

Into the Archive: The Politics and Practice of Archival Research
JanPlan 2018 – HI297A – Colby College
Monday - Thursday, 1:00-3:00pm
Miller 205

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 3:30-4:30pm in Miller 257, or by appointment.

Course Description: This course brings students into a range of archives — paper and digital, past and present — to explore how to critically analyze primary sources and interpret evidence. Students will examine the history and politics of archives and deconstruct the narratives and silences inherent in them. They will investigate the ways in which archives have historically been used for political regimes, social movements, memory work, education, and scholarship, with an emphasis on case studies from the history of Latin America. Through in-class activities and two archive visits, students will gain interpretive tools, develop the ability to assess the reliability of information, and build an understanding of research practices. Readings, discussions in seminar and online, writing assignments and oral presentations will build students' skills in close reading, critical thinking and analysis, collaborative learning, and communicating complex ideas.

Course Website: web.colby.edu/intothearchive

Mark your calendar: On Thursday, January 18, we will visit the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine in Augusta (hhrcmaine.org). We will depart at 9:00am and return to campus by mid-afternoon. Transportation will be provided.

Assignments:

Readings and Online Posts: The readings will be central to class discussions and activities. All readings and course materials are available on the course website or through the Colby Library website (ebooks and articles). Complete all reading assignments listed on the syllabus in preparation for each session (the readings are listed on the day they will be discussed). By 10:00am on each class day, post a quote, a comment and a question from the readings on our course discussion page. Come to class ready to address discussion questions and comment on your classmates' posts.

Source Analysis: Students will submit three (3) short primary source analyses (1200-1500 words), due on Friday at 5:00pm for the first three weeks of the course. Guidelines will be provided. Students will receive extra credit if they use the Farnham Writers' Center to work on drafts of these assignments.

Presentations: Students will practice oral presentation and collaboration skills by working in small groups to analyze and interpret primary sources provided in digital format and present their findings to the larger group.

Final: The final take home exam will be distributed on Wednesday, January 31 and will consist of a short essay question and a primary source analysis. The final is due via email by 12:00pm on the last day of JanPlan, Thursday, February 1. Class will meet that day but there will be no required reading.

Assessment:

25% - Participation: Includes attendance, completing the readings, submitting online posts, and active participation in seminar discussions and archive visits.

15% - Oral presentation of digital archive materials in class

30% - Source Analysis (3 in total)

30% - Final Exam (take home)

Week 1 – Archival Thinking

Monday, January 8, 2018:

Welcome and Introductions

What is an Archive? Guiding Concepts and Questions

Approaches to Primary Source Material

Tuesday, January 9, 2018: Power in the Archive

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Preface and Ch. 1, pp. xvii-xix, 1-30.

Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science* 2, no. 1 (2002): 1-19.

Francis Blouin and William Rosenberg, *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives*, Introduction: "On the Intersections of Archives and History," pp. 3-10 (ebook).

In-class exercise: Bring a source from your own personal archive to discuss

Wednesday, January 10, 2018: Silences and Omissions

Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Ch. 3, pp.70-107.

Rebecca Scott, "The Provincial Archive as a Place of Memory: The Role of Former Slaves in the Cuban War of Independence (1895-98)," *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58 (2004): 149-66.

Thomas, Fowler, and Johnson, *The Silence of the Archive*, Ch. 1, pp. 1-34.

Thursday, January 11, 2018: Institutional Archives and Contestation

Visit to the Colby College Archives – Miller Library, First Floor

Earl Smith, *Mayflower Hill: A History of Colby College*, pp. 167-199.

Jarrett Drake, "Documenting Dissent in the Contemporary College Archive," *On Archivy*, November 7, 2016.

Chase Hommeyer, "An Update on Archiving Student Activism at Princeton," *Mudd Manuscript Library Blog*, March 25, 2016.

Brian Whitley, "Documenting Student Activities and Activism on Campus: Bringing Activist Alumni into the Fold," *Academic Archivist*, November 13, 2017.

Due: Friday, January 12 by 5:00pm via email: Source Analysis #1

Week 2 – Archival Logics and Historical Memory

Monday, January 15, 2018: National and Colonial Logics in the Archive

Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives*, Ch. 1, pp. 13-31 (ebook).

Kathryn Burns, *Into the Archive: Writing and Power in Colonial Peru*, Introduction, pp. 1-19 (ebook).

Ann Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*, Ch. 2, pp. 17-53 (ebook).

Dharma Ghosh, “National Narratives and the Politics of Miscegenation: Britain and India,” in Burton, ed., *Archive Stories*, pp. 27-44 (ebook).

Tuesday, January 16, 2018: Contesting Authority and Reconstituting Loss

Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives*, Ch. 2 and 4, pp. 32-49, 63-93 (ebook).

Eric Ketelaar, “Archival Temples, Archival Prisons: Modes of Power and Production,” *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 221-238.

Read a chapter of your choice from Burton, ed., *Archive Stories* (ebook).

Wednesday, January 17, 2018: Holocaust Testimony and Oral History

Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, Preface, Ch. 1 and 8, pp. 11-35, 167-197.

Alessandro Portelli, *The Order Has Been Carried Out*, Introduction, pp. 1-20.

Noah Shenker, *Reframing Holocaust Testimony*, Introduction, pp. 1-18

Watch: “116 Cameras,” *New York Times Op-Doc with Eva Schloss*.

Thursday, January 18, 2018: Holocaust Archives and Sites of Memory

Trip to the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine

Leave campus at 9:00am and return by mid-afternoon.

James Young, *Texture of Memory*, Introduction and Ch. 11, pp. 1-15, 283-322.

Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives*, Ch. 6, pp. 97-115 (ebook)

Listen: Oral History Interview with Gerda Haas, Founder of HHRC (1998) (selections)

Due: Friday, January 19 by 5:00pm via email: Source Analysis #2

Week 3 – Archives of Dictatorship, Questions of Human Rights: Studies from 20th-Century Latin America

Monday, January 22, 2018: Shifting Archival Logics: From Surveillance to Justice in Guatemala

Kirsten Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala*,

Introduction: “The Power of Archival Thinking,” Part I and II (ebook)

Elena Danielson, “Privacy Rights and the Rights of Political Victims: Implications of the German Experience,” *The American Archivist* 67, no. 2 (2004): 176-193.

Tuesday, January 23, 2018: Guatemala Police Archives and the Cold War Context

Weld, *Paper Cadavers*, Part III and IV (ebook)

Barbara Zanchetta, “Between Cold War Imperatives and State Sponsored Terrorism: The United States and ‘Operation Condor,’” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 39, no. 12 (2016): 1084-1102.

Wednesday, January 24, 2018: Archival Imperatives and Human Rights

Louis Bickford, "The Archival Imperative: Human Rights and Historical Memory in Latin America's Southern Cone," *Human Rights Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (1999): 1097-1122.

Amanda Strauss, "Treading the Ground of Contested Memory: Archivists and the Human Rights Movement in Chile," *Archival Science* 15 (2015): 369-397.

Thursday, January 25, 2018: Stories of a Dirty War

Verbitsky, *Confessions of an Argentine Dirty Warrior*.

Due: Friday, January 26 by 5:00pm via email: Source Analysis #3

Week 4 – Archival Turns

Monday, January 29, 2018: Archiving Secrets

Howard Zinn, "Secrecy, Archives and the Public Interest," Address to the Society of American Archivists, 1970.

Nick Cullather, *Secret History: The CIA's Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954* (selections)

Kate Doyle, "The End of Secrecy: U.S. National Security and the Imperative for Openness," *World Policy* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 34-51.

Tuesday, January 30, 2018: Politics of Archival Custody

LILAS Benson Latin American Studies Collection, "Identifying Post-Custodial Partners in Latin America," (April 2016): 1-7.

Theresa Polk, "Archiving Human Rights Documentation: The Promise of the Post-Custodial Approach in Latin America," *Portal Magazine* (August 2016).

Society of American Archivists Statement on García Márquez Archive (November 2014).

Jennifer Schuessler, "Souvenirs of a Literary Alchemist," *The New York Times*, November 24, 2014.

Press Release, "García Márquez Archive Opens," The University of Texas at Austin (October 2015).

Jennifer Schuessler, "Gabriel García Márquez's Archive Available Freely Online," *The New York Times*, December 11, 2017.

Wednesday, January 31, 2018: Digital Complications

Roy Rosenzweig, "Scarcity or Abundance? Preserving the Past in a Digital Era," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 3 (June 2003): 728-762.

Lara Putnam, "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast" *American Historical Review* 121, no. 2 (2016): 377-402.
Final take home exam will be distributed.

Thursday, February 1, 2018: Archiving the Future

Final exam is due by 12:00pm (submit by email).

All JanPlan work is due on February 1, according Colby policy.

No required reading for today.

Optional reading: Blouin and Rosenberg, *Processing the Past*, Ch. 11, pp. 207-215.

"Update on the Twitter Archive at the Library of Congress," December, 2017.

Conclusion

JanPlan at Colby: The fundamental purpose of the January Program is to broaden and extend the learning experience at Colby by offering students distinctive opportunities not ordinarily available during the traditional academic semesters. By definition, January experiences are intensely focused, emphasizing engagement by faculty and students with a single subject matter or experience. While January experiences share the broader learning goals of Colby's curriculum, they are especially concerned with strengthening capacities for innovative thinking, independent work, creativity, intellectual exploration and experimentation. *Students should expect to be assigned work of at least two hours outside of class for each class hour. For all January courses, students should be highly engaged with their course material and are expected to spend 30-40 hours per week on their January Program topics.*

Academic Honesty & Consequences for Academic Dishonesty: Honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility are cornerstones of a Colby education and provide the foundation for scholarly inquiry, intellectual discourse, and an open and welcoming campus community. These values are articulated in the Colby Affirmation and are central to this course. You are expected to demonstrate academic honesty in all aspects of this course. If you are clear about course expectations, give credit to those whose work you rely on, and submit your best work, you are highly unlikely to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: violating clearly stated rules for taking an exam or completing homework; plagiarism (including material from sources without a citation and quotation marks around any borrowed words); claiming another's work or a modification of another's work as one's own; buying or attempting to buy papers or projects for a course; fabricating information or citations; knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty; misrepresentations to faculty within the context of a course; and submitting the same work, including an essay that you wrote, in more than one course without the permission of the instructors.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense against the college. Sanctions for academic dishonesty are assigned by an academic review board and may include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the College.

For more on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism, see the library guide: libguides.colby.edu/avoidingplagiarism

The Colby Affirmation

Colby College is a community dedicated to learning and committed to the growth and well-being of all its members.

As a community devoted to intellectual growth, we value academic integrity. We agree to take ownership of our academic work, to submit only work that is our own, to fully acknowledge the research and ideas of others in our work, and to abide by the instructions and regulations governing academic work established by the faculty.

As a community built on respect for ourselves, each other, and our physical environment, we recognize the diversity of people that have gathered here and that genuine inclusivity requires active, honest, and compassionate engagement with one another. We agree to respect each other, to honor community expectations, and to comply with college policies.

As a member of this community, I pledge to hold myself and others accountable to these values.

What does this mean to students?

- We respect each other and ourselves.
- We respect our physical spaces on campus.
- We respect our academics and complete work honestly.