

**Course Syllabus**  
**HIST-GA 3901 Community Archives (Spring 2021)**

Thursdays, 4:55-7:35pm, [on Zoom](#)

Instructor: Maggie Schreiner

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Office hours: Mondays, 12-1pm, [Zoom room](#)

**Course Description**

All communities create historical records, and recent decades have brought a growing critical awareness of how existing social hierarchies influence the creation and maintenance of historical archives. Community archive projects locate the power to preserve and shape history, heritage, and memory in communities themselves. Through readings, discussion, and analysis, this course will introduce students to a range of issues relating to grassroots community archives, archives of community organizations, and what happens when larger institutions partner with communities and community organizations to create archives. Students will also work with [CAA AV Organizing Asian Communities](#) and [Mutual Aid NYC \(MANYC\)](#) to support two archivally-based public projects.

**Course Goals**

- To explore major themes in community-based archiving, with a specific focus on the role(s) of library and information science (LIS) professionals supporting this work.
- To investigate the construction of community and identity-based memory, and the role of the archival record in this process.
- To develop an understanding of the landscape of community archives, with a focus on organizations in New York City.
- To critically examine the roles of race, power, and privilege in traditional and community-based archival settings.
- To gain hands-on experience using LIS skills to support a community organization.

**Assignments and Grading**

- Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the dates listed.
- Please submit written assignments by emailing your paper as a Word doc or a link to share a Google Doc (with editing access) to me at [maggie.schreiner@nyu.edu](mailto:maggie.schreiner@nyu.edu).
- Assignments must be formatted as 12 point font, Times New Roman, 1 inch margins with 1.5 spacing, and should follow Chicago Manual of Style.
- Assignments turned in after the due date will be penalized by half a grade (e.g., an A will automatically drop to an A-) unless you have obtained advance permission from me.

Class Participation (20%)

Review of Community Archives Tool (20%)

CAAAV Omeka Cataloging (10%)

CAAAV Newsletter Item (15%)

Final Project: for CAAAV or MANY, and presentation (35%)

### **Review of Community Archives tool (3-5 pages, with brief in-class presentation)**

Due: February 25th

Choose a "tool" (or methodology) that community archives use in their work and submit a written review. A list of suggested tools will be provided, and students can also propose additional tools. The review should explain the tool, its utility, and any benefits and drawbacks.

The paper should address the following questions:

- Describe the tool: what is it, how does it work, what are its origins?
- What sorts of projects use this tool? How does their use of this tool help them accomplish their mission? How does their use of the tool extend or reshape its traditional purpose?
- What does their use of this tool tell us about the needs, innovations, and challenge of community archives?
- Prepare a brief in-class presentation (lightening talk) about the tool, with one slide as a visual (3 minutes)

In-class presentation, 3 minutes (5%)

Write-up (10%)

### **CAAAV Omeka Cataloging (30 items)**

Due: March 11th

Catalog 30 items in CAAAV's digital archive (Omeka), using Dublin Core metadata. Item assignments and detailed cataloging instructions will be distributed in late February. Grades will be based on completeness of catalog records, adherence to cataloging guidelines, and thorough and culturally-sensitive descriptions.

### **CAAAV Archives mini-essay (500 words)**

Draft 1 Due: March 18th

Draft 2 Due: April 1st

Select an item, or a set of related items from the CAAAV digital archives and write a 500 word research essay contextualizing the item(s) within CAAAV history. The essays will be shared on the CAAAV digital archives site. The essays should explore a theme in CAAAV history, describe the connection to the item(s) selected, and be written in a concise and accessible fashion, similar to a blog post. Citations should be included. 10% of your grade will be based on your first draft, and the remaining %5 will consist of any necessary revisions.

### **Final Project Proposal (2 pages)**

Due: March 25th

Write a 2 page proposal outlining your plans for the final project. This proposal should include topic, rationale, format, outline, and initial bibliography.

### **Final Project: Project for CAAAV or MANYC (with presentation)**

Due: May 6th

Create a public-facing project related to the course partnership with CAAAV or MANYC. Projects related to CAAAV should address the history of the organization and/or the archival collection, and should result in a finished product that can be used by CAAAV staff or members. Projects related to MANYC should reflect the goals and priorities of MANYC's archival initiative.

Proposed ideas will be further developed in consultation with CAAAV staff or MANYC volunteers. Possible topics suggested by CAAAV and MANYC include:

- Create a mini-exhibition, walking tour, or timeline in Omeka exploring a specific aspect of CAAAV's history
- Create a guide to CAAAV's archival materials on a particular theme
- White paper suggesting methods that CAAAV could employ to get their membership and wider community involved in their archive
- Create an educational tool for MANYC on identifying and contributing archival materials

A 5 minute presentation will be required for both options. The presentation will consist of 5% of the final grade, while the project will be 30% of the final grade.

### **Attendance and Communication**

Class attendance is required. If you cannot attend class due to illness or emergency, please communicate with me in advance. We are all experiencing a difficult year with many challenges, and I commit to working with you to make the course a positive and manageable experience. To best do this, please communicate with me about your needs as openly as you are comfortable.

I will send class announcements to your NYU emails. You can reach me at [maggie.schreiner@nyu.edu](mailto:maggie.schreiner@nyu.edu). I will do my best to respond within 24hrs from Monday to Friday. For anything that requires a longer conversation, please attend office hours (Mondays, 12-1) at this [Zoom link](#). You can also email me to set up another time to talk if you are not available during the scheduled office hours.

### **Academic Accommodations**

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities ([212-998-4980](tel:212-998-4980) or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

### **Course Schedule**

\*\* All readings are available as PDFs on the course's NYU Classes site or as a URL on the syllabus.

#### **Week 1: January 28th**

##### **Introduction, Expectations and Definitions**

- Flinn, Andrew. "Community histories, community archives: Some opportunities and challenges." *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 28 no. 2 (2007): 151-176. doi:10.1080/00379810701611936.
- Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory" *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 1-19.

#### **Week 2: February 4th**

##### **Building Memory**

- Cook, Terry. "Evidence, memory, identity, and community: four shifting archival paradigms." *Archival Science* 13 (2012): 95–120.
- Ghaddar, Jamila . "The Spectre in the Archive: Truth, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Archival Memory," *Archivaria* 82 (Fall 2016): 3-26.
- Kaplan, Elisabeth. "We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity," *American Archivist* 63 (2000): 126-151.
- Ramirez, Mario H. "Being Assumed Not to Be: A Critique of Whiteness as an Archival Imperative," *The American Archivist* September 2015; 78 (2): 339–356.

#### **Week 3: February 11th**

##### **Community Archives Case Studies**

- Barriault, Marcel. "Archiving the queer and queering the archives: a case study of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (CLGA)." In *Community Archives: the shaping of memory*, edited by Jeanette A. Bastian and Ben Alexander, 97-108. London: Facet Publishing, 2009.
- Corbman, Rachel F. "A Genealogy of the Lesbian Herstory Archives, 1974-2014." *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies*, Vol 1. (2014): 1-16.

- Roachat, Désirée and Kristen Young, Marjorie Villefranche and Aziz Choudry. "Maison d'Haïti's collaborative archives project: archiving a community of records," in *Community Archives, Community Spaces*, ed. Jeannette A. Bastian and Andrew Flinn. London: Facet Publishing, 2020.
- Sellie, Alicia, Jessie Goldstein, Molly Fair, and Jen Hoyer. "Interference Archive: A Free Space for Social Movement Culture." *Archival Science* 15 no. 4 (2015): 453-472.

Guest speakers: Jen Hoyer and Elena Levi, Interference Archive

#### **Week 4: February 18th**

NO CLASS

#### **Week 5: February 25th**

##### **CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities Collaboration**

- Truong, Vivian. "From State-Sanctioned Removal to the Right to the City: The Policing of Asian Immigrants in Southern Brooklyn, 1987–1995." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 23, no. 1 (2020): 61-92.
- Wong, Vivian, Tom Ikeda, Ellen-Rae Cachola and Florante Peter Ibanez. "Archives (Re)Imagined Elsewhere: Asian American Community-based Archival Organizations," in *[Through the] Archival Looking Glass: A Reader on Diversity and Inclusion*, Ed. Mary A Caldera and Kathryn M. Neal. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2014.
- CAAAV Reading Guide: *The Voice* Digital Archives:  
<https://caaav.org/reading-guide-the-voice-digital-archives>
- Select and read one issue of *The Voice* from the CAAAV newsletter archives.  
<https://caaav.org/media/newsletter-archives>

Guest speakers: CAAAV members

Assignment due: Review of community archives tool, with class presentation

#### **Week 6: March 4th**

##### **Race and Power**

- Farmer, Ashley. "Archiving while Black." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. July 22, 2018.  
<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Archiving-While-Black/243981>
- Evangelestia-Dougherty, Tamar et al. "When WHITE Libraries Happen to BLACK Rare & Distinctive Collections: Finding Pathways from Marginalization to Narratives of

Empowerment.” Cornell University Library, Rare and Distinctive Collections (RAD) Hour. October 19, 2020. [Video link](#).

- O’Neal, Jennifer. “Respect, Recognition, and Reciprocity: The Protocols for Native American Materials.” In *Identity Palimpsests: Archiving Ethnicity in the U.S. and Canada*, edited by Dominique Daniel and Amalia Levi, 125-143. Sacramento, CA: Litwin Books, 2013.
- Williams, Stacie M. and Jarrett M. Drake. “Power to the People: Documenting Police Violence in Cleveland.” *Special issue, Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 1.2 (2017): 1-27.

### **Week 7: March 11th**

#### **Collaboration and Participatory Archiving**

- Allard, Danielle and Shawna Ferris. "Antiviolence and Marginalized Communities: Knowledge Creation, Community Mobilization, and Social Justice through a Participatory Archiving Approach." *Library Trends* 64, no. 2 (2015): 360-383.
- Caswell, Michelle and Samip Mallick. “Collecting the easily missed stories: digital participatory microhistory and the South Asian American Digital Archive,” *Archives and Manuscripts*, 42:1 (2014): 73-86.
- Huvila, I. “Participatory archive: towards decentralised curation, radical user orientation and broader contextualisation of records management.” *Archival Science* 8 no 1 (2008): 15-36.
- Spade, Dean. *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity Through This Crisis (and the Next)*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2020, p. 1-29.

Guest Speaker: Mutual Aid NYC member

Assignment due: CAAAV Cataloging

### **Week 8: March 18th**

#### **Ethics and Labor**

- Caswell, Michelle and Marika Cifor. “From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in Archives.” *Archivaria* 81 (Spring 2016): 23-43.
- Jules, Bergis. “Confronting Our Failure of Care Around the Legacies of Marginalized People in the Archives.” *Medium*. November 11, 2016.  
<https://medium.com/on-archivy/confronting-our-failure-of-care-around-the-legacies-of-marginalized-people-in-the-archives-dc4180397280>

- Ramírez, Yvette. “Extending Affective Care in the Digital Realm” Visual Aids, August 2020. <https://visualaids.org/gallery/mapping-nyc-hyper-surveillance-during-covid-19>
- Williams, Stacie. “All Labor is Local” *Medium*. November 12, 2016. <https://medium.com/@Wribrarian/all-labor-is-local-344963e33051>
- Zine Librarians’ Code of Ethics: <http://zinelibraries.info/code-of-ethics/>

Assignment due: CAAAV Newsletter item, first draft

## Week 9: March 25th

### Post-Custodial Models

- Bastian, J. “Taking custody, giving access: A postcustodial role for a new century.” *Archivaria*. 53 no. 1 (2004): 76-93.
- Cowan, Sarah. “At a Queer Film Festival, a Collective Offers to Digitize Your Videos for Free.” *Hyperallergic*. November 13, 2015. <https://hyperallergic.com/253658/at-a-queer-film-festival-a-collective-offers-to-digitize-your-videos-for-free/>
- Kelleher, Christian, T-Kay Sangwand, Kevin Wood & Yves Kamuronsi. “The Human Rights Documentation Initiative at the University of Texas Libraries.” *New Review of Information Networking*, 15:2 (2010): 94-109.
- Culture in Transit Toolkit, Community section: <https://mnylc.github.io/cit-toolkit/community/>
- Explore the following websites:
  - Memory Lab: <https://www.dclibrary.org/labs/memorylab>
  - XFR Collective: <https://xfrcollective.wordpress.com/>
  - Digital Transgender Archive: <https://www.digitaltransgenderarchive.net/>

Assignment due: Final project proposal

## Week 10: April 1st

### Institutional Partnerships

- Augusto, Geri et al. “Learn from the Past, Organize for the Future: Building the SNCC Digital Gateway,” in *Digital Community Engagement: Partnering Communities with the Academy*, ed. Rebecca S. Wingo, Jason A. Heppler, and Paul Schadewald. Cincinnati: University of Cincinnati Press, 2020. <https://ucincinnati.press.manifoldapp.org/read/digital-community-engagement/section/e597a18f-faf6-4786-8889-3a02b1906d85>

- Hughes-Watkins, Lae'l. "Moving Toward a Reparative Archive: A Roadmap for a Holistic Approach to Disrupting Homogenous Histories in Academic Repositories and Creating Inclusive Spaces for Marginalized Voices." *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 5.6 (2018): 1-17.
- Sangwand, T.-K. "Preservation is Political: Enacting Contributive Justice and Decolonizing Transnational Archival Collaborations." *KULA: knowledge creation, dissemination, and preservation studies*, 2.1 (2018): article 10.
- Stevens, Mary, Andrew Flinn, and Elizabeth Shepherd. "New Frameworks for Community Engagement in the Archive Sector." *International Journal of Heritage Studies*. 16.1-2 (2010): 59-76.

Assignment due: CAAAV Newsletter item, draft 2

**Week 11: April 8th**

**Group 1 Workshop: MANYC Archive Project**

**Week 12: April 15th**

**Group 2 Workshop: MANYC Archive Project**

**Week 13: April 22nd**

**Visibility**

- Caswell, Michelle. "Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation." *The Public Historian* 36 no. 4 (November 2014): 26-37. DOI: 10.1525/tph.2014.36.4.26.
- Mattson, Rachel. "Queer Histories, Videotape, and the Ethics of Reuse." *Center for the Humanities Blog*. December 18, 2017. <https://www.centerforthehumanities.org/blog/queer-histories-videotape-and-the-ethics-of-reuse>
- McMurtie, Beth. "Secrets from Belfast: How Boston College's oral history of the Troubles fell victim to an international murder investigation." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. January 26, 2014. <https://www.chronicle.com/interactives/belfast>
- Robertson, Tara . "Not All Information Wants to be Free: The Case Study of On Our Backs." In: *Applying Library Values to Emerging Technology: Decision-Making in the Age of Open Access, Maker Spaces, and the Ever-Changing Library*, edited by Peter D. Fernandez and Kelly Tilton, 225-239. Chicago: American Library Association (2018).

**Week 14: April 29th**

**Sustainability and the Limits of Professionalism**



- Architecting Sustainable Futures, “Key Findings” and “Recommendations for the Field.”  
<https://architectingsustainablefutures.org/key-finding>  
<https://architectingsustainablefutures.org/recommendation>
- Cifor, Marika and Jamie A. Lee. “Towards an Archival Critique: Opening Possibilities for Addressing Neoliberalism in the Archival Field.” *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 1, no. 1 (2017): 1-22.
- Drake, Jarrett M. “I’m Leaving the Archival Profession: It’s Better This Way” *Medium*. June 26, 2017.  
<https://medium.com/on-archivy/im-leaving-the-archival-profession-it-s-better-this-way-ed631c6d72fe>

### **Week 15: May 6th**

#### **Final Project Presentations**

Please note that staff and members from CAAAV and MANYC will be invited to attend the online presentations.

Assignment due: Final project and class presentation