

WOH 5932: Archives and Global History

Instructor: Prof. James Gerien-Chen

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Class Meeting Time: Thursday, 3–6 pm

Classroom: Keene-Flint 013

Office Hours: Tuesday 2–3 pm; Wednesday 2–4 pm; and by appointment (Keene-Flint 204)

Course Description

Archives are central to historical research and scholarship. But how should we engage these collections of fragmentary records and objects? How do archival texts and objects shape the questions we ask, the interpretations we develop, and the narratives we construct? In short, what (and how) can and can't we know about the past? This course is designed to give you an opportunity to engage such methodological questions through reading and practice.

We will read from monographs and pay particular attention to how scholars (both historians and from other disciplines) have located and analyzed sources and the archives in which they are located. We will also discuss how scholars have transformed “the archive” itself into the subject/object of inquiry, especially when writing about challenging topics including slavery, colonialism, violence, and the experiences of ordinary people. Throughout the semester, and especially the second half, we will devote time to hands-on exercises, when we will consider more practically how the lessons we draw might shape our own work. By the end of the semester, you will be focusing exclusively on your own research using sources available at UF or online.

Finally, the recent interest in global history and the digitization of some archives have multiplied the archival materials we can and might like to engage. Do these developments obviate, or rather reinforce, the necessity of cultivating a self-reflexive practice around engaging historical archives?

Course Format

Our class will meet **synchronously (live) and in-person** during the assigned time.

History classes are built around a classroom community, and this course is designed to draw on our collective willingness to teach and learn from each other. I also recognize that you may be encountering, or may throughout the semester encounter, challenges beyond the classroom. I encourage you to reach out to me at any time to discuss questions you might have about the class or otherwise, or if you are finding it challenging to keep up with class attendance and assignments, participate in discussion, or other course-related activities.

Required Texts

No required texts for purchase. We will read four monographs in whole; all are available as e-books via the UF Libraries. However, you are highly encouraged to acquire/print out hard copies of these (and all other) texts to work with throughout the semester.

Assignments and Grading

History classes thrive on discussion, critique, and learning from one another. The class' success, and what we each get out of it, depend on our collective efforts to complete all reading assignments and come to meetings prepared to engage course materials and each other's ideas.

That said, I recognize that personal, institutional, and societal circumstances are unusual and may change throughout the semester. Please understand that I will make adjustments to the syllabus and assignments as necessary.

Attendance and Participation **15%**

Attendance is mandatory in all class sessions. Please inform me in advance if you are unable to attend. More than one absence in the semester will adversely affect your grade. For extended absences related to medical reasons, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

In-Class Discussion Leading (2x) **15%**

Each week, one or two students will lead the seminar by preparing (a) a set of questions for class discussion and (b) an annotated bibliography that expands on the reading(s). You will lead the course two times over the course of the semester. Class discussion leaders will meet with me the day before class (Wednesday) to finalize questions.

Discussion Board Posts (4x) **20%**

Four times throughout the semester, during weeks you are not presenting, post a reading response paper to Canvas before class.

Research Exercises and Annotated Bib. **15%** **A.B. due March 8, 5pm**

Over the course of the semester, we will devote increasingly more time to applying the methods and theories from readings to practical exercises. These are meant to form the basis of your final paper and will cover all the steps of archival research and writing. We will determine the exercises together based on your interests/needs. Possible topics include: identifying archival sources; analyses of primary sources; tracing footnotes; paleography and transcription; different genres of sources; positionality of the historian and source base, historicizing the archive; etc.

Final Paper **35%** **Due April 29, 5pm**

By spring break, students will determine the final assignment that best meets their current academic trajectory and needs. Options include: (a) research paper of 15–20 pages based on original research in archival sources; (b) transcription and (possible) translation of one or more challenging primary sources and extended analytical introduction, to form the basis of a dissertation chapter and/or article.

Extensions, Make-up, and Late Work Policies

If you are having trouble keeping up with class readings and exercises, please contact me as soon as possible. Late written work graded on the letter scale will be penalized 1/3 letter grade for each day it is late. Without prior discussion, I will not accept work more than one week late. Should you have a university excused absence, contact me beforehand. For unforeseen emergencies, contact me as soon as possible after your absence to make make-up arrangements.

Reading responses must be submitted on time. Those submitted after the deadline will not be graded for credit.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1 (January 11): Introduction

Week 2 (January 18): Colonialism, Migration, and Subaltern Studies I

- Gaiutra Bahadur, *Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture*. University of Chicago Press, 2013, 1–74. [e-book]
- Ranajit Guha, “The Prose of Counter-Insurgency,” in Nicholas Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry Ortner, eds. *Culture/Power/History*. Princeton University Press, 1994, 336–361.

Week 3 (January 25): Class Canceled

Week 4 (February 1) Colonialism, Migration, and Subaltern Studies II

- Bahadur, *Coolie Woman*, 75–214.
- Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (revised edition), in Rosalind Morris, ed. *Reflections on the History of an Idea*. Columbia University Press, 21–80.

Week 5 (February 8): Gender, Labor, Science, and Medicine

- H. Yumi Kim, *Madness in the Family: Women, Care, and Illness in Japan*. Oxford University Press, 2022, all. [e-book]
- Saidiya Hartman, “An Unnamed Girl, A Speculative History,” *The New Yorker*, February 9, 2019.

Week 6 (February 15): Slavery and Its Afterlives

- Saidiya Hartman, “Venus in Two Acts,” *Small Axe* No. 26, Vol. 12, No. 2 (June 2008), 1–14.
- *History of the Present* 6:2 (Fall 2016), essays by Smallwood (117–132), Kazanjian (133–145) and Hartman (208–215).

Week 7 (February 22): Slavery, Gender, Violence

- Marisa Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. [e-book]

Week 8 (February 29): History of the Archive

- Kathryn Burns, *Into the Archive: Writing and Power in Colonial Peru*. Duke University Press, 2010.
- Ann Stoler, “Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance,” *Archival Science* 2 (2002), 87–109.

Week 9 (March 7): Decolonization and the Archives

- *American Historical Review* 120:3 (June 2015), essays by Elkins (852–868), Shepard (869–883), and Balkin (884–899).
- Annotated Bibliography due March 8, 5pm.

SPRING BREAK (March 14)

Week 10 (March 21): Sexuality and/in the Archive

- Durba Ghosh, *Sex and the Family in Colonial India*. Cambridge University Press, 2014, Chapter 4 (“Native Women, Native Lives”), 133–169.
- Durba Ghosh, “Revisiting Sex and the Family,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 32:1 (Jan. 2023), 79–85.
- Durba Ghosh, “National Narratives and the Politics of Miscegenation: Britain and India,” in Antoinette Burton, ed. *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*. Duke University Press, 2005, 27–44.
- Zeb Tortorici, “Visceral Archives of the Body: Consuming the Dead, Digesting the Divine,” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 20:4 (2014), 407–437.

Week 11 (March 28): Paperwork, Bureaucracy, and Materiality

- J. M. Chris Chang, “Paper Affairs: Discipline by the Dossier in a Mao-Era Work Unit,” *Administory* 4 (2019), 125–140.
- Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*. Duke University Press, 2014, excerpt.

Week 12 (April 4): No class; independent research and individual meetings with instructor.

Week 13 (April 11): Student Presentations

Week 14 (April 18): Student Presentations

Final paper due April 29, 5pm.

Policies and Expectations

Attendance and Makeup Policy

Attendance is mandatory in all class sessions. Please inform me in advance if you are unable to attend. More than one absence in the semester will adversely affect your grade. For extended absences related to medical reasons, please contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up assignments in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at Attendance Policies.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to arrive to class on-time. **Students should use electronic devices (laptops and tablets) only to take notes or reference assigned texts and materials.** Please refrain from using electronic devices for texting or other personal reasons during class.

Statement Regarding Course Recording

The instructor will not record class sessions for any reason. Student participation is fundamental since improving oral conversation skills is a key objective of the course. Discussion sessions may not be recorded by students.

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A

student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The [Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/> or 352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available from the [Gatorevals website](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via the evaluation system. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at the [public results website](#).