

# W&M in Washington

## Spring 2009

### *War, Memory and the Holocaust* (Taught by Professor Bruce Campbell)

How do we remember the Second World War and the Holocaust? What do these terrible events mean today, and how are they commemorated in the United States and Germany? How do public and private memories differ? This will be our focus, as we explore the modern meanings of some of the most tragic events in human history.

#### **Washington Program Internship**

- 6 credit hours

This internship is a venue through which to think about the practical implications of memory and commemoration through the lens of student internships in institutions engaged in the preservation, research or elaboration of the memory of the Second World War and Holocaust. The semester's program is designed to be an integrated experience in which students complete writing assignments, of both a narrow and extended focus, to assess the ways in which memory and commemoration are expressed and manufactured in their individual work experiences.

#### **The Politics of Memory: The Commemoration of the Second World War and Holocaust in and Around Washington D.C.**

- 4 credit hours: GRMN 387, AMST 350, LCST 351

How does the United States 'remember' and commemorate the Second World War and the Holocaust in its capitol city? How is this memory made, and how is it transmitted to the public through public memorials? What goes into a politics of memory? In this course we will look at the manifold ways in which the War is remembered today in both popular and official culture, and will visit various sites of memory in and around Washington, such as Arlington National Cemetery and the US Marine Corps Museum in Quantico. But we will also visit and hear invited speakers from institutions where the memory of the War is still able to produce controversy, such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) or the Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution, where a recent exhibit on the bomber "Enola Gay" sparked a national debate on the memory of the dropping of the atomic bomb. The goal of the course is to explore the many and contested ways in which a society and individuals choose to remember past events and so produce history and art.

#### **The German and US Memories of Two World Wars**

- 4 credit hours: GRMN 409, AMST 350, LCST 401

This seminar contrasts the ways in which the Second World War is remembered and commemorated in the United States and Germany. Both countries were central participants in the War, but fought on different sides. While the US remembers the war as a great victory and an example of moral fortitude, even though it was the first to use the atomic bomb and was a party to the most widespread use of indiscriminate bombing of civilian targets the world has ever seen, for Germany the war is a moment of shame and defeat, yet one which allowed for a democratic rebirth, in which the US played a major role. The course will draw on resources of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the German Historical Institute, the U.S. National Archives and the Smithsonian Museums.