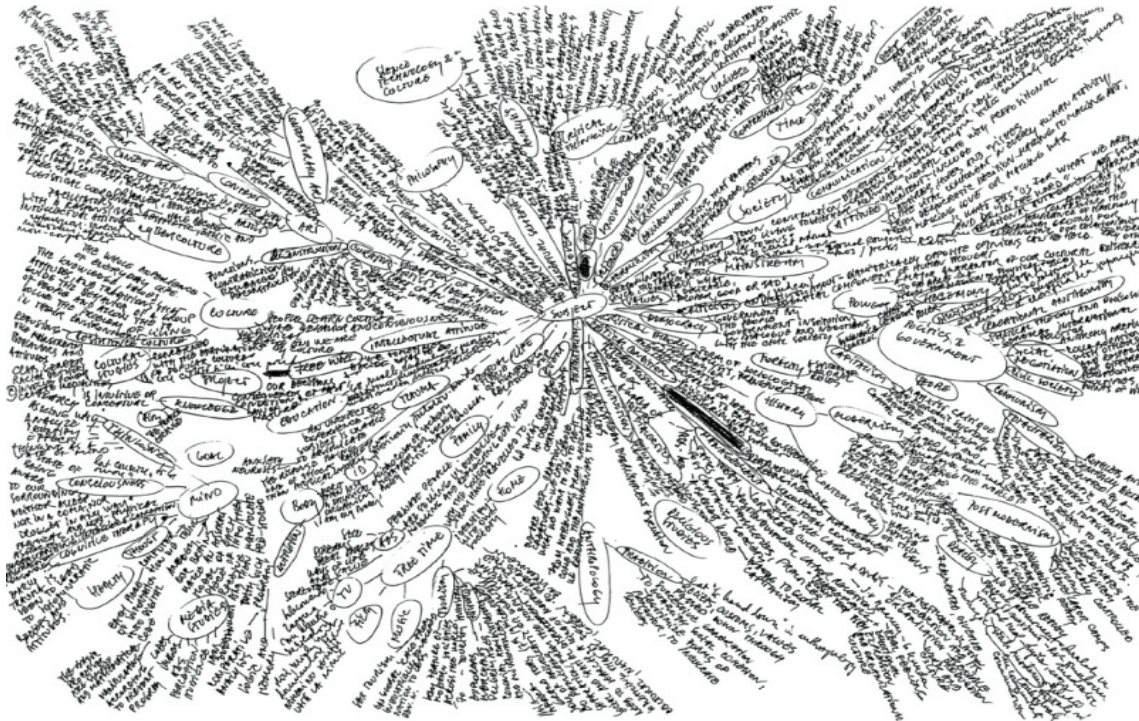


## Theories and Arts of Archives

Instructor: Ms. Ann Garascia  
Office hours: MW 11:15am-12:45pm  
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Class time: M 2:10pm-5:00pm



Lia Perjovschi, *Knowledge Museum* 1999-2007 (adhesive paper, transparent matte)

Interdisciplinary research methods sometimes strengthen disciplinary divides. One of the most potentially insurmountable, the “archival divide” refers to presumed differences in methods, theories and agendas between the archivists and historians who work directly with documentary collections. However, through the rise of archives-based research within various humanities subfields, the “archival divide” looks less like a single chasm than it does a topography of rivulets each carved out by minor disciplinary differences, much like Lia Perjovschi’s *Knowledge Museum* mind map.

In this seminar, we will navigate the divisive terrain of “the archive” by staging interdisciplinary inquiries into archives, archival documentation, and archival research across humanities, social science, and information science fields. Geared toward advanced undergraduate and graduate students, this course will introduce students to major debates and questions in archival theory traversing library science, historical, queer, performance, critical race, postcolonial, disability, and critical refugee studies approaches. Each week features key theoretical readings paired with either archival art projects across a broad spectrum of media or onsite archival fieldwork at Washington University. With each week’s assigned texts, we will be considering how the aesthetics, rhetoric, and informatics of archival systems actively shape the conditions of possibility for historical transmission. We will also assess our roles as researchers through the narratives of interdisciplinary research that archival research inspires in order to push

beyond familiar rhetorical figures, like “the divides” we bridge as interdisciplinary scholars, to imagine new models of archival storytelling.

### **Writing Requirements**

**Response Papers (20%):** To prepare for seminar, each student will write six short, ungraded responses (approximately 250 words) to the week’s assigned readings over the course of the semester. Sign up for these will take place the second week of seminar, so plan accordingly for the weeks you will be contributing. The goal of this assignment is to synthesize the theoretical texts and artistic pieces. We will be using these responses as the basis for seminar discussions. Students will upload them to the course website by Sunday evening 11:00pm, so everyone can read one another’s response.

**Class Facilitation (20%):** The oral assignment for this class is intended to be an interactive facilitated class discussion (as opposed to an oral presentation.) You may work singly or in pairs to draft a series of interpretative and critical questions that map out positions and topics designed to stimulate lively discussion. You will be assessed on whether or not your questions can be answered; whether or not your classmates take up the challenge of responding to your questions; and whether or not you have engaged with the assigned readings in meaningful, creative ways. You may offer some contextualizing comments or introduce a new supplementary text, but these should not surpass 5-10 minutes. Remember: the best facilitations are the ones in which the facilitator does not do all of the talking. Plan your questions to cover the first half of seminar (about 70 minutes) and after the break the seminar leaders will take over.

**Final Project—Alternative Archival Methodology (40%; 15 pages or commensurate alternative format):** For the entire semester, we have been reading about different approaches to archiving and interpreting archival materials. For your final project, you will develop and propose your own method for archival research based on your theoretical, subject-based, or historical interests. For this project, you can either choose an existing archival collection or compile your own to serve as the primary source materials for your proposed method. You may present you the rubric for your archival research method through a number of different forms. Traditional typewritten essays are welcome, but you are also encouraged to present your proposed method as a piece of born-digital scholarship, a multimedia project, or a performed/site-specific installation. Just keep in mind that you will want your presentation of your rubric to reflect its content in a meaningful way. (For example: if you are working with a primarily visual archive, you may want to choose a publishing venue geared toward visual preservation and display.) Our seminar will be hosting an exhibition of our archival methodologies during the last class session in which each student will present his or her project to the attendees.

**Final Project Proposal (20%; Week 9):** To prepare for your final project, you will put together an abstract of 500 words that sketches a possible plan for your analytical rubric. This includes identifying your primary theoretical, historical, or subject-based orientation and your potential suite of primary sources. Your annotated bibliography will require that you do research to find primary sources and critical secondary sources that will help you develop your argument. For each source, you will supply a brief summary and how you see this source contributing to your

project. We will workshop these proposals during Week 9 of the semester.

\*\*Abstract: 500 words

\*\*Annotated Bibliography: 5-7 entries, 75-100 words/entry

### Required Readings

Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2007).

Blouin, Francis X. and Rosenberg, William G., *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Caswell, Michelle, *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014).

Cvetkovich, Ann. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Translated by Eric Prenowitz. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996)

González, Jennifer A. *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art*. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2008).

Rogers, Molly. *Delia's Tears: Race, Science, and Photography in Nineteenth-Century America*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

Steedman, Carolyn. *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001).

Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Culture Memory in the Americas*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003)

\*\*the rest of the readings and art pieces will be available through our course website

### Reading Schedule

\*denotes archival art piece

#### Unit One: The Archive—What is the Archive?

##### M, Week One:

--Derrida, *Archive Fever*

--selections from Foucault, *The Order of Things* (from Charles Merewether, *The Archive* MIT Press 2008)

--Heather Macneil and Jennifer Douglas, "Arranging the Self: Literary and Archival Perspectives

on Writers' Archives." *Archivaria* (Spring 2009)

--Jorge Luis Borges, "The Library of Babel"

-- Holly Hall Book Arts Collection at Washington University

## **Unit 2: Archives— How do we access archives?**

### **M, Week Two:**

--Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archive* (Oxford University Press 2011)

--Introduction to Gilliland, McKemmish, and Lau, *Research in the Archival Multiverse* (Monash University Press 2015)

--Hal Foster, "An Archival Impulse" *October* (Autumn 2004)

\*Karsten Bott, "Archive of Contemporary History" (1993; multimedia installation)

## **Unit 3: Visualizing Evidence— What constitutes "evidence"**

### **M, Week Three:**

--Molly Rogers, *Delia's Tears: Race, Science, and Photography in Nineteenth-Century America*

--Joan Schwartz, "Records of Simple Truth and Precision: Photography, Archives, and the Illusion of Control" *Archivaria* (Fall 2000)

--\*Carrie Mae Weems, "From Here I Saw What Happened and I Cried" (1995-1996; photography)

## **Unit 4: The Researcher—How do we write about archival work?**

### **M, Week Four:**

--Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*

--introduction from Helena Michie and Robyn Warhol, *Love Among the Archives: Writing the Lives of George Scharf, Victorian Bachelor* (Edinburgh University Press 2015)

### **M, Week Five:**

--selections from Antoinette Burton, *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Duke University Press 2006)

--\* Cheryl Dunye, *The Watermelon Woman* (1996; film)

--\* Cheryl Dunye and Zoe Leonard, "The Fae Richards Photoarchive" (photograph-film)

## Unit 5: Human Rights Archiving — What is the archival grain and how we read it?

### M, Week Six:

-- Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance.” (*Refiguring the Archive*, Kluwer Academic Publishers 2006)

-- selections from Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton University Press 2009)

--Adeline Koh, “Digitizing Chinese Englishmen: Creating a Nineteenth-Century ‘Post-Colonial Archive’” ([chineseenglishmen.adelinekoh.org](http://chineseenglishmen.adelinekoh.org))

--\**The Act of Killing* (2012; documentary)

### M, Week Seven:

--Michelle Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia*

--Michelle Caswell, “Defining Human Rights Archives” *Archival Science* (October 2015)

--\* *The Look of Silence* (2014; companion documentary to *The Act of Killing*)

--\* *Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo* (“Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo; photo-visual protest art)

## Unit 8: Archiving—What does evidence of sexuality feel like?

### M, Week Eight:

-- Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*

-- José Muñoz, “Ephemera as Evidence: Introductory Notes to Queer Acts” *Women and Performance: a journal of feminist theory* (1996)

--introduction to Alana Kumbier, *Ephemeral Material: Queering the Archive* (Litwin Books 2014)

--St. Louis LGBT History Project: Missouri History Museum Library and Research Center, and St. Louis LGBT Walking Tour

### M, Week Nine:

--**final project proposals DUE; proposal workshop**

-- Melissa Meyer and Miriam Schapiro, “Femmeage: Waste Not Want Not, An Inquiry into What Women Saved and Assembled” (1977-1978)

--Julia Bryan Wilson, “Handmade Genders: Queer Costuming in San Francisco Circa 1970” *West of Center: Art and the Counterculture Experiment in America, 1965-1977*, University of

Minnesota Press 2012)

--\*Senga Nengundi, “Respondez s’il vous plait” (1977/2003; mixed-media installation)

### **Unit 9: Domestic Collections—How do objects constitute cultural memory?**

#### **M, Week Ten:**

--Jennifer A. González, “Autotopographies” (*Prosthetic Territories: Politics and Hypertechnologies*)

-- Jennifer A. González, *Subject to Display* chapter on Amalia Mesa-Bains

--\* Amalia Mesa-Bains, “An Ofrenda for Dolores Del Rio” (1984; mixed media installation)

--\* Amalia Mesa-Bains, “Sor Juana’s Library” (1993; mixed media installation)

--Lisa Darms, “The Archival Object: A Memoir in Disintegration” *Archivaria* (2009)

--Russell Belk, “Possessions and the Extended Self” *Journal of Consumer Research* (September 1988)

--\*David Wojnarowicz, “Magic Box ” (mixed media)

### **Unit 10: Family Albums—How do we document intimacy?**

#### **M, Week Eleven:**

--Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*

--introduction to Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory* (Harvard University Press 1997)

--Cheryl Finley, “No More Auction Block for Me!” (*Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African American Identity*, Duke University Press 2012)

-- \*Albert Chong “The Sisters” and “Aunt Winnie’s Story” (1995; photography-text)

### **Unit 11: Museum Exhibitions—What are the politics of display and storage?**

#### **M, Week Twelve:**

-- Jennifer A. González, *Subject to Display* introduction and chapters on Fred Wilson and James Luna

--Mary M. Brooks and Claire Rumsey “Who Knows the Fate of His Bones?": Rethinking the body on display: object, art, or human remains?" (from *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed*, Routledge 2007)

--Sheila Watson, "History museums, community identities, and a sense of place: rewriting histories" ((from *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed*, Routledge 2007)

-- Fred Wilson, "Mining the Museum" (1992; mixed media)

-- James Luna, "Artifact Piece" (1987-on; endurance art)

--The Griot Museum of Black History

**M, Week Thirteen:**

--Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*

-- Coco Fusco, Guillermo Gómez-Peña, and Paula Heredia, *The Couple in the Cage* (1993; performance art-mockumentary)

**Unit 12: Unfinished Archives—What is the Future of Archiving**

**M, Week Fourteen:**

-- introduction to Robert McRuer, *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability* (New York University Press, 2006)

-- Yên Lê Espiritu, "Toward a Critical Refugee Study: The Vietnamese Refugee Subject in US Scholarship" *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* (February 2006)

--Lucian Gomoll, "Objects of Dis/order: Articulating Curiosities and Engaging People at the Freakatorium" (from *Defining Memory: Local Museums and the Construction of History in America's Changing Communities*, AltaMira Press 2007)

--Marika Cifor and Anne Gilliland, "Affect and the Archive, Archives and their Affects: an introduction to the special issue" *Archival Science* (March 2016)

**Unit 13: What is the Archive?**

**M, Week Fifteen:**

-- Exhibition of student projects

