In this seminar, you will explore the fundamentals of archival work while also thinking about the “big questions” of the archive. How do we organize information and knowledge? How do taxonomies shape our critical understanding of a field? And how do we account for the absent, lost, or even unknowable? You will be given the opportunity to do hands-on archival work in two ways: first, by being tasked to investigate a particular processed Newberry collection to identify its constructed and contingent nature (e.g., its provenance, year of processing, organizational approach); and second, by working with archival staff to write a processing plan for an unprocessed collection at the Newberry. This methodological work will be buttressed by a deep engagement with conceptual issues raised through a discussion of readings from historians, literary scholars, and theorists.

The seminar will take place from 9:30 to 12:30 in Towner Fellows Lounge (TFL) on the second floor of the Newberry, unless noted otherwise. Lunch will be catered from 12:30 to 1:30 in TFL. On the first and last day of the seminar, we will also meet in the afternoon from 2 to 4/4:30 pm. Otherwise, afternoons should be reserved for your own work with collection materials.

**October 5th: What is an Archive?** // Liesl Olson, Director of Chicago Studies; Alison Hinderliter, Interim Lloyd Lewis Curator of Modern Manuscripts and Selector for Modern Music; Catherine Grandgeorge, Processing Archivist.

**READINGS:**
3. Selected Newberry Finding Aids: Fanny Butcher Papers (literary papers); Goodman Family Papers (family papers); Pullman Company Records (business papers); Arts Club of Chicago (organization papers).

2-4 pm: Tour of the Stacks. Introduction to Unprocessed Collections.

**October 12: Processing and the Process of the Archive** // Liesl Olson, Alison Hinderliter, Catherine Grandgeorge.

**READINGS:**
1. James O’Toole and Richard Cox, chapters 3-4 from *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts* (2006).
October 19: Archive Fever, the Philosopher and the Historian // Liesl Olson

READINGS:

October 26: Born-Digital Materials in the Archives // Guest faculty presentation, Naomi Nelson, Director of the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University. Please meet in the first floor seminar room.

READINGS:

Nov. 2: Getting a Grip: The Challenges of Preserving Born-Digital Materials as Evidence // Guest faculty presentation, Chris Prom, University Archivist and Andrew Turyn Professor, University of Illinois Library.

READINGS:


**November 16: Archive and Ethics** // Liesl Olson and Analú López, Ayer Librarian.

**READINGS:**

**November 30: Archives and Historical Imagination** // Liesl Olson.

**READINGS:**

**December 7: Hidden Archives and Archival Stewardship** // Guest Faculty Presentation, Melissa Barton, Curator, Prose & Drama, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Visit by Andrea Jackson, Executive Director, BMRC.

**READINGS:**
1. [Mapping the Stacks](#) and [Black Metropolis Research Consortium](#) websites.
2. [Finding aid](#) for the South Side Community Art Center
4. [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#), South Side Community Art Center

2-4:30 pm: Presentations and Evaluations.