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9-28-2011

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**Barber Lecturer Ofelia Ferran researches memory and trauma within the context of contemporary Spanish literature and culture**

*Summary: Ferran will speak on the historical memory of Spain and the difficult topics of stolen children and mass graves*

(September 28, 2011)-Ofelia Ferrán, associate professor of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, will give the 2011–12 Barber Lecture at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, October 3, 2011, in Recital Hall, Humanities Fine Arts, at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Ferrán’s lecture, “Mass Graves, Stolen Children, and other Specters of the Past Haunting Contemporary Spain” reflects her research on memory and trauma studies within the context of contemporary Spanish literature and culture, feminist studies and contemporary women’s narrative in Spain, as well as literature and culture of exile after the Spanish Civil War. The lecture is free and open to the public. A reception follows.

“We are all used to seeing the immediate effects of war, trauma, and repression,” says Barber Lecture coordinator Tom Turner, associate professor of Spanish. “Professor Ferrán studies important long term psychological manifestations of these traumas in Spain, their consequences for memory, self definition, and meaning in national life. Her observations have wide application to other nations and cultures.”

Ferrán’s lecture will analyze recent literary and photographic representations of two crucial phenomena at the heart of the current movement for the recuperation of historical memory in Spain: the exhumations of mass graves of the Spanish Civil War and the plight of the children of Republican sympathizers stolen by the Franco regime and handed over clandestinely by the regime to right-wing families.

“I argue that the texts I study exemplify the invaluable role that the arts can play in the process of coming to terms with the traumatic nature and on-going legacy of the mass graves and stolen children in Spain,” says Ferrán. “What makes these texts particularly effective is the way in which they not only represent these historical phenomena but, at the same time, critically question the possibility of fully representing the horror of these historical experiences. It is this critical self-awareness of the limitations and dangers inherent in their own projects that make these texts valuable, and politically effective, forms of ‘working through memory.’”

In 2007, Ferrán published *Working Through Memory: Writing and Remembrance in Contemporary Spanish Narrative*. She earned a doctorate in romance studies from Cornell University in 1997. On the Twin Cities campus, she teaches courses that include *Literary Discourses of Modern and Contemporary Spain (1800–Present)* and *Contemporary Spanish Literature Since 1915*.

The Barber Lecture Series is made possible by a gift to the University of Minnesota, Morris from Laird Barber, professor emeritus of English, and the late Dorothy Barber.

For more information, contact [Turner](#) at 320-589-6255.

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