

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

INTRODUCTION TO ARCHIVES I

G57.1010
FALL 2011
PETER J. WOSH
pw1@nyu.edu
(212) 998-8601
Office Hours: Thursdays, 2-6

Purpose

Provide a basic introductory overview of archival administration, historical documentation, and the management of historical resources.

Develop an understanding of the historical development of records creation and record keeping, manuscript collecting, and institutional archives in North America, with some attention to global issues.

Discuss current issues, trends, and theories that continue to change the nature of archival management.

Consider the role of the archivist and the use of archives and historical collections in humanities and social science scholarship.

Gain a basic understanding of the archival functions of arrangement, description, collection development, appraisal, and reference.

Supplement the theoretical component of the course with a variety of hands-on exercises designed to illustrate the relationship between theory and practice.

Assignments

Write an essay (3-4 pages) concerning a document that you find particularly interesting, analyzing its physical, intellectual, and social meaning. Due: September 19.

Examine electronic records project, work with your group to develop oral report, and participate in class discussion on October 17.

Develop arrangement scheme and rationale for collections that have been posted to blackboard and be prepared to discuss in class. Due: October 31.

Complete one (ca. 4-6 page) paper that analyzes and critiques three or four finding aids that you locate on the web, measuring them against professional standards. Due: November 14.

Examine and appraise one assigned collection prior to the November 28 class, and be prepared to discuss your appraisal in class.

Conduct original research in an archival repository (not one of the NYU repositories) and write a 3-4 page reflection on the reference process and procedures. Due: December 5.

Construct a bibliographic essay/literature review on some aspect of archival management that you are particularly interested in. The essay should cover 6-8 supplementary readings on the topic (in addition to whatever books/articles that we have covered in class) and should be 8-10 pages in length. Topic and preliminary bibliography due on: October 17. Final paper due on: December 19.

Post two or three weekly discussion questions to Blackboard, as assigned.

Assignment Time-Line

September 19 -- Document Analysis (3-4 pages)

October 17 – Project Discussions and Preliminary Bibliography for Final Paper

October 31 – Arrangement Assignment and Discussion

November 14 – Finding Aid Analysis (4-6 pages)

November 28 – Appraisal Discussion

December 5 – Reference Reflection (3-4 pages)

December 19 – Final Paper (8-10 pages)

Classroom and Grading Policy

There will be no incompletes in the course.

If you are absent for a class session, you will be responsible for submitting a 4-5 page paper that analyzes the readings for that week, due the following class session.

Assignments are due by the end of class on the dates listed above. They may be submitted electronically or (in the case of papers) turned in at the end of class.

Blackboard postings should be submitted by 5 P.M. on the Friday before class.

Please observe page limits, pay attention to comments on written work, and take comments into consideration.

Grades are determined according to the following criteria: Class Participation and Blackboard Postings (15%); Finding Aid Critique (20%); Document Analysis Essay (15%); Reference Reflection (20%); Bibliographic Essay (30%).

SEPTEMBER 12 - INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

Required Reading: James M. O'Toole and Richard J. Cox, *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2006), Chapter 3 "The Archivist's Perspective: Knowledge and Values" (BLACKBOARD).

Several web sites and listservs offer important information for archivists, records managers, and public historians. You should make an effort to search and regularly monitor them.

A good entry to the relevant web sites, which in effect constitutes an archival meta index, can be found at "Ready, 'Net, Go! Archival Internet Resources" at the following URL: (<http://www.tulane.edu/~lmiller/ArchivesResources.html>).

Especially significant sites include those maintained by the following professional organizations:

Society of American Archivists (<http://www.archivists.org>);
ARMA International (<http://www.arma.org>);
National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators (<http://www.nagara.org>);
National Council on Public History (<http://www.ncph.org>);
Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (<http://www.lib.umd.edu/MARAC>);
Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York (<http://www.nycarchivists.org>);
Academy of Certified Archivists (<http://certifiedarchivists.org>);
International Council on Archives (<http://www.ica.org>).

Most of these organizations publish useful literature, hold regular informational meetings, and are important sources for professional networking. The Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York, in particular, is free for students to join and holds monthly meetings at various local archival venues. It is worth participating.

Other useful archival web sites that you should familiarize yourself with include:
National Archives and Records Administration (<http://www.archives.gov>);
New York State Archives (<http://www.archives.nysed.gov>);
New York City Department of Records (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/records/home.html>).

The National Coalition for History (NCH), a consortium of various historical and archival organizations, monitors current legislation and public policy issues that affect archivists and historians. You should regularly check NCH updates and peruse the organization's digest at: (<http://historycoalition.org>).

Finally, it is useful to subscribe to the Archives and Archivists Listserv, which also provides a digest that summarizes past issues and debates in the field. There are also listservs for archives students and for various special interests. You can subscribe to

these sites by visiting the SAA web site, then following the links for “Resources” and “Electronic Mailing Lists.”

SEPTEMBER 19 - DOCUMENTS

Required Readings: Craig Robertson, *The Passport in America: The History of a Document* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010);

David M. Levy, “Meditation on a Receipt,” pp. 7-20; and “What Are Documents,” pp. 21-38, in *Scrolling Forward: Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age* (New York: Arcade, 2001) (BLACKBOARD);

Katherine Ott, Susan Tucker, and Patricia P. Buckler, “An Introduction to the History of Scrapbooks,” in Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, *The Scrapbook in American Life* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), pp. 1-25 (BLACKBOARD);

Catherine O’Sullivan, “Diaries, On-line Diaries, and the Future Loss to Archives; or Blogs and the Blogging Bloggers Who Blog Them,” *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2005), pp. 53-73 (E-JOURNAL);

David M. Henkin, “Embracing Opportunities: The Construction of the Personal Letter,” in *The Postal Age: The Emergence of Modern Communication in Nineteenth Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006) (BLACKBOARD);

SEPTEMBER 26 - MODERN ARCHIVES: THE THEORETICAL BASE

Required Readings: S. Muller, J.A. Feith, and R. Fruin, *Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives* (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1940, excerpts) (BLACKBOARD);

Peter Horsman, Eric Ketelaar, and Theo Thomassen, “New Respect for the Old Order: The Context of the Dutch Manual,” *American Archivist* (Fall/Winter, 2003), pp. 249-270 (E-JOURNAL);

Marjorie Rabe Barritt, “Coming to America: Dutch *Archivisteck* and American Archival Practice,” *Archival Issues* (18:1, 1993) (E-JOURNAL);

Peter J. Wosh, “Waldo G. Leland (1879-1966): The Progressive Professional,” in *Waldo Gifford Leland and the Origins of the American Archival Profession*, (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2011) (BLACKBOARD);

Francis X. Blouin and William G. Rosenberg, "Authoritative History and Authoritative Archives," in *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) (BLACKBOARD);

JoAnne Yates, "Communication Technology and the Growth of Internal Communication," in *Control Through Communication: The Rise of System in American Management* (BOBST E-BOOK);

OCTOBER 3 - SIR HILARY JENKINSON: FRIENDS AND FOES

Required Readings: Sir Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration* (London: Percy Lund, Humphries, & Company, 1922 (E-PUBLICATION available at: <http://www.archive.org/details/manualofarchivea00jenkuoft>);

Theodore M. Schellenberg, "The Appraisal of Modern Records," at the following URL: <http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/appraisal-of-records.html>

Theodore M. Schellenberg, "Archival Principles of Arrangement," available at the following URL: <http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/principles-of-arrangement.html>

Oliver W. Holmes, "Archival Arrangement: Five Different Options at Five Different Levels," available at the following URL: <http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/archival-arrangement.html>

Terry Eastwood, "Jenkinson's Writings on Some Enduring Archival Themes," *American Archivist* (Summer 2004), pp. 31-44 (E-JOURNAL);

Terry Cook, "What Is Past Is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898 and the Future Paradigm Shift," *Archivaria* (Spring 1997)

OCTOBER 10 - HAPPY COLUMBUS DAY: NO CLASS

OCTOBER 17 - ARCHIVAL THEORY: CURRENT TRENDS

Required Readings: Roy Rosenzweig, "Scarcity or Abundance? Preserving the Past in a Digital Age," *American Historical Review* (June 2002) (E-JOURNAL);

Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science*, (2003) Volume 2, Issues 1 and 2 (E-JOURNAL);

Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance," *Archival Science*, (2003) Volume 2, Number 3 (E-JOURNAL);

Tom Nesmith, "Seeing Archives: Postmodernism and the Changing Intellectual Place of Archives," *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2002), pp. 24-41 (E-JOURNAL);

Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance: On the Content in the Form" in Carolyn Hamilton, et al, *Refiguring the Archive* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), pp. 82-101 [BLACKBOARD];

Verne Harris, "The Archival Sliver: A Perspective on the Construction of Social Memory in Archives and the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy" in Carolyn Hamilton, et al, *Refiguring the Archive* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), pp. 135-159 [BLACKBOARD];

Nicole Convery, "Information Management, Records Management, Knowledge Management: The Place of Archives in a Digital Age," in Jennie Hill, ed., *The Future of Archives and Recordkeeping: A Reader* (London: Facet, 2011);

Andrew Flinn, "'An Attack on Professionalism and Scholarship'?: Democratising Archives and the Production of Knowledge," *Ariadne* (January 2010), <http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue62/flinn/#11>

Examine the following web sites, then learn all you can about one of the following projects (as assigned) and be prepared to discuss your particular initiative in class:

Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org>)
Archives of American Art Digital Collections at:
<http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/digitalcollections/>
Library of Congress National Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIP) (<http://www.digitalpreservation.gov>)
The National Security Archive (<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/>)

OCTOBER 24 - COMMUNITY ARCHIVES/DOCUMENTATION

Class will be held at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 515 Malcolm X Boulevard (and 135th Street). Guest Presenters include: Diana Lachatanere and Mary Yearwood of the Schomburg Center; and Jane Carr, Ph.D. candidate in the English Department.

Arthur Schomburg, "The Negro Digs Up His Past," in Alain Locke, ed., *The New Negro* (1925) (BLACKBOARD);

Adelaine Holton, "Decolonizing History: Arthur Schomburg's Afrodiasporic Archive," *Journal of African-American History* (Spring 2007) (BLACKBOARD);

Betty Jenkins, "A White Librarian in Black Harlem," *Library Quarterly* (July 1990) (BLACKBOARD);

Mapping the Stacks: A Guide to Black Chicago's Hidden Archives, at the following URL: <http://mts.lib.uchicago.edu/>

OCTOBER 31 - ARRANGEMENT: REORDERING REALITY

Required Readings: Kathleen D. Roe, *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005) (BOOK);

Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Processing," *American Archivist* (Fall/Winter 2005), pp. 208-263 (E-JOURNAL);

Christine Weideman, "Accessioning as Processing," *American Archivist* (Fall/Winter 2006), pp. 274-283 (E-JOURNAL);

Donna E. McCrea, "Getting More for Less: Testing a New Processing Model at the University of Montana," *American Archivist* (Fall/Winter 2006), pp. 284-290 (E-JOURNAL);

Carl Van Ness, "Much Ado about Paper Clips: 'More Product, Less Process' and the Modern Manuscript Repository," *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 129-145 (E-JOURNAL);

Christopher J. Prom, "Optimum Access? Processing in College and University Archives," *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 146-174 (E-JOURNAL);

Mark A. Greene, "MPLP: It's Not Just for Processing Anymore," *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 175-203 (E-JOURNAL)

NOVEMBER 7 - DESCRIPTION

Required Readings: Kathleen Roe, *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005) (review);

Elizabeth Yakel, "Archival Representation," *Archival Science* (3:1, 2003, pp; 1-25) (E-JOURNAL);

David Weinberger, "The Geography of Knowledge," in *Everything is Miscellaneous: The Power of the New Digital Disorder* (New York: Henry Holt, 2007 (BLACKBOARD));

Describing Archives: A Content Standard (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004) (read introductory matter and browse entire volume) (LIBRARY RESERVE);

Familiarize yourself with the Archivists Toolkit (<http://www.archiviststoolkit.org>) and Archon (<http://www.archon.org>) projects.

NOVEMBER 14 - FINDING AID CRITIQUES

Browse the web, locate, and critique three or four archival finding aids for presentation in class. You should also explore some of the major descriptive projects that involve marking up finding aids for placement on the web and, in some cases, linking finding aids with digitized documents. These include: the Online Archive of California (<http://www.oac.cdlib.org>); the Northwest Digital Archives (<http://nwda.wsulibs.wsu.edu/index.shtml>); and the Rocky Mountain Online Archive (<http://rmoa.unm.edu/>). The Online Archive of California, which grew out of the Berkeley Finding Aids Project (<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/amher>), was one of the first attempts to use EAD in order to create a statewide database of archival finding aids. The Rocky Mountain Online Archive and the Northwest Digital Archives involve collaborative efforts between archivists in the western states that are designed to place finding aids online and to create regional digital repositories.

NOVEMBER 21 - APPRAISAL

Required Readings: Frank Boles, *Selecting & Appraising Archives & Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005) (BOOK);

James M. O'Toole, "The Symbolic Significance of Archives," *American Archivist* (Spring 1993), pp. 234-255 (E-JOURNAL);

Helen Willa Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," *American Archivist* (Spring 1986), pp. 109-124 (E-JOURNAL)

NOVEMBER 28 - APPRAISAL DISCUSSION/DOCUMENTATION

Required Readings: Doris J. Malkmus, "Documentation Strategy: Mastodon or Retro-Success?" *American Archivist* (Fall/Winter 2008), pp. 384-409 [E-JOURNAL];

Tom Nesmith, "Documenting Appraisal as a Societal-Archival Process: Theory, Practice, and Ethics in the Wake of Helen Willa Samuels," in Terry Cook, ed., *Controlling the Past: Documenting Society and Institutions* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2011) (BLACKBOARD);

Richard J. Cox, "The End of Collecting: Towards A New Purpose for Archival Appraisal," *Archival Science* (2002), pp. 287-309 [E-JOURNAL];

Dominique Daniel, "Documenting the Immigrant and Ethnic Experience in American Archives," *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 82-104 (E-JOURNAL)

DECEMBER 5 - REFERENCE AND ACCESS

Required Readings: Mary Jo Pugh, *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005), Chapters 1-5 & 9;

Magia, Ghetu Krause and Elizabeth Yakel, "Interaction in Virtual Archives: The Polar Bear Expedition Digital Collections Next Generation Finding Aid," *American Archivist* (Fall/Winter 2007), pp. 282-314 (E-JOURNAL);

Christopher J. Prom, "Using Web Analytics to Improve Online Access to Archival Resources," *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2011), pp. 158-184;

"The Interactive Archivist: Case Studies in Utilizing Web 2.0 to Improve the Archival Experience" at <http://lib.byu.edu/sites/interactivearchivist/>, read the introduction, as well as the case studies concerning "Blogs and Blog Marketing at

Northwestern University,” “Talking and Tagging at Oregon State,” “RSS at Brigham Young University,” and “Using Wikipedia at the University of Washington.”

DECEMBER 12 - ETHICS AND ACCESS

Required Readings: Mary Jo Pugh, *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005), Chapters 6-8;

Sara S. Hodson, “In Secret Kept, In Silence Sealed: Privacy in the Papers of Authors and Celebrities,” *American Archivist* (Fall/Winter 2004), (E-JOURNAL);

Michelle Caswell, “Thank You Very Much, Now Give Them Back: Cultural Property and the Fight over the Iraqi Baath Party Records,” *American Archivist* (Spring/Summer 2011), pp. 211-240;

Sarah Rowe-Sims, Sandra Boyd, and H.T. Holmes, “Balancing Privacy and Access: Opening the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission Records,” in Menzi L. Behrnd-Klodt and Peter J. Wosh, eds., *Privacy and Confidentiality Perspectives: Archivists and Archival Records* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005) (BLACKBOARD);

Elena Danielson, “The Ethics of Disposal,” in *The Ethical Archivist* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2010), (BLACKBOARD);

Randall Jimerson, “Rethinking Archival Ethics,” in *Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009) (BLACKBOARD);

Society of American Archivists, “Code of Ethics for Archivists,” at: http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/app_ethics.asp

DECEMBER 19 - WRAP-UP

FINAL PAPERS DUE