

## **HIST6601: Silences and Biases of the Archives**

University of New Orleans

Spring 2020

W 5:00 – 7:40pm

History Seminar Room

Professor: Andrea C. Mosterman

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Office Hours: W2-4pm, TuTh 3:15-5:15pm

Location: LA 111

### **Course Description**

Welcome to HIST6601! This course will explore the silences and biases in the archives. It will look at the ways in which archives are created, the politics of preserving records, and the silences and biases in these repositories. It will also explore how scholars can take such biases into account, and how they can write histories about people and topics that do not appear in the archival records.

### **Learning Objectives**

Students in this course should learn to do the following:

- Discuss historical discourse in writing, discussions, and presentations.
- Write succinct responses that summarize and evaluate scholarship.
- Prepare and conduct a seminar discussion.
- Write a book review that evaluates a text and connects it to other scholarship in the field.

### **Course Texts**

Ann Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. ISBN: 0691146365

Michael-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. ISBN-10: 0807080535

Marisa Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*. ISBN-10: 0812224183

Michelle Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia*. ISBN-10: 0299297543

Kristen Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala*. ISBN-10: 0822356023

Additional course materials will be available on Moodle or through UNO's library databases.

### **Course Requirements**

#### *Class Participation*

As a significant amount of our class time will be spent discussing the readings, I expect you to attend all classes and participate in class discussions. All reading assignments must be completed by the day under which they appear. Please arrive on time for class. If you must leave early, let me know at the beginning of class. This course is based on discussion, and so you will be expected to share your thoughts, but courteous behavior and responses are expected, even when you do not agree with what is said or discussed in the classroom. Civility in the classroom and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment.

### *Response Papers*

Most weeks you will be required to submit a 300-500 word (maximum!) response paper (11 out of 13 in total). This should be a brief discussion of the readings in which you highlight important arguments, theories, and/or methods. Also identify how the different readings relate to each other and the topic of the week. As part of the response paper, you should list two questions for discussion. These Response Papers are due on Moodle at noon on the day of class. If the paper is submitted after noon but before class, it will lose 10 points. I do not accept Response Papers that are submitted after the class of its due date.

### *Book Review and Presentation*

You will be required to write a book review on an external book. I will bring a list of the books to our first classes. The book review should be 500-750 words long. It is due on the day during which we discuss related topics as detailed on the sign-up sheet. You will present on the book during the class of your book review due date. This informal presentation should be no longer than **5 minutes**. Please bring your book review to class and submit it to Moodle (the Welcome page of the course) on the day that it is due.

### *Lead Discussion*

You will be required to lead one of our discussions either alone or with one of your classmates. Please sign up for the date of your discussion during our first meetings. As part of the discussion preparation, discussion leaders have to meet with me a few days in advance of the discussion.

### *Final Paper*

Your final paper should be an argument-based 12-15 pages research paper on any topic that fits the larger subject of Silences and Biases in the Archives. The paper will be a defense of a thesis, in which data are arrayed to support the thesis. You should use at least ONE primary source for analysis, and at least 6 secondary sources. All papers should be double-spaced in 12-point type maximum. The margins should be 1 inch on each side. You should use Chicago Manual Style for footnotes (see Moodle for guidelines). The final paper is due at **5pm on May 8th** (both Moodle and hard copy in my mailbox). Late work will lose one-third of a letter grade for each day it is late.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Reading Responses	44%	90-100 = A
Book Review and Presentation	10%	80-89 = B
Final Paper and Presentation	26%	70-79 = C
Leading of Class Discussion	10%	60-69 = D
Class Participation and Attendance	10%	< 60 = F

### **Students with Disabilities**

It is university policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to <http://www.ods.uno.edu>.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. In short, plagiarism is using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. In order to ensure that you are not plagiarizing anybody else's work, make sure to footnote each source you use and make sure

you cite the original author of any idea, phrase, or paraphrase that you include in any written work. If you do plagiarize, I will have to report this to student affairs. For more information, see the UNO Judicial Code online at <http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu>.

## **WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1 (1/15): Introduction**

Read: Howard Zinn, "Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest"

### **Week 2 (1/22): The Archive and Archival Research**

Read: Selections from Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*; Alexandra Walsham, "The Social History of the Archive: Record-Keeping in Early Modern Europe"; Robert Darnton, "The Good Way to do History."

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

### **Week 3 (1/29): How Archives are Created**

Read: Terry Cook, "The Archive(s) Is a Foreign Country: Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape"; Rebekah Ahrendt and David Van der Linden, "The Postmasters' Piggy Bank: Experiencing the Accidental Archive"; Selections from Kathryn Burns, *Into the Archive: Writing and Power in Colonial Peru*.

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

### **Week 4 (2/5): Archiving the Unspeakable**

Read: Michelle Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable*.

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

### **Week 5 (2/12): Silencing the Past**

Read: Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*.

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

### **Week 6 (2/19): Working in Colonial Archives**

Read: Ann Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*; Anna More and Bianca Premo, "Opening the Colonial Archive"; Anjali Arondekar, "Without a Trace: Sexuality and the Colonial Archive"

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

### **Week 7 (2/26): Mardi Gras/Spring Break**

### **Week 8 (3/4): The Politics of Preservation**

Read: Stephanie Smallwood, "The Politics of the Archive and History's Accountability to the Enslaved"; Alexandra Steinlight, "The Liberation of Paper: Destruction, Salvaging, and the Remaking of the Republican State"; Selections from Jeannette Bastian Allis, *Owning Memory: How a Caribbean Community Lost Its Archives and Found Its History*.

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

### **Week 9 (3/11): Archival Gatekeeping**

Read: Sarah A. Curtis, "Writing the Lives of Saints: Archives and the Ownership of History"; Nick Shepherd, "'When the Hand that Holds the Trowel is Black...': Disciplinary Practices of Self-Representation and the Issue of 'Native' Labour in Archeology"; Jennifer Scheper Hughes, "Religion and Emotion in the Archives of Empire"; Ashley Farmer, "Archiving While Black"; Craig Robertson, "Mechanism of Exclusion: Historicizing the Archive and the Passport."

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

**Week 10 (3/18): Archival Silences and Biases**

Read: Alex Poole, "The Strange Career of the Jim Crow archives: Race, Space, and History in the Mid-Twentieth Century American South"; Tony Kushner, "Alienated Memories: Migrants and the Silences of the Archive"; Zeb Tortorici, "Archival Seduction: Indexical Absences and Historiographical Ghosts"; John Wrathall, "Provenance as Text: Reading the Silences around Sexuality in Manuscript Collections"; selections from Catherine A. Stewart, *Long Past Slavery: Representing Race in the Federal Writers' Project*.

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

**Week 11 (3/25): Intentional Silences**

Read: Brett Rushforth, "The *Gauolet* Uprising of 1710: Maroons, Rebels, and the Informal Exchange Economy of a Caribbean Sugar Island"; Paul Griffiths, "Secrecy and Authority in Late Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century London"; Estelle B. Freedman, "'The Burning of Letters Continues': Elusive Identities and the Historical Construction of Sexuality"; Alessandra Tanesini, "Collective Amnesia and Epistemic Injustice."

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

**Week 12 (4/1): Lost Archives**

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

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

**Week 13 (4/8): Violence of the Archives**

Read: Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts"; J. J. Ghaddar, "The Spectre in the Archive: Truth, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Archival Memory"; Melissa Adams-Campbell, Ashley Glassburn Falzetti, and Courtney Rivard, "Introduction: Indigeneity and the work of settler archives"; Tonia Sutherland, "Archival Amnesty: In Search of Black American Transitional and Restorative Justice."

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

**Week 14 (4/15): Working with Silences**

Read: Marisa Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*; Natalie Zemon Davis and Laura Briggs's perspectives on filling in the silences.

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

**Week 15 (4/22): Counter-Archives and Archival Work**

Read: José Ragas, "Peasant Archives and Identity Documents in Peru"; "Archives as Activism at a Hispanic-Serving University: A Conversation with Catherina Nolan-Ferrell and Agnieszka Czeblakow"; Rodney G. S. Carter, "Of Things Said and Unsaid: Power, Archival Silence, and Power in Silence"; Ashley Glassburn Falzetti, "Archival Absence: the Burden of History"; Donor Statement - Mimi Thi Nguyen Zine Collection.

Assignments: Response Paper due at noon

**Week 16 (4/29): Presentations and Conclusions**

\* Final paper due at 5pm on May 8<sup>th</sup> (both Moodle and hard copy in my mailbox).