Spring 2019 Course Descriptions

Instructor: Marian Eide
Course: 352
Title: Literature World War II to the Present

Description: Historical Narrative, Cultural Memory
As a society, we develop collective versions of the past to cement our sense of culture and community. This course focuses on contemporary literature, works written in the last twenty-five years. However, the focus of each book is a historical event or process that had lasting national or international effects. Our primary concern in the course will be to understand how history becomes cultural memory, how events of the past shape present communal identity. We will also consider the possibility that literature can unsettle the communal assumptions formed by cultural memory and give us new ideas about our own heritage.

Proposed Readings: Toni Morrison: A Mercy
Colson Whitehead: The Underground Railroad
Pat Barker: Toby’s Room
TaraShea Nesbit: The Wives of Los Alamos
Ian McEwan: Sweet Tooth
Jennifer Clement: Prayers for the Stolen
Mohsin Hamid: The Reluctant Fundamentalist
Natasha Trethewey: Beyond Katrina