

English 650-16540
Nineteenth-Century Archival In(ter)ventions
Fall 2015

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Office Hours: Wednesday 11-2 and by appointment

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Class Meetings:

253 PLC

T 2:00--4:50

Course Description

What is an archive? How might the form or content of a nineteenth-century archive invent, challenge, or narrate knowledge of the past? How does memory intercede in archival reading and recovery? What is paper, ink, or a material object to an archivist or an archive? And how has nineteenth-century literary culture deployed figurative or imagined archives to narrate history or the production of knowledge? This course will approach these questions from three angles. First, we'll read selections from recent critical and theoretical works on the study and creation of archives. This material will help us to analyze the significance of the archive's architecture, content, context, provenance, and cultural weight. Our aim will be to study archival spaces, objects, and narratives (and depictions thereof) not as repositories of facts or fixed knowledge, but as contested sites of inquiry, disruption, silencing, and dissonance. We will also consider, by extension, the intersection of archival knowledge-making and the public sphere. How might archival scholarship grow through its collaborations with the public?

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

To gain expertise writing scholarly arguments.

To engage in debates about nineteenth-century culture, archives, and the making/shaping of knowledge.

To gain expertise reading and analyzing scholarly arguments, paying careful attention to rhetoric, the selection of evidence, and the analysis of texts.

To gain knowledge of and new questions about nineteenth-century culture raised by figurative, physical, and digital archives. To consider the ways in which archives—in their various forms—have the ability to narrate, challenge, remediate, and block alternate narratives.

To engage in the practice of reading slowly, carefully, and analytically. To gain experience focusing on a text's shaping of meaning through language, form, context, history, and rhetoric.

To gain experience and expertise researching a subject using library search tools, digital resources, and the human process of questioning and re-questioning.

To consider the relationships among scholars, scholarly work, and the public sphere.

Attendance

Since this course meets once a week I expect everyone to attend every class. If you have an emergency that will keep you from attending a class it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible, preferably beforehand, to let me know you'll be absent.

Required Texts (available at the Duck Store)

Archive Fever, Jacques Derrida (translated by Eric Prenowitz)

Possession, A. S. Byatt

Dracula, Bram Stoker

What They Saved: Pieces of a Jewish Past, Nancy K. Miller

King Solomon's Mines, H. Rider Haggard

Digitized Articles

Assigned articles can be found on Canvas or in hyperlinks listed below.

Respect

Everyone enrolled in this course is expected to help foster a community of respect. We will read controversial material and you may find that you don't always agree with a view expressed by a classmate, teacher, author, or text. It is crucial that we listen carefully and contribute respectfully to class discussions. Classroom behavior should enable and not interfere with learning.

Course Materials

Please bring the following to each class: our course syllabus, the text(s) assigned for each class day, paper for in-class writing exercises, and a writing utensil.

Written Work

Written course assignments should be turned in by the deadline and in the format (electronic or hard copy) specified. Work submitted on Canvas should be **saved as an MS Word file**. All written work for this course should follow the MLA guidelines for essay writing (double-spaced pages, numbered pages, proper bibliographical citations, essay title, etc.). Written work can be uploaded to Canvas after a deadline, but it will still be counted as late. Assignments will be docked five points for each day following the deadline. Extensions and incompletes will be given only for documented emergencies. I do not accept written work submitted by email without prior permission.

Plagiarism

All work submitted in this course must be your own and must be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources. Plagiarism will be handled according to the [Student Conduct Code](#)

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and will need accommodation, let me know by week two of the term so that I can make appropriate arrangements. Please request that the [UO Accessible Education Center](#) send me a letter explaining that you've consulted with them about your disability.

Class Preparation & Participation

I expect all class members to complete reading assignments and to arrive on time and ready to discuss the materials assigned for each day.

Digital Archive Study (DAS)

See the last pages of the syllabus for details about this assignment. **Essays should be submitted to Canvas by noon on the day the essay is due.** Your presentation of your assigned digital archive will be evaluated according to the following: demonstration of your knowledge of the site; organization of your presentation; clarity of the presentation; attention to and analysis of archival issues raised by the site you've studied.

Final Research Project

Please meet with me to discuss your final project before you begin. Projects should be uploaded to Canvas by the deadline, 11 PM on Friday, December 4, 2015. You may not use the DAS assigned as your final research project. See the last pages of the syllabus for details about this assignment.

Assessment

- 15% Class participation — including quality and consistency of contributions to discussions, punctuality, and preparedness for class
- 10% Digital Archive Presentation
- 20% Digital Archive Essay
- 25% Annotated Bibliography, Abstract, & Summary (10 sources min.; abstract is 300-500 words; summary describes work completed on three databases)
- 30% Final Essay/Digital Archive Exhibit

UO Library Guide to Finding Archives: Tools for Access to Primary Resources

<http://library.uoregon.edu/general/services/specialized-collections.html>

<http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/history/primary.html>

Additional Helpful Resources

[Terminology of Old Books](#)

[MLA on citing archival sources](#)

Some Local Archives & Archival Resources

[Oregon State Archives](#)

[University of Oregon Archives](#)

[Oregon Historical Society](#)

[Oregon State University Archives](#)

[First Nations Collection, Southern Oregon University](#)

[City of Portland Archives](#)

[OHSU Historical Archives](#)

[Oregon Historical Photographs Collections](#)

[Oregon Digital Library Collection](#)

[Archives of the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education](#)

Course Schedule

Week 1 (9/29): Introductions

Syllabus Overview

Assignment of Digital Archive Study topics

Visit to SCUA (Special Collections and University Archives) to see collection highlights and learn how to use/access archival materials in Special Collections

Week 2 (10/6): Archival Romance & Research

A.S. Byatt, *Possession*

Susanne Keen, "Romances of the Archive" (Canvas)

Research: Introduction to UO Databases & Resources: Archive Grid, Oxford DNB, NW Digital Archives, Orlando, NCCO (Artemis); MLA & JSTOR

Week 3 (10/13): Archive Fever

Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*

[Book Traces:](#)

Digital Archive Study 1:

[Shelley-Godwin Archive:](#)

Digital Archive Study 2:

Week 4 (10/20): Archival Form and Transformation

Dino Franco Felluga, "Addressed to the Nines: The Victorian Archive and the Disappearance of the Book" (Canvas)

Dino Franco Felluga, "BRANCHing Out: Victorian Studies and the Digital Humanities" (Canvas)

Andrew Stauffer, "The Nineteenth-Century Archive in the Digital Age" (Canvas)

Jill Lepore "Preface" and 47-89 (Canvas)

Matthew Kirschenbaum, "[The .txtual Condition](#)"

[Society of American Archivist's Definition of Archives](#)

[Kate Theimer, "Archives In Context and As Context"](#)

[NINES](#)

Digital Archive Study 3:

[BRANCH](#)

Digital Archive Study 4:

[Simeon Solomon Research Archive](#)

Digital Archive Study 5:

Week 5 (10/27): Archive Workshop (CLASS MEETS IN SCUA)

Selections from Ellen Gruber Garvey's, *Writing With Scissors* (Canvas)
Class will meet in Special Collections for a hands-on scrapbook workshop

Week 6 (11/3): Figurative Archives

Bram Stoker, *Dracula*
Thomas Richards, "Archive and Form" (Canvas)

[East London Theatre Archive](#)

Digital Archive Study 6:

[Charles Booth Archive](#)

Digital Archive Study 7:

Week 7 (11/10): Family Archives

Nancy K. Miller, *What They Saved: Pieces of a Jewish Past*

[Rural Diary Archive](#)

Digital Archive Study 8:

[Civil War Diaries and Letters Collection](#)

Digital Archive Study 9:

11 pm FRIDAY 11/13: Three items are due on Canvas:

- 1) Annotated Bibliography**
- 2) Final paper abstract**
- 3) Synopsis of database research**

See [Purdue's Guide](#). Bibliography: 10 sources min. Each annotation should be a paragraph in length (no more). Abstracts should be about 300-400 words and should summarize your research subject (area of focus) and should identify clear research questions you expect to address in your Final Research Project. The Synopsis of database research should provide an account of at least three UO databases used in your search, a description of the kinds of materials for which you searched on each database, and a description of the results. A database is not a bibliographical entry. However, items found on a database (if helpful to your project) could and should be included in your Annotated Bibliography. It's perfectly fine if you found nothing helpful on the databases. The point of this assignment is to gain experience using the databases so that you understand how each one organizes and disseminates research materials uniquely.

Week 8 (11/17): Archival Silences, Part I

H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*
Anne McClintock, TBA, Canvas

[Martha Berry Digital Archive](#)

Digital Archive Study 10:

[Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive and Transcription Project](#)

Digital Archive Study 11:

[David Livingston Spectral Imaging Project](#)

Digital Archive Study 12:

Week 9 (11/24): Archival Silences, Part II

Ann Laura Stoler, "The Pulse of the Archive" from *Along the Archival Grain* (Canvas)

Anjali Arondekar, "Introduction" and "A Secret Report" from *For the Record* (Canvas)

[Legacies of British Slave Ownership](#)

Digital Archive Study 13:

Week 10 (12/1): Rhetoric and Writing: A Workshop

Writing Workshop: Bring to class a printed copy of the first 3 (or so) pages of your final essay.

*****Final Essays/Projects due on Canvas by 11PM on Friday 12/4/15. *****

Guidelines for Course Work

Topics to Consider for Digital Archive Presentation

(Please Note: I'll bring my computer to class so that we will not have to set up a new machine for each presentation)

Identify the site's creator, organizer, and source of material (library or archive with holdings).

Identify the digital tools used to create this site (if known).

Summarize the content and subject of this site (keep in mind your audience may have never visited this site)

How is the site structured? What kind of searching does this structure allow/enable?

What can users *not* find on this site? Or what kinds of searches are foreclosed by the site's structure?

What does this site illuminate about how archives create knowledge of a field/subject?

How might this site be used for research or classroom projects?

Point to a good example of what this site offers users.

Digital Archive Essay:

Your essay should contain a clear thesis about the digital archive you've been assigned. After making your claim/thesis about the archive you begin by providing a brief survey (overview or description) of the archive's content, boundaries, and organization. Next, you'll select a particular object/item/document from this archive to close read. Your reading will not only focus on the single object, but on the way we read the object in light of its context (the archive). By extension, you might consider what story the object you've selected narrates? How does it tell its story? And how does this single item, situated within the context of the archive, push against or challenge our understanding of the archive's content?

Papers will be evaluated based on your knowledge of the site you are analyzing and your close reading of the text you've selected. Essays should be 5 pages (min. double spaced) and should be uploaded as a Word document to Canvas by noon on the day of your presentation.

Annotated Bibliography & Abstract

Click on this link for samples of annotated bibliographical entries:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/03/>

Thesis Paragraph (not the same as your abstract)

Click on these links for samples:

Tips for thesis statement: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/>

Strong thesis statements: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/01/>

Final Research Paper

Option #1: A seminar paper that makes an interpretive claim about an archive (physical, digital, or figurative). Papers should have a clearly articulated thesis supported with well-conducted research, appropriate examples chosen from the archive, close reading/analysis, and persuasively argued prose (12-14 pages min. plus bibliography of at least 10 sources).

Option #2: An interpretive study of an issue raised by or encountered within a local cultural institution (library, public record office, collection, foundation, cemetery, etc.). For this option you will not only draw from our course readings and topics in your essay, but you will use your research to help you interpret and develop a thesis about the debates within your chosen archive. It may be appropriate to interview people affiliated with the organization that oversee the archive and/or read relevant press materials to learn more about its situation/problem/issue. This assignment is not simply an overview of the history of a public archive. Your job, rather, is to make an argument about archives based on your analysis of the institution's situation. Like all other essays, this option should have an original, well-articulated thesis supported by research, examples, and close analysis. (12-14 pages min. plus a bibliography of at least 10 sources).

Option #3: Build a digital collection or Archival Exhibit on a system such as OMEKA or WordPress. The subject of your collection should not only include archival materials but should address the way your archive functions as a narrative. Your archive will need a title, a scholarly introduction (8-10 pages double spaced min.), and scholarly annotations/captions (appropriately researched, 300-500 words each) for each object in your archive. Your project should demonstrate, in Antoinette Burton's words, that "all archival sources are at once primary and secondary sources: neither raw nor fully cooked . . . but richly textured as both narrative and meta-narrative, as both archive and history-in-the-making."¹ Your digital collection/archive/exhibit must contain at least 6 objects with captions for each. A bibliography of sources (10 min.) should also appear somewhere visible on your site.

¹ Antoinette Burton, Introduction, *Archive Stories* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2006) 1-24; 12.