms of preservation and remembering) within disciplinary and
   interdisciplinary perspectives.
2. Locate significant examples within contemporary visual digital culture that
   concentrate on the subject of memory.
3. Using primary texts, write a critical analysis paper on the relationship between
   memory and cultural experience, specifically acknowledging processes of visuality.
4. Deconstruct the concept of the archive and its connection with memory, referring to
   current perceptions and contemporary challenges.
5. Reflect on your progress within the course and regulate your learning, in order to
   improve written and oral communication skills and analyses.
6. Create a visual archive/map on a specific cultural memory

Content:
Memory is often positioned at the heart of how we construct our public histories and
our private selves, but our mapping process has changed. This course questions the
ephemerality of contemporary visual culture (specifically cinema, photography and
digital media) and its impact on the way we archive and order our memories. Has our
recent dependence on visual archiving changed the way in which culture experiences
memory? What will it mean for the future - our predilection for memorializing via
images over writing? We will ask: what is the function of memory for culture and why
do we use the image as the primary archive? How are our memories shaped by the
image and how are images shaped by memory? The primary theoretical framework
will be interdisciplinary drawing on various perspectives and disciplinary issues that relate through the synergies and nexus of memory: for example, the exchange between the archive and the collective (community); digital media, public space and democracy of voice in the construction of ‘memory’. Writers referred to may include Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, Sigmund Freud, Friedrich Kittler, Cathy Caruth.

Key questions:
• Why are some memories lost and some made present?
• Are we losing our private recordings in favor of public (mediated) ones?
• How are memories translated into images?
• On repression and expression: where are the missing memories? What groups are made absent?
• Which subjectivities get lost and which are created/enforced?
• On Death: what are some examples of cultural practices of remembering appropriate modes of memories and remembering (memorial choices)?

Current Required Texts:
Selected Chapters and Articles will be used instead of a single textbook. These will be made available via Blackboard.

Instructional strategies:
• Seminars and small group teaching.
• Visual presentations using PowerPoint and short clips from contemporary visual culture (cinema, video, television, photography, internet) will be used.
• Index Cards: In order to aid class discussion, you are required to submit an index card to me at the beginning of each class. On one side of the card, you are to write one or two important questions which you have about the assigned reading material for the day. On the other side, you are to write a response to the prior class; you may write, for example, about something important you learned, your critical reaction to something said in class, or an issue that you would like the class to revisit. Cards are to be turned in at the beginning of class. This realizes course objective number 5.
• Oral presentation (graded) You will give a 10 minute presentation on a cultural memory of your own choice. It should connect with an historical event. You will identify and discuss the different cultural strategies that were used to give context to the event and for the creation of ‘memory’. Visual examples must be included. This realizes course objectives 1 and 2.
• Memory Map (graded) You will use a template of the London Underground Tube Map to demonstrate how cultural memories are linked and represented. Each student map will be different as your interpretation of memory, the emphases we individually place on memory will occupy different ‘stops’ (or positions) in our own ‘memory maps’. This project is to be supplemented with the written précis on the representation of cultural memory.
• Written assignments: (graded)
  o Research Paper. This realizes course objectives 1-5.
Methods of Evaluation:

1. Evaluation and grading will be based on the following requirements:
   • Oral Presentation:
   • Research Paper
   • Creating a visual ‘map’ and précis on representation of memory
   • Reflective statement

2. Grades will be assigned as follows:
   Index Cards 150 points
   Oral Presentation 200 points
   Archive Map and Précis 200 points
   Reflective Statement 200 points
   Research Paper 250 points

A = 1000-910; B = 900-810; C = 800-710; D = 700-610; F = below 600

Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy:
The course syllabus should include the following statement:
Chapman University is a community of scholars which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the university

Students with Disabilities Policy:
The course syllabus should include the following statement:
In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. The University, through the Center for Academic Success, will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to provide the accommodations for a student in determining what accommodations are suitable based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Prepared by: Kelli Fuery, Sept 2011

Last revised: Kelli Fuery, Sept 2011
Weekly Outline

Week One: Introduction

We will orient ourselves with the direction of the course - discussing how the phrase ‘digital archive’ is to be contextualized for the following weeks. During the classes for this week we will discuss questions such as: How do we remember? What do we remember? Looking at the differences and similarities between the Personal, Public and Cultural spheres of everyday life.

Assignments will be discussed, reading groups explained.

Readings:
Group A:


Group B:

Week Two: Toward an Archaeology of Archive

We start by considering how archives are formed. How is knowledge organized? Has digital culture altered our systems of classification? of knowledge? Are there differences between digital and analogue epistemologies? The choices that we make produce different knowledges, different systems of knowledge, and therefore different archives.

Think about your path & the course of your university decisions. Would you end up with a radically different degree if you chose different courses?

Reading:
Excerpts from Foucault, M. The Archaeology of Knowledge.
On Blackboard

Task: Complete some basic research of how knowledge is formed/created. You are free to choose an archive that you are interested in, or you can research Linnaeus’s taxonomy of animals.

Week Three: Divergent Archives and Access

This week will be spent thinking about the archive as a body of work, organized in some way (not just preserved - but through access - and our negotiations of knowledge). The
archive is not simply a chora - a receptacle for information, material, or digitization of data. What does a culture recognize as worthy of archiving? Who are the decision-makers on what gets archived, who archives, where archives are placed and the access to such archives?

What is the difference btw government, institutional and personal archives?

Task: Select an archive already established - that is clearly embedded and indicative of a history (for example: an Art Gallery; the Freud Archives; any major academic institution such as Cambridge or Oxford will have a number of archives you can access) and begin to identify the limits of the archive.

Where are the alternatives?

Readings (required)


Week Four: Guest Speaker: Dr Charlotte Frost

Week Five: Private and Public: Forming and Forging the Trace

If you archived your life - how/what would you do? Why?

Readings:


Week Six: Material, Space and Democracy: What is worthy? or Who gets to say what is included?
Task: Bring along a traditional and an experimental and non-traditional archive. We will consider the notion of access through time and technology. Can you find an example of a digital archive (textual, visual, aural) that you are able to contribute to or create within (open source)?

Foucault, Parrhesia & Institutional Voice

Week Seven: Invisibility of the Episteme
Archive of sexuality - forbidden sexualities; historically removed permissible again

The archive of the forbidden - material seen as problematic. If archive is a knowledge forming process - what we think about sexuality has to be archived.

HoS archive historical attitudes toward sexuality. What are still invisible?

**Week Eight: Poeisis, Aesthetics & Technology**


There is a lot of secondary commentary on this famous article online. If you are finding Heidegger too hard to access, then please search for an article that helps to explain his ideas but read it alongside the set piece.

**Week Nine: The Art of Preservation**

Group A:

Group B:

**Week Ten: Forgetting, Repression and Deletion**


**Week Eleven: Cinema**


**Week Twelve: The Memory Work: Creativity as agency**

**Week Thirteen: Categories Futured**

Relationships around categories we create

Week Fourteen: