With retro tee shirts, vintage fashions, and an almost limitless array of products designed to induce nostalgia, we draw from culture’s collective memory to define ourselves. Even in childhood photo albums many construct a sense of identity from events they are unable to remember. This semester we will explore the relationship between memories, both individual and collective, and our sense of self. We will analyze not only those memories that seem reliably documented, but also those that are corroded and shaped by the inevitable pressure of forgetfulness.

**Reading Schedule:**
All reading and writing assignments are due on the dates indicated below. This schedule is tentative; adjustments may be made at the Instructor’s discretion. *Starred* texts are available on E-reserve.

1.9 Introduction to the course
1.11 The study of memory and popular culture
   Lowenthal – “Memory”*
1.16 Vintage Fashion and Personal Identity
   Barthes – “Myth is a type of Speech”*
1.18 This American Life: “Reruns: Intro” (to be played in class)
   Short Writing Assignment 1 due
1.23 Boym – “The Dinosaur: Nostalgia and Popular Culture”*
1.25 Murakami – “The Fall of the Roman Empire…” (in *Amnesia*)
1.30 Maya Lin – The Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial
2.1 Maya Lin – The Civil Rights Memorial
   This American Life: “Reruns: Act 3” (audio file on Oncourse)
   Paper 1 due
2.6 Foer – *Everything is Illuminated*
2.8 Foer – *Everything is Illuminated*
2.13 Foer – *Everything is Illuminated*
2.15 Foer – *Everything is Illuminated*
2.20 Foer – *Everything is Illuminated*
2.22 **Midterm Exam**

2.27 Dick – “I Hope I Shall Arrive Soon” (in *Amnesia*)
3.1 Borges – “Funes: The Memorius” (in *Amnesia*)
Lowenthal – “Forgetting and Revising”*

3.6 Scrapbooking and cultures of memory
Sontag - “On Photography” pgs. 1-12*
3.8 Didion – *The Year of Magical Thinking*
**Short Writing Assignment 2 Due**

3.13 Spring Break
3.15 Spring Break

3.20 Didion – *The Year of Magical Thinking*
3.22 Didion – *The Year of Magical Thinking*

3.27 This American Life – “Experts” (audio file on Oncourse)
3.29 *Memento* and *50 First Dates*
**Paper 2 Due**

4.3 Dick – “We Can Remember It for You Wholesale”*
4.5 Shainberg – “Memories of Amnesia” (in *Amnesia*)

4.9 Film screening, 7pm
4.10 *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*
4.12 *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*
**Short Writing Assignment 3 Due**

4.17 Campbell – *The Fate of the Artist*
4.19 Campbell – *The Fate of the Artist*

4.24 discussion of final projects
4.26 exam review

5.1 Final Exam 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

**Grading Layout for the Course:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Writing assignments (3)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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Course Requirements

Reading
All reading is required and is to be completed by the date it appears on the syllabus. Students are expected to double check assignments and their due dates on the course website because the syllabus will be updated to accommodate the needs of the course. Additional readings may be handed out over the course of the semester.

Required Texts:

Campbell – *The Fate of the Artist*
Didion – *The Year of Magical Thinking*
Foer – *Everything is Illuminated*
Lethem - *The Vintage Book of Amnesia*

All texts are available at the IU Bookstore and at TIS. Do NOT wait to purchase your books. Buy all the texts now, make sure you have the approved editions, and keep your receipts!

Papers
This course will require two papers. All papers must follow MLA (Modern Language Association) guidelines for formal research papers. All papers, even those that quote from only one text, must include a bibliography. Papers more than one week late will not be accepted. **NO papers may be turned in over email.** Please print your papers on both sides of the page.

Consultations and drafts: Meetings and drafts give you a chance to review your arguments and to improve your overall grade. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with me or to submit drafts before the final due date.

Paper 1 Due: Feb. 1st
History and Collective Identity
No outside sources.
4-5 pages.

Your first paper will analyze the way history informs collective identity. For this assignment you will select one of the following:

- An episode of a popular sitcom
- An aspect of a popular theme park
- A public monument or memorial

and analyze the way history is presented and the way it shapes the modern sense of nation and self. Consider the following in your analysis: What historical elements are present? Are these elements presented accurately or are they altered? If they are altered, how and why? What does this incorporation of historical material tell its audience about their own collective identity?
Paper 2 Due: Apr. 3rd

Literary Analysis: *The Vintage Book of Amnesia*

No outside sources

5-6 pages.

Your second paper should analyze the relationship between memory and identity in one of the short stories from *The Vintage Book of Amnesia*. You can select a story we have read and discussed in class, or if you prefer you may choose a story that wasn’t included in our syllabus. This second paper is a literary analysis, and should look closely at the language used in the story while analyzing the content in the same way that we have been analyzing various aspects of popular culture in class.

**Grading Guidelines for Papers - An “A” paper must exhibit all of the following:**

1. Evidence: quoted material supports all assertions and is blended into sentences
2. Analysis: Commentary/analysis is provided, explaining fully how “quoted” material supports assertions and thesis, providing depth to discussion, and demonstrating familiarity with the text
3. Thesis: an arguable thesis clearly states the writer’s position and establishes the direction of the paper
4. Organization: support paragraphs extend the argument smoothly, logically, and coherently. Ideas and topics follow one another logically. Paper should have an introduction, body, and conclusion.
5. Grammar/Mechanics: style demonstrates control of diction and syntax, with a minimum of mechanical errors. No use of “I,” “you” or “we.”

**Plagiarism:** In college courses, we are continually engaged with other people’s ideas: we read them in texts, hear them in lecture, discuss them in class, and incorporate them into our own writing. As a result, it is very important that we give credit where it is due. Plagiarism is using another’s ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. Any instances of plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment, and filing an official report of misconduct to the dean. Please remember that defending yourself against a charge of plagiarism is a lot more work than writing a paper with properly cited sources.

**Writing Tutorial Services**

Writing Tutorial Services is available to anyone who feels they would like extra help with their writing. If you would like help in any phase of the writing process—from brainstorming to polishing the final draft—Call Writing Tutorial Services at 855-6738 for an appointment, or stop by during open hours. They are located in Ballantine 206. WTS is open from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday. WTS also provides walk-in tutorials on the main level of the Undergraduate Library, with hours from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

**Short Writing Assignments**

In addition to two academic papers this course requires three short writing assignments that are more informal. These will help you internalize our progressing themes, relating them to your personal lives and to the environments you encounter every day. These assignments should be typed, but I will not grade you on the same formal aspects that comprise your grade for the two larger papers (i.e. MLA format, thesis, etc.)

**Short Writing Assignment 1**

Using Barthes’ theory of sign, signifier, and signified, write up a short (2 pg) analysis of a product or an advertisement for a product. Select the product or advertisement from your daily environment—your dorm or apartment, a restaurant you frequent, or any other space you inhabit every day (this means the product should be something you have already purchased). In your analysis consider the following:

- If you select a product, where do you keep it? How is that significant?
- If you select an ad, where was it posted? How does its presence alter that space?
- When you are sold a product advertisers offer you not only a tangible item, but also something more abstract. What is this more abstract element and how does the tangible item attempt to evoke it?
Short Writing Assignment 2
Your second short writing assignment will look at photography as one of our tools for remembering. Select a photograph that is of some significance for you, but that predates your birth. It could be a family photo, a historical photograph of a significant moment for your native culture, or any other image that you feel touches on your own history. Write a 2-3 page analysis addressing the relationship this photo has to your own current identity. How and why can a photograph taken before you were born contribute to your sense of self? If at all possible please include a scan of the photograph when you hand the assignment in.

Short Writing Assignment 3
Using the many topics we’ve discussed this semester as inspiration, piece together a two-page autobiography that recognizes the role memory play in your own sense of identity. Like Campbell’s graphic novel, you are free to make this final project a collage of items—text, photos, drawings, etc. Like the autobiographies we’ve read in class this project should be suitable for public consumption. Selections from the class’ work will be uploaded to the website; we will discuss these projects the final week of class.

Attendance, Participation, Etc.
Our daily classes will strongly emphasize discussion. Due to the challenging nature of the readings, attendance and participation are required. Classes will rely on student preparedness and participation. Each student is granted 3 absences for illnesses, emergencies, etc. All other absences will result in the deduction of 3 points each from the student’s final grade. Any more than 6 unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the course. Any absences due to religious holidays or personal matters will be excused provided I am contacted 2 weeks in advance.

A note on classroom civility: During our discussions students are expected to keep their contributions mature and appropriate. Often the material we read will contain mature content and I expect students to handle this material in an adult manner. I expect students to respect their peers, regardless of gender, sex, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Any inappropriate contributions will result in a warning. Persistent incivility will result in dismissal from the course.

Website
http://mypage.iu.edu/~krereed/Memory.html
For this class our website will be an indispensable resource. Helpful websites, research materials, assignments and announcements will be updated online on a weekly basis. Students are expected to check the site regularly, keeping up with announcements and revisions to our reading schedule.

Midterm and Final Exams
Our midterm exam is scheduled for February 22nd and will cover all texts read up to that point in the semester. A study guide detailing the format of the exam will be posted online.

Our final exam is scheduled for May 1st, 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m., and will take place in our usual classroom. The final will be cumulative and will be a combination of short answer and essay questions about the various themes and texts discussed over the course of the semester. We will have a study session during our final class and a review guide will be distributed in class.

Office Hours and Email
My office hours are 2-3:30 TR in the Art Museum Cafe. Students are encouraged to stop by, especially while working on formal writing assignments. If a student has a conflict with my office hours, I’m more than happy to schedule another time to meet with them. Students are also encouraged to communicate with me through email regarding any questions or concerns they may have about the course. All communications regarding assignments, specifically those conducted over email, should take place at least 24 hours before an assignment is due. My mailbox is in the 9th floor of Ballantine Hall, to the right when you exit the elevator.

Above all, I want you to enjoy the class. The texts selected are diverse in period and in topic, and were chosen with the hope that they would be interesting, even fun, to read. Any questions, concerns, or feedback you have over the course of the semester is welcome.