NEW COURSE FALL 2020

AN593 Special Topics Seminar
T/R 12:30-1:45, rm TBA

Desiring Memorials: 
Afterlives of Mass Violence and the Pursuit of Justice

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Historians claim that we live in a golden age of memorials. But what do memorials want? And what do we want from memorials? Are memorials an expression of healing after violent events such as slavery, the Holocaust, World Wars, genocides and other forms of mass killings? Or are memorials a reminder that the experience of violence requires further healing and engagement in order to achieve justice? What is past and what does live on after mass violence, especially for the affected societies?

This course is intended for upper-level undergraduate and graduate students. Students will be introduced to and familiarized with key debates in anthropology on mass violence, genocide, memory, history and justice. In the first part of the course, our exploration of violent events will prioritize cases that have shaped the field of human rights and its terminology. In the second part of the course we will attend to cases that have not shaped human rights discourses, but memory and memorials are being mobilized in order to make a human rights case. We will engage with works by political and legal theorists, historians, anthropologists and novelists in order to survey and examine the human condition at stake in a course on mass violence and the pursuit of justice.