

**English 650 | CRN 27080**  
**Archive Theory/Culture (Winter 2019)**

**Professor Heidi Kaufman**

Email: [hkaufman@uoregon.edu](mailto:hkaufman@uoregon.edu)

Office: PLC 327

Office Hours: Wednesday 11-2 and by appointment

Phone: 541-346-3932 (email is the best way to reach me)

**Class Meetings**

448 PLC

F 9-11:50

**Course Description**

What is an archive? How might the form or content of archives invent, challenge, or narrate knowledge of the past? How do archives silence? What is paper, ink, or a material object to an archivist or an archive? And how has the emerging field of critical archive studies transformed our understanding of literary archives, archives about literature, and archive fictions?

This course will approach these questions from three angles. First, we'll read selections from critical and fictional works on the study, creation, and uses 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, materials, and narratives (and depictions thereof) not as repositories of facts or fixed knowledge, but as contested sites of inquiry, disruption, and dissonance. Second, we'll consider, by extension, the intersection of archival knowledge-making and the public sphere. How might archival scholarship grow through its collaborations with the public? Finally, we'll consider how the creation of digital archives might re-shape narratives of the past and/or the production of knowledge about the past. You will have an opportunity to study physical and digital archives and, if you choose, to create digital archives and exhibits or course packets for public audiences. Knowledge of advanced computer languages is unnecessary. However, this course will require curiosity, imagination, and a desire to experiment with the intersection of digital scholarship, critical archive studies, and cultural texts.

**Learning Objectives and Outcomes**

- \*To gain expertise writing scholarly arguments
- \*To engage with key debates about archives, digital and written cultural texts, narrative, 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 the novel and cultural narratives 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, or to use evidence to evoke or create fictions
- \*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 in its entirety. 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. If you miss class for any reason you should contact me as soon as possible.

### **Email and Communication**

Please check your UO email account daily for updates or announcements

When you correspond with me, please be sure to sign your name to emails

Please make sure your email is set to appear in reverse chronological order (most recent emails at the top, with previous emails below)

### **Required Texts**

Arlette Farge, *The Allure of Archives*

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past* (Duck Store; e-copy on order for Library)

Michelle Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia* (E-copy available from our library; physical copy available at Duck Store)

Nora Krug, *Belonging: A German Reckons with History and Home* (Physical copies available at Duck Store)

Doug Dorst and J.J. Abrams, *S.* (Ship of Theseus, by V.M. Straka)

**PLEASE PURCHASE A NEW COPY OF THIS BOOK. \*\*\* YOU WILL NEED A HARD COPY FOR CLASS.** Available at Duck Store.

Assorted materials on Canvas site and links 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, writing supplies. You may use a computer for note-taking but you are expected to refrain from using your computer for anything else during class time (such as social media).

### **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 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.

## **Coursework (should be uploaded to Canvas)**

### **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.

### **Plan for Final Project**

In week 4 you will turn in a paragraph explaining (broad terms are fine) the text(s) on which you're planning to focus your final project, and the kind of project you plan to write/create (seminar paper, digital/writing, etc.). (1 paragraph)

### **Pre-Essay and Bibliography Due**

In week 7 you'll turn in a Pre-Essay and Bibliography. This should be a draft of the first five pages of your final essay along with six sources you have consulted for your project. (4-5 pages plus bibliography)

### **Group Presentation (GP)**

You will be paired with another class member, and together you'll present material assigned for the day of your presentation. Your presentation should accomplish the following:

- 1) Provide an overview of the material you covered and your approaches to studying it.
- 2) Identify a few (2-3) key questions raised by the assigned text(s) that build on or complicate questions we've addressed in this course about archival theory/culture.
- 3) Identify and close read the passage where you hear the author stating or alluding to the text's thesis.
- 4) Discuss what you found most interesting or compelling about the assigned text. Why was it so powerful (effective, interesting, provocative, etc.)?
- 5) Prepare 2 questions (one from each of you) to start our class discussion of the material. Questions should inspire discussion.

This assignment should be a teaching presentation (rather than a formal paper presentation) where you have an opportunity to set up and lead a discussion that examines significant features of the texts under study. Presentation should be about 20-25 minutes and will be followed by discussion.

### **Presentation Essay**

Each person in the group will turn in an essay analyzing the text you've presented. Essays should be 4 pages and should have a clear thesis in which you interpret a feature or facet of the argument and significant features of the way it makes its point(s). Essays are due on the day of your presentation.

### **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
- 15% Group Project Presentation
- 20% Group Project Essay
- 10% Pre-Essay & Bibliography
- 40% Final Essay/Digital Archive Exhibit

### **UO Library**

[UO Unique Special Collections](#)  
[ArchiveGrid](#)

### **Helpful Additional Resources**

[Digital Public Library of America](#) (great examples of digital exhibits)

[Harry Ransom Center Digital Collections](#) (great materials)

[Society of American Archivists](#) (great articles, guide, and list of archival terminology)

[Terminology of Old Books](#)

[MLA Guide to Citing Materials from Physical Archives and Collections](#)

[HASTAC](#) (Humanities, Arts, Sciences, Technology Collaboratory) (grants, programs, etc.)

[National Humanities Alliance](#) (Humanities for All)

[Hathi Trust](#) (digital library)

[CLIR](#) (Council on Library and Information Resources) (fellowships and grants for grads)

NOTE! Our library has a number of databases (available only to UO people) containing digitized archives. We just got three new ones: *London Low Life* (19c); *Empire* (19c) and the *African American Newspapers* module of Accessible Archives.

[DLOC](#) (Digital Library of the Caribbean)

### **Some Local Archives & Archival Resources**

[Oregon State 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](#)

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

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 (1/11): Introductions

Syllabus Overview  
Group Presentation Topics  
Discussion of Farge, *The Allure of Archives*  
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 (1/18): Sources, Beginnings, Romances

Farge, *The Allure of Archives*  
Derrida, from *Archive Fever* (Canvas). Pay particular attention to pages 9-11 and the section titled "Theses" (53-60).

### Week 3 (1/25): Truth, History, Fiction, Narrative

Trouillot *Silencing the Past*

GP1: \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 4 (2/1): Archival Ethics: The Lives and Afterlives of Evidence

Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable* (e-book available through our library)  
Caswell, ["The Archive' is Not An Archives: Acknowledging the Intellectual Contributions of Archival Studies"](https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7bn4v1fk) (https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7bn4v1fk)

**Plan for Final Project due**

GP2 \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

### Week 5 (2/8): Materiality and the Archive (CLASS MEETS IN SCUA)

**Class will meet in SCUA for a hands-on scrapbook workshop**  
Selections from Ellen Gruber Garvey's, *Writing With Scissors* (Canvas)  
MaryAnne Dever, Papered Over, from *Out of the Closet, Into the Archives* (Canvas)  
[Mama Pina's Cookbook:](http://www.criticalmediartstudio.com/RemediatingMamaPina/index.html)  
<http://www.criticalmediartstudio.com/RemediatingMamaPina/index.html>

GP3 \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

## Week 6 (2/15): Decolonizing Archives

Anjali Arondekar, "Introduction: Without A Trace" in *For the Record* (Canvas)

[Decolonizing the Archive](http://www.decolonisingthearchive.com/)

<http://www.decolonisingthearchive.com/>

Early Caribbean Digital Archive, "[Decolonizing the Archive](https://ecda.northeastern.edu/decolonizing-the-archive/)":

<https://ecda.northeastern.edu/decolonizing-the-archive/>

Adeline Koh, "[Inspecting the Nineteenth-century Literary Digital Archive: Omissions of Empire](https://academic.oup.com/jvc/article/19/3/385/4095117#104270087)"

<https://academic.oup.com/jvc/article/19/3/385/4095117#104270087>

Jarrett M. Drake, [Liberatory Archives Part I](https://medium.com/on-archivy/liberatory-archives-towards-belonging-and-believing-part-1-d26aaeb0edd1)

<https://medium.com/on-archivy/liberatory-archives-towards-belonging-and-believing-part-1-d26aaeb0edd1>

Jarrett M. Drake, [Liberatory Archives Part II](https://medium.com/on-archivy/liberatory-archives-towards-belonging-and-believing-part-2-6f56c754eb17)

<https://medium.com/on-archivy/liberatory-archives-towards-belonging-and-believing-part-2-6f56c754eb17>

GP4 \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

## Week 7 (2/22): Public Engagement and the Archive

**Class meets in DREAM Lab (Knight Library)**

**Pre-Essay and Bibliography Due**

Class time will be spent discussing public archives with people from the Kentucky Historical Society. Some of the questions we'll consider:

What is Public Engagement? How is it connected to academia?

Why do public records and archives matter to the public?

How do we make them accessible?

How can graduate education prepare us for the work of public engagement/public humanities?

How do public and digital humanities intersect in productive ways around archives?

**Consult the following in preparation for this discussion**

Podcast [Interview with Natalie Smith](http://civilwargovernors.org/natalie-smith-think-humanities-interview/)

<http://civilwargovernors.org/natalie-smith-think-humanities-interview/>

[LIST CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE]

Lewis and Higgs, [“Investing in the Ecosystem History News”](#)  
file:///C:/Users/heidi/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/ZLVYHPDH/Lewis%20%20Higgins-%20Investing%20in%20the%20Ecosystem%20History%20News%20(002).pdf  
[Civil War Governors of Kentucky website](#)  
<http://discovery.civilwargovernors.org/ft>  
Michelle Caswell: [How I started](#)  
[https://aranewprofessionals.wordpress.com/2018/08/17/how-i-started-michelle-caswell/amp/?\\_\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://aranewprofessionals.wordpress.com/2018/08/17/how-i-started-michelle-caswell/amp/?__twitter_impression=true)

**Week 8 (3/1): Fiction and Absent Archives**

Krug, *Belonging*

**GP5** \_\_\_\_\_ **&** \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 9 (3/8): Absence and Archival Creation**

Verne Harris, “Hauntology, archivy and banditry: an engagement with Derrida and Zapiro” (Canvas)

Lauren F. Klein, The Image of Absence: Archival Silence, Data Visualization, and James Hemings” (Canvas)

Bethanie Nowviskie, [Speculative Collections](#)  
<http://nowviskie.org/2016/speculative-collections/>

Kate Ozment’s [Imagining Literature](#)  
<https://www.imaginingliterature.com/>

[A New Portrait of Slavery:](#)  
<https://theconversation.com/in-a-digital-archive-of-fugitive-slave-ads-a-new-portrait-of-slavery-emerges-55263>

**GP6** \_\_\_\_\_ **&** \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 10 (3/15): Materiality, Romance, and Archival Assemblage**

*Ship of Theseus*

**GP7** \_\_\_\_\_ **&** \_\_\_\_\_

**Final projects should be uploaded to Canvas by noon on Tuesday, March 19.**

### **Analyzing Digital Projects** (A beginner's guide)

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).

What is significant about the content and subject of this site?

How is the site structured visually and conceptually? Is it effective?

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?

### **Final Research Project**

**Option #1:** A scholarly seminar paper that makes an interpretive claim about materials we've studied in this course. Papers should have a clearly articulated thesis supported with well-conducted research, appropriate examples chosen from the archive/text, close reading/analysis, and persuasively argued prose (12-14 pages min. plus bibliography of at least 10 sources).

**Option #2:** An interpretive scholarly analysis of an archive (physical or digital). You can write about an archive of your choosing (library, public record office, collection, foundation, cemetery, etc.). You will not only draw from our course readings and topics in your essay, but you'll use your research to interpret and develop a thesis about the debates raised by the materials, contexts, history, form/architecture, or role of your archive. It may be appropriate to interview people affiliated with the organization that curate, oversee, or use the archive. This assignment is not simply an overview of the history of a public archive. Your job, rather, is to make an interpretive argument about the archive based on both the content, form, uses, and history of the archive. 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 an archive/exhibit essay in Omeka. Your exhibit essay will need a title; a scholarly essay (equal to 8 ms. pages min.) integrated with digital objects using Omeka's exhibit plugin; and scholarly metadata for each object included in your archive. You will *also* write a 2-3-page essay in which you analyze your own archive through the lens of critical archive theory. Your essay 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."<sup>1</sup> You might consider, for example, *how* your exhibit narrates stories through content, provenance, or original order. Or you might consider the narrative or visual rhetoric you've created through the juxtaposition of objects and the function of digital tools. Or you might consider how you've chosen to handle the silences or gaps in your exhibit, the stories that can't be told. Your digital archive (Omeka "items") must contain at least 6 objects with metadata. A bibliography of sources (10 sources min.) should appear on the final page of your exhibit.

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

**Option #4:** Build a classroom course pack that draws from one of the archives or collections at the Kentucky Historical Society. If you choose this option, you'll need to do the following:

- 1) Before you begin, consult with Patrick Lewis at the Kentucky Historical Society to be sure your course pack aligns with the goals of their outreach initiative, and that you are using materials the Kentucky Historical Society is trying to promote for classroom use.
- 2) Create a 4-class plan module for a specific audience (grade level). Each class plan will include clear learning outcomes; an overview of the contexts for the materials that will be taught; a collection of primary materials to be assigned to students; classroom activities, homework assignments, writing assignments, and evaluation criteria that tie in with the learning outcomes.
- 3) Write a scholarly essay that makes a strong argument for the way you've interpreted the archive and your approach to teaching the archive. Following your thesis, your essay will point to specific examples from the archive and your reading in archival theory to demonstrate the value of the approach you've taken in your course pack. Essays should be 7 pages (min.) plus bibliography.