The impulse to memorialize through the construction of monuments has been described by noted historian Jay Winter as the “effort to comprehend and transcend catastrophe.” Prior to the 1990s Ireland had very few commemorative events to honor the memory of the Irish Famine and it was not until the 150th anniversary (1996-1997) that monuments to the Famine as well as Heritage Centers across Ireland were created. In contrast, the commemoration of the Holocaust began within three years after the end of World War II. In this presentation, Dr. Mahon will address questions such as: Why was the Irish Famine not widely commemorated for 150 years when Holocaust commemoration began in less than a generation? What historical and social factors delayed collective memory in one instance and not the other? How was the Holocaust able to become part of collective memory so quickly and what factors influenced this process?

Thursday, December 6, 2012 at 4 p.m. in Brothers College Rm. 120
Drew University, Madison, NJ

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