

Marianne Hirsch

*Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University
and the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality*

”Mobile Memories”

*Introductory lecture of In Search for Transcultural Memory in Europe (ISTME) COST
Network Training School: "Mobilising Memory for Change"*

6:00 p.m., Tuesday, 30 September 2014, Auditorium

2014 is the year of monumental memory, ranging from commemorations of the First World War to the openings of the National September 11 Memorial Museum and the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. How can memory be mobilized for a transcultural future that resists the national imaginaries and ideologies displayed in these institutions? This talk explores ways of thinking about memory as mobile, mutable, portable, porous and vulnerable, reframing national and transnational paradigms from a feminist perspective. Focusing specifically on the role of aesthetic practices in the activation and dissemination of memory, and on the work of several women artists, it highlights small, unofficial, anti-monumental memory practices. Working in different media and cultural contexts, the artists discussed here activate small, fragmentary archives and allow them to travel and migrate, creating networks of connectivity and potentiality that might enable memory to move and be moved toward the future.

Marianne Hirsch is William Peterfield Trent Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University and Professor in the Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality. She is immediate past president of the Modern Language Association of America. Hirsch's work combines feminist theory with memory studies, particularly the transmission of memories of violence across generations. Her recent books include The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust (2012), Ghosts of Home: The Afterlife of Czernowitz in Jewish Memory, co-authored with Leo Spitzer (2010), Rites of Return: Diaspora, Poetics and the Politics of Memory, co-edited with Nancy K. Miller (2011). She is one of the founders of Columbia's Center for the Study of Social Difference and of its global initiative "Women Creating Change."

*Reception to follow.
Registration required at memory@ceu.hu*