

## HIS 553 – THEME SEMINAR

### “MEMORY & HISTORICAL PRODUCTION”

Professor Donna Rilling

Monday 5:00-7:50pm SBS N-318

This course melds two intersecting approaches: an exploration of memory, commemoration, and heritage; and an introduction to the methods, practice and intellectual foundations of public history. We will examine relationships between history and collective memory, current cultural and political controversies, and real-world issues surrounding monuments, memorials, exhibitions, digital projects and websites, and other forms of historical representation and interpretation, discerning ways that the study of the past is remembered and shaped by and into the present. In addition, we will consider how public history engages and influences its audiences and shapes public knowledge and interpretations. How do public historians—in contrast to academic historians? - communicate historical knowledge and interpretations to general audiences? What forms do these narratives take?

The field of Public History has been, until recently, principally a North American field. Many of our readings and topics, therefore, will focus on the U.S. and Canada. The relevance of such themes as slavery and indigeneity, however, stretch beyond North America; students interested in Africa, Latin America, former imperial European powers, or Pacific or Indian Ocean populations can explore memory and commemoration in those regions. Our chronological focus will range principally from the 1500s to the present. **Enrollment in History MA or PhD Program or Permission of Instructor.**