



Image: Yinka Shonibare MBE, *The British Library*.

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Course Description

Historians and other scholars have become increasingly concerned with understanding how knowledge about the past (as well as the present) is produced, the politics that undergird this production, and the implications of this process for what we have come to understand as “the archive.” The notion of a static or authoritative archive has increasingly come under scrutiny by scholars from a variety of disciplinary fields, and, as

a result, the number of theoretical works on archives and archiving has expanded a great deal in recent years. This course critically examines this body of work through the lens of queer studies, considering how debates within this broadly defined field regarding time, temporality, curation, and embodiment can inform the work of history. We will conclude the course by analyzing a few historical sources in light of the critical engagements we have had with these scholars throughout the semester.

Learning Objectives:

This course is designed as a seminar primarily for upper level history majors and minors but is open to students of all disciplines. That being said, students are expected to have already acquired some basic skills in primary research and historiographical analysis.

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- locate, interpret, and critically analyze primary documents and historical objects relevant to research questions, bearing in mind the context of their production
- comprehend and critique established scholarly methods in investigating and interpreting the past
- frame research questions in the context of existing scholarly literature in a written paper or project

Required Assignments:

Weekly Response Papers:

Informal one-page weekly papers giving your reactions to the week's reading (engaging with the arguments, making connections among other aspects of the class and events outside the class). **You must complete reactions papers for at least ten of the semester's weeks.**

Group Primary Source Analysis

The class will divide into groups of no more than three students. Each group will analyze a primary source, reflecting on the theories and methodologies discussed throughout the semester, and prepare a 15-minute presentation. The group presentations will be on the last two days of class.

Final Paper/Project

You have three choices as to the nature of this project:

- a. A 10- 15-page paper on a topic of your choice. This paper may be a historical review essay or it may be a research paper, whichever you prefer.
- b. A blog that you have updated throughout the semester, along with an extensive end of the semester commentary on the blog, tying it into the

- objectives of the course, including your own research and/or historiographical comments.
- c. A multimedia project approved by me in advance.

Proposals (250 words) are due, via email, before class in week 8.

Final paper or other project is due, via email, on **tba**.

Participation: Please note that this course requires regular attendance and active participation. Frequent absence from class will affect your grade. Active participation means that you come to class prepared (having completed the reading assignments), that you listen and take notes, and that you ask intelligent questions and offer thoughtful comments during discussion.

Grading: 30% of your grade is based on your final paper/project, 30% is based on your participation, 20% is based on your primary source analysis, and 20% is based on your response paper.

Meeting Schedule and Readings:

All article and chapter readings will be available online. You can either purchase the monographs or seek them out in the library or ILL service.

I. Introduction to Queer Studies

Week 1:

Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (New York: NYU Press, 1997).

II. Queer Temporalities

Week 2:

Roderick A. Ferguson et al., "Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 13, no. 2 (2007): 177–95.

Valerie Traub, "The New Unhistoricism in Queer Studies," *PMLA* 128, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 21–39.

Week 3:

Laura L. Doan, *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality, and Women's Experience of Modern War* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).

Week 4:

Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

Week 5:

José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: NYU Press, 2009) 1-64.

Sara Ahmed, “Happy Futures” in, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

Week 6:

Heather Love, *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2007) 31-52, 146-163.

Heather Love, “Compulsory Happiness and Queer Existence,” *New Formations* 63.1 (2007): 52-64.

Week 7:

Judith Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2011) 87-121.

III. Encountering the Archive

Week 8:

Antoinette M. Burton, “Archive Fever,” in *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005) 1-24.

Arlette Farge, *The Allure of the Archives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

Week 9:

Anjali Arondekar, Ann Cvetkovich, Christina B. Hanhardt, Regina Kunzel, Tavia Nyong’o, Juana María Rodríguez, Susan Stryker, Daniel Marshall, Kevin P. Murphy, and Zeb Tortorici. “Queering Archives A Roundtable Discussion.” *Radical History Review* 2015, no. 122 (May 1, 2015): 211–31.

Week 10:

Day 1:

In lieu of class today, you will visit an archive of your choice. The goal here is to speak with archivists, get a sense of collection practices, navigate systems of classification, and search for primary documents that may be of use to you.

Options include, but are not limited to:

[The Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture](#), [The Nasher Museum's Study Storage](#), [James E. Shepard Memorial Library Special Collections](#), [The Louis Round Wilson Library Special Collections](#), [The Durham County Library North Carolina Collection](#), [The State Archives of North Carolina](#), [The North Carolina Museum of History Collections](#), or [The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences Research & Collections](#)

Please come to our next class ready to discuss your archive visit.

Day 2:

Anjali R. Arondekar, *For the Record: On Sexuality and the Colonial Archive in India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009) 1-25, 131-180.

Week 11:

Zeb Tortorici, *Queer Colonial Archives: Sexuality and Colonialism in New Spain* (In Progress).

Week 12:

María Elena Martínez, "Archives, Bodies, and Imagination The Case of Juana Aguilar and Queer Approaches to History, Sexuality, and Politics." *Radical History Review* 2014, no. 120 (September 21, 2014): 159–82.

Melissa Autumn White, "Archives of Intimacy and Trauma Queer Migration Documents as Technologies of Affect," *Radical History Review* 2014, no. 120 (September 21, 2014): 75–93.

Week 13:

Watch Issac Julien's *The Attendant*. On Reserve at Lilly.

Roderick A. Ferguson, "A Special Place within the Order of Knowledge: The Art of Kara Walker and the Conventions of African American History," *American Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (2009): 185–92.

Marcus Wood, "American Museums and the Representation of Slavery as Trauma" in *Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Week 14:

In Class Group Presentations