

## Collections, Archives & Libraries,

### Abstracts & readings

*Blossom Stefaniw (MF/CAS)*

#### ***Know Better: Archives, Race and Gender in History***

Archives as sites of knowledge production are always involved with race and gender, because western theories of knowledge operate on the assumption that the knower is superior to and in control of both what is known and those who do not know, treating knowledge as the possession of the knower. This lecture examines how archival discourses require and re-inscribe gendered and racialized scenes of penetration, objectification, possession and extraction. I ask how scholarly imagination can be expanded beyond notions of knowledge acquisition which are driven by patriarchy and white supremacy. What has shifted and what can be shifted further when we consider women and people of colour as scholars? How do we make space for racialized and feminized scholars to engage with archives without simply impersonating white supremacist and patriarchal scholarly subjectivities? How do we navigate an academic world in which racism and sexism are at the root of entire disciplines?

#### *Required reading*

Marlene Manoff, "Theories of the Archive Across the Disciplines". *Libraries and the Academy*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2004): 9–25.\*

“Feminist Epistemology” (from the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, the introduction to the article and section 9 "Epistemic Authority, Epistemic Injustice, Epistemologies of Ignorance, and Virtue Epistemology". <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-epistemology/#EpisAuthEpisInjuEpisIgnoVirtEpis>

#### *Recommended reading*

Achille Mbembe, "The Power of the Archive and its Limits" p. 19-26 in *Refiguring the Archive*, Caroline Hamilton et al. eds. (2004).\*

Olufemi Taiwo, "Exorcising Hegel's Ghost: Africa's Challenge to Philosophy" *African Studies Quarterly* 1.4 (1998): 3-16.\*

Gregory Cuéllar, *Empire, the British Museum and the Making of the Biblical Scholar in the Nineteenth Century*. pp. 60-77 (excerpt from Chapter 3)\*

*Francis Borchardt (NLA / CAS)*

#### ***Fictional Reality and the Materialization of Libraries of Antiquity***

We frequently encounter libraries as physical spaces filled with material media with which we can and do interact. Our municipal and university libraries come to mind as contemporary examples. But this is just one of the ways in which libraries occupy our lives. In the digital world, libraries can also be hybrid spaces that contain materials for us to access, but only have a passing resemblance to physical location. They exist within “sites” that we “visit” where we can select media from a “shelf” or “collection” to download and stream, but those fixed spatial metaphors conceal the presence of these libraries wherever there is a device and an

internet connection. Databases like JSTOR, Ebrary, or even Netflix and Disney+ are fine examples of this phenomenon. There are also ways in which libraries exist primarily as fictions. They are realized in our stories about the knowledge they contain, their connection to founders, and the activities that we imagine to be going on there, but they need not be accompanied by physical media, historical founders, or fixed location. In some sense, these libraries are always on the move. Their contents are never quite accessible and the knowledge that they possess changes. Nevertheless, they are real and remain entities of continuous fascination. By working with a framework developed by Bruno Latour, this lecture will show how two ancient libraries persisted as fictions. The presentation will make the case that the Book of Enoch and the Sibylline Oracles were both sustained by the ancient imagination about their founding, the fate of their contents, and their power over the audience. It will then argue that these fictions drove the materialization of these libraries in physical form at various points in antiquity and the modern world.

#### *Required reading*

Yun Lee Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), Introduction (p. 1- 15).\*

Gregory Nagy, "Homer as Model for the Ancient Library: Metaphors of Corpus and Cosmos." <https://chs.harvard.edu/curated-article/gregory-nagy-homer-as-model-for-the-ancient-library-metaphors-of-corpus-and-cosmos/>

#### *Recommended reading*

Bruno Latour, *An Inquiry into the Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), Chapter 9: Situating the Beings of Fiction (p. 233-257).\*

Eva Mrozek, "Moses, David, and Scribal Revelation Preservation and Renewal in Second Temple Jewish Textual Traditions." In Brooke, Najman, et al. Eds., *The Significance of Sinai: Traditions about Sinai and Divine Revelation in Judaism and Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), p. 91-115.\*

#### *Mary Jane Cuyler (MF)*

##### ***Excavating Archives: Accessing & Evaluating Archaeological Materials***

The process of archaeological excavation produces vast amounts of data (artifacts, notes, drawings, photographs, and more), much of which is left unpublished by excavators. Such archival material holds enormous research potential for the modern scholar. Yet accessing this type of material can be difficult and even daunting. Preparation is key. Using case studies from recent research carried out in and around Rome, this lecture explores some of the practical considerations of this exciting research area.

#### *Required reading*

A. Assmann (2010), "Canon and Archive" in *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*, A. Erll and A. Nünning, eds. De Gruyter, pp. 97–108.\*

L.L. Gaillet (2010), "Archival Survival: Navigating Historical Research" in *Working in the Archives. Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition*. A. Ramsey, W. Sharer, B. L'Eplattenier and L. Mastrangelo, eds. Southern Illinois University Press, pp. 28–39.\*

M.J. Cuyler, A. Martin, L. Banducci (2020), "Santa Maria in Aracoeli (Rome): Frank

Brown's Excavation in 1963," *Archaeologiae* XVIII, 11-80: 11-16 & 72-74. [only introduction and conclusion]\*

*Jon Christian Nordrum (UiO)*

***On Norwegian Legal Text***

In this session, I will present genre traits of legislative text, how legislative texts are produced and discuss the functions such texts serve in the society. I will draw on the Norwegian system of legislative text but will compare with other European as well as American examples. Legislative texts are a realization of democracy, parliaments govern through legislation. Legislative texts is a prerequisite for rule of law (*rechtsstaat, rettsstat*), amongst others the principle that everybody is bound by the law, and that the government must act in conformity with the legislation (principle of legality, *legalitetsprinsippet*). The legal systems revolve around the system of text. The system has a vertical dimension, at the top we find constitutional texts and international treaties, thereafter legislation and secondary legislation, and at the bottom by-laws, standards, and administrative decisions. There are large differences in how this system of texts are built in different jurisdictions, how it is interpreted and how it evolves through time. The Norwegians case is characterized with very short legislation, with active using of broad and vague terms as well as outright delegation, pragmatic and goal-oriented interpretation and a mix between court-made (common law) and legislator-made law (civil law).

*Required reading*

Jon Christian Fløysvik Nordrum, "Legislation in Norway".\*

*Esther Brownsmith (MF/CAS)*

***Absences in the Archive: Marginalized Voices (Workshop)***

The archival turn leads to scrutinizing the archive for its weaknesses and absences. In this workshop, participants will gain a greater awareness of various marginalized groups and how their voices can be silenced by archives. Participants will practice skills to counter the archive's selective sampling, whether they approach the problem as archivists working to include many voices, or as scholars seeking out the voices that were excluded. Along the way, participants will wrestle with some of the difficult questions around archival absence: what can scholars do about past voices that cannot be retrieved? How can archivists preserve marginalized voices without subjecting those voices to invasive exposure? In what ways does intersectionality affect the quest for inclusion? And, last but not least, how do archival absences impact *all* our research, whether or not we specialize in marginalized groups?

This workshop features an interview session with *Johanne Ostad* (The National Library of Norway) on strategies for archiving materials of marginalized groups.

*Required reading*

The first section of Bernadette Brooten's "Early Christian Women and Their Cultural Context: Issues of Method in Historical Reconstruction".\*

Gina Watts, "Queer Lives in Archives: Intelligibility and Forms of Memory".\*

Ryan Lee Cartwright, "out of sorts: a queer crip in the archive".\*

Sara Ahmed, "Feminist Shelters" (3 pages) (<https://feministkilljoys.com/2015/12/30/feminist-shelters/>)

*Recommended reading*

Anjali Arondekar, "Without a Trace: Sexuality and the Colonial Archive"\*

Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts"\*

Jarrett M. Drake, "Liberatory Archives: Towards Belonging and Believing"

(<https://medium.com/on-archivy/liberatory-archives-towards-belonging-and-believing-part-1-d26aaeb0edd1>)

Reading items marked with an asterisk (\*) are available from the ATTR administration.