

The Archive: Theory, Form, Practice
Newberry Library
Fall 2019

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 is 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 4th: What is an Archive? // Liesl Olson, Director of Chicago Studies; Alison Hinderliter, Lloyd Lewis Curator of Modern Manuscripts and Archives; Catherine Grandgeorge, Manuscripts and Archives Librarian.

READINGS: 1. Michelle Caswell, “The Archive” is Not An Archives: Acknowledging the Intellectual Contributions of Archival Studies” (2016).
2. Michel Foucault, “Lives of Infamous Men” (1979).
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 11: Processing and the Process of the Archive // Liesl Olson, Alison Hinderliter, Catherine Grandgeorge. Visit by Marcia Walker-McWilliams, Executive Director, Black Metropolis Research Consortium.

READINGS: 1. Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner, “More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing” (2005).
2. “Collection Survey and Processing Plan,” adapted from “Manuscript Processing and Procedures” created by Jennifer Gotwals (Harvard, 2013) and compiled by Catherine Grandgeorge (Newberry, 2019).
3. “Newberry Library Arrangement Practices,” edited by Alison Hinderliter (2018).
4. Thomas Osborne, “The Ordinarity of the Archive” (1999).

5. [Mapping the Stacks](#) and [Black Metropolis Research Consortium](#) websites.

October 18: Archive Fever, the Philosopher and the Historian // Liesl Olson

- READINGS: 1. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever* (1995).
2. Carolyn Steedman, selections from *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (2002).

October 25: Archive and Ethics // Liesl Olson; Rose Miron, Director of The D'Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies; and Analú López, Ayer Indigenous Studies Librarian.

- READINGS: 1. Northern Arizona University Institute for Native Americans, "[Protocols for Native American Archival Materials](#)" (2007).
2. [Society of American Archivists' Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics](#) on the Society of American Archivists website.
3. Brian Carpenter, "Archival Initiatives for the Indigenous Collections at the American Philosophical Society," (2019).
4. [optional] [The Sustainable Heritage Network](#) website.
5. [optional] Michelle Caswell, "Dusting for Fingerprints: Introducing Feminist Standpoint Appraisal," (2019).

Nov. 1: Black Radicalism and the Archive // Guest faculty presentation, Professor Brent Edwards, Department of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University.

- READINGS: 1. Brent Hayes Edwards, "The Taste of the Archive" (2012)
2. Brent Hayes Edwards, "The Politics of Scraps" (forthcoming)

November 15: Bitstreams: The Future of Digital Cultural Heritage // Guest faculty presentation, Professor Matt Kirschenbaum, Department of English, University of Maryland; Director of the Graduate Certificate in Digital Studies; Co-founder, BookLab.

- READINGS: 1. Matt Kirschenbaum, "Archives Without Dust" (forthcoming).
2. Wendy Chun, "The Enduring Ephemeral" (2008).

November 22: Archives, Confabulation, and Historical Imagination // Liesl Olson.

- READINGS: 1. Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts" (2008).
2. Wendy Warren, "The Cause of Her Grief" (2007).
2. Liesl Olson, Preface and Interludes from *Chicago Renaissance* (2017).

1:30-2 pm: Visit to the Newberry's Conservation Lab (5th floor)

December 6: Materiality and Subjectivity in the Archive // Liesl Olson

READINGS: 1. Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives* (1989).
2. [optional] Robert Darnton, “The Good Way to Do History” (2014).

10:30-12:30	Presentations
12:30-1:30	Lunch
1:30-4	Presentations and Evaluations

Key resources:

Writers, Artists, and their Copyright Holders ([WATCH](#)) website.

YouTube videos from a Princeton historian about how to organize archival research: [Research Methods for Historians. Part 1: Secondary Sources + Best Practices](#), [Research Methods for Historians. Part 2: Digitizing + Organizing Archival Sources](#)

Newberry Library: [Digital Collections for the Classroom](#)

[Explore Chicago Collections](#)

[Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology](#)

[The Copyright Genie](#)

[Copyright Office](#)