

Syllabus/Programme

The Everyday and the Unremembered: Gendered Memories of Conflict

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When & Where:	Tuesdays, 10:00–11:45	Off University Moodle
Hosted by:	Philipps-Universität Marburg with 6 ECTS Certification*	
Department	Center for Conflict Studies — Peace and Conflict Studies Program	

*How to count your Off university course towards credit?

Successful completion of a course at Off University is certified by the host university. This means that you are able to use these credits at any university in the EHEA in a programme you are enrolled in, or you may count this as previous knowledge in a future study programme. In order to be sure that you can transfer the credits, we suggest you get written confirmation by your home university's students' office. And if you are not enrolled in any university programme: You are very welcome to join! All our courses are free of charge and open to anyone: students, scholars, activists.

Description:

This online laboratory examines how armed conflict is remembered through a gendered lens, shifting attention away from dominant narratives centered on combat, heroism, and spectacular violence. Instead, it focuses on what remains in the background: the everyday practices that sustain life under violence, the invisible labor of survival, and the forms of memory that remain unrecognized or excluded from official narratives.

Rather than treating memory as a representation of the past, the course approaches it as a lived and ongoing condition, structured by waiting, uncertainty, and unresolved loss. Drawing on feminist memory studies and the anthropology of the everyday, the course develops conceptual and analytical tools to examine how memory is produced, silenced, and contested. Empirical examples include the instructor's research on women affected by the Kurdish conflict alongside comparative cases from Latin America, the post-Yugoslav space, and other post-conflict settings.

Designed as an interactive online laboratory, the course prioritizes collaborative inquiry, iterative analysis, and collective knowledge production. It explicitly connects teaching and research by involving participants in collective analysis of materials connected to the instructor's research, with possible outputs including blogs, digital archives, or collective publications.

Digital Self Defense

Our platform is dedicated to spread knowledge threatened by authoritarian and right-wing populist regimes and to put measures in place that enable people to practice digital self-defense.

We encourage all users to sign up for the platform anonymously and respect others' preferences for staying anonymous. **Please do not force anyone to share personal information or take screenshots of others without their knowledge.**

The courses take place on Off University's Moodle. The platform includes an encrypted video-call option, a cloud storage, as well as a messaging system. We would like to remind all users that communication with other users outside of the platform (i.e. e-mail, Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp or other video conferencing tools) may put them at risk.

Timeline of the Course Schedule

Week 1		Introduction: Why Gender? Why Memory?
Week 2		Gendering War: From Militarization to Memory
Week 3	<i>Memory Lab introduced</i>	Ethics of Listening: Trauma, Testimony, and Research
Week 4		Feminist Memory Studies: Frameworks and Stakes
Week 5		The Everyday, Structural Violence, and Invisible Labor
Week 6		Waiting and Temporal Suspension
Week 7		Heroes, Martyrs, and the Shadows They Cast
Week 8		Disappearance and the Labor of Searching
Week 9		Sexual Violence, Silence, and Counter-Memory
Week 10	<i>Memory Lab project begins</i>	Memory Lab I — Framing the Inquiry
Week 11	<i>Draft analysis + peer feedback</i>	Memory Lab II — Analysis and Interpretation
Week 12	<i>Final outputs developed</i>	Memory Lab III — Synthesis and Dissemination
Week 13		Toward a Feminist Memory Ethics
Week 14	<i>Final project submission</i>	Final Presentations and Collective Reflection

Aimed Outcomes

A general understanding of:

- Key concepts in feminist memory studies (postmemory, counter-memory, structural violence, the everyday)
- How everyday practices of survival and care remain structurally excluded from dominant memory narratives
- How temporal experiences such as waiting and unresolved loss shape lived memory
- How gender shapes what is remembered, by whom, and through which forms

The skills to be gained upon active participation:

- Analyzing testimonies, oral histories, and cultural artifacts with ethical sensitivity
- Situating specific cases within broader comparative and theoretical frameworks
- Developing a collaborative analytical project through iterative, research-based inquiry
- Working with sensitive empirical materials in an ethically grounded manner

Course Components

The methodology includes:

- Short conceptual inputs by the instructor
- Guided plenary discussion
- Collaborative small-group analysis of shared materials (testimonies, films, photographs, memorials, literary excerpts)
- Collective Memory Lab: iterative workshops for developing analytical projects (Weeks 10–12)
- One core reading per week; optional supplementary readings provided on Moodle

The final grade for the course will be based on the following:

- Weekly Moodle forum contributions — 20%
- Collective Memory Lab Project (analytical essay, artifact analysis, or creative piece with analytical commentary) — 60%
- Peer feedback and participation in collective work — 20%

The emphasis is on analysis and synthesis, not personal disclosure. Engagement with lived experience is strictly voluntary and never expected. No personal or family narrative collection is required. Trauma-informed research guidelines are introduced in Week 3 and followed throughout.

Organization of the course

Focus/Topic of the week & Reading List

PART I — CONCEPTUAL GROUND

Week 1: Introduction: Why Gender? Why Memory?

Memory as a field of inquiry. Why does gender matter for how wars are remembered? Introduction to participants, to the laboratory format, and to Moodle tools.

Core reading: Astrid Erll, Memory in Culture (introduction).

Week 2: Gendering War: From Militarization to Memory

How war structures everyday life and gender roles before it is remembered. Case-based material used to ground the theoretical discussion.

Core reading: Cynthia Enloe, Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives (selection).

Week 3: Ethics of Listening: Trauma, Testimony, and Research

Feminist research ethics, positionality, trauma-informed engagement. Introduction to the Memory Lab project and its ethical framework.

Core reading: Sherna Berger Gluck & Daphne Patai, Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History (introduction).

PART II — THEMATIC EXPLORATIONS

Week 4: Feminist Memory Studies: Frameworks and Stakes

Who becomes history and who remains invisible? Postmemory, counter-memory, and cultural memory through a gender lens.

Core reading: Marianne Hirsch, The Generation of Postmemory.

Week 5: The Everyday, Structural Violence, and Invisible Labor

Core analytical shift: from spectacular events to the unnoticed labor that sustains life under violence. Central conceptual anchor of the course.

Core reading: Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (chapter 1).

Week 6: Waiting and Temporal Suspension

Waiting, delay, and uncertainty as lived conditions shaped by violence and displacement.

Core reading: Ghassan Hage, *Waiting*.

Week 7: Heroes, Martyrs, and the Shadows They Cast

How martyrdom, heroism, and sacrifice are constructed as masculine in official and movement memory, and what — and who — falls outside the frame.

Core reading: Miriam Cooke, *Women and the War Story*.

Week 8: Disappearance and the Labor of Searching

Gendered practices of searching for the disappeared and memory activism. Latin America as entry point.

Core reading: Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts*.

Week 9: Sexual Violence, Silence, and Counter-Memory

The politics of speaking, not speaking, and alternative memory practices. Post-Yugoslav context as entry point.

Core reading: Dubravka Žarkov, *The Body of War*.

PART III — MEMORY LAB (RESEARCH INTEGRATION)

Week 10: Memory Lab I — Framing the Inquiry

Participants define their analytical focus, materials, and approach using existing or anonymized sources. Small-group scoping sessions with instructor guidance.

Week 11: Memory Lab II – Analysis and Interpretation

Draft analysis shared in small groups. Structured peer feedback and collaborative refinement with instructor guidance.

Week 12: Memory Lab III – Synthesis and Dissemination

Finalization of outputs. Possible formats include collective blog, thematic digital archive, curated analytical entries, or contributions to future publications. Discussion of dissemination formats.

PART IV – SYNTHESIS

Week 13: Toward a Feminist Memory Ethics

What do we owe the past? Responsibility, listening, and the politics of memory work. Synthesis of the laboratory's conceptual threads.

Core reading: Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (selection).

Week 14: Final Presentations and Collective Reflection

Presentation of final Memory Lab projects. Collective reflection on the course, synthesis, and exploration of future collaboration (joint publication, informal network, conference panel). Course evaluation.