

The Department of Political Science
invites you to

**Driving Remembrance from Below:
Civil Society Initiatives and Memory Politics
in Germany**

A talk by

Jenny Wüstenberg
DAAD Visiting Professor
York University

Monday 28 March 2016

2:30 - 4:30 pm

South 674 Ross Building, York University

Department of
Political Science

Seminar Series



Much has been written about efforts to commemorate traumatic pasts in Germany. However, the role of grassroots actors has been neglected. Drawing on interviews with activists, government officials, and observers, as well as archival research, I paint a picture of the key actors involved in the building of the memorial landscape since 1945. I emphasize in particular the interplay between civil society and the state, as well as “competing pasts” throughout German post-war history. I argue that without civil society action, the landscape of memory in the Berlin Republic would look very different today – both in design and in governance. A focus on memory activists holds implications for the study of commemoration far beyond the German case.

Jenny Wüstenberg’s research examines civil society activism and networks in German and transnational memory politics. Since receiving her PhD in 2010, she has taught at the American University in Washington DC and held a postdoctoral fellowship at the Free University of Berlin. She is the initiator and co-chair of the Council for European Studies’ Research Network on Transnational Memory and Identity in Europe. Her forthcoming book is entitled *Civil Society and Remembrance in Postwar Germany*.

