Course Description: This course seeks to engage innovations in the theory and method of archival research while introducing students to the practice of archivists. Using the archival holdings of the Tippecanoe County Historical Association (TCHA) as our primary resource, we will discuss both the “how to” and the “how come” of archives: their invention, organization, cultural significance and pragmatic use. We will read discussions of archival creation and study by leading scholars and we will work with the TCHA to index, create finding aids, make preservation recommendations, or digitize materials in their collections even as we use those materials as the basis for our critical work.

Texts (at Von’s Books):
Jacques Derrida, Archive Fever
Carolyn Steedman, Dust

Course packet (at Copymat), indicated by CP in the reading schedule

Requirements:
50% Critical Archival Project
Proposal (due February 6)
Draft (due March 20)
Completed Project (due April 24)

Guidelines for Critical Archival Project
For the proposal, please provide information about the following:
- The name of the collection you will be processing and any other identifying information
- Informal description of collection: records creator, dates, contents (attach a copy of existing finding aids if one exists)
- The current status of the collection’s processing:
  - Accession records
  - Preservation steps already taken
  - Preservation steps remaining, if any, and estimate of time and materials required to complete
  - Arrangement steps already taken; steps remaining and estimate of time required
  - Description steps taken and remaining, and estimate of time required
Arguments for conducting processing work on this collection:
  o Merits of the records
  o Need for additional processing
  o General interest and potential use of records

Reasons you should do the work:
  o Special expertise and/or skills
  o Special interest in subject or medium

For the draft, I would like to see a preliminary version of the work you are doing on the collection—transcription, preservation steps, indexing, finding aids, etc. By this point the project should be nearly completed, and as I read the draft, I will be able to make suggestions for finishing up.

For the completed project, please turn in the archival work you’ve performed (or direct me to it at the TCHA). In addition, please submit an analysis of the project. What were your critical or theoretical considerations? How did you meet challenges or problems? What remains to be done on the project? Who now should have access or find the collection meaningful and in what ways? How would you ensure future access to the collection and the relevance of your archival work? If there is work still to be done to fully process the collection, provide a brief summary of the next steps to be taken on a separate sheet.

50% Critical Research Project
  Proposal (due March 6)
  Newspaper article (due April 17) and Public presentation (to be determined by class)
  Paper (due May 3)

For the proposal, turn in a 1-2 page abstract of your project, including mention of the materials from the TCHA that you will use, your disciplinary or methodological approach, the significance of your project, and the questions you seek to address. Please also include a bibliography of primary and secondary sources as appropriate and a projected timeline for the research.

Details of the public presentation will be worked out by students in the class. A newspaper article suitable for publication in the Lafayette Journal & Courier is required. Part of the work we do as scholars is to cultivate historical consciousness, and our work should in some way be available to the wider public. Because of challenges faced by TCHA, it is particularly important that we find outlets for the projects that will engage Tippecanoe County citizens.

The paper should be 18-30 pages long, including footnotes or endnotes that conform to the Chicago Manual of Style.

Also required: constant attendance and active participation in class discussions and group work; preparation of a text for class discussion. Each student will select one
book from which an excerpt has been taken and make a brief presentation on it to prepare the way for the seminar discussion.
Schedule: materials in the course pack are mostly excerpts from longer works. Discussion leaders will read the book, but will focus the discussion in class on the assigned selections.

January 9
Introduction to the course
The scholar and the archives—personal stories of archival investigation
Sign-up for leading discussion
Survey of interests
Workshop: The raw materials and what to do with them.
   --hand out a facsimile packet of a mini archival donation
   --what are the issues that need to be addressed?
   --what needs to happen before others can use this collection?
   --how do the questions you pose of these raw materials differ when you are thinking like an archivist and thinking like a scholar?

January 16
The seminar will honor Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and will not convene. But the following work is your assigned reading for the week, which you should complete before the next meeting of the seminar, which will be held at the TCHA.
Paul Brunton and Tim Robinson, “Arrangement and Description” (CP)
Jennifer Edgecombe, “Finding Aids” (CP)
Gregory Hunter, “Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts” (CP)
James Gregory Bradsher, “An Introduction to Archives” (CP)
James M. O’Toole, “The Usefulness of Archives” (CP)
Finding aids for JOHN LEVERING FAMILY COLLECTION; ISAAC BLADEN COLLECTION; and ANDREW FAMILY/PINE FARM COLLECTION (CP)

January 23
Class meets at the TCHA Wetherill Research Center across from the Fowler House, 909 South Street.
Presentation by Paul Schueler, collections manager and consultant for the course
   --Introduction to TCHA and tour of the facility
   --History of TCHA
   --Discussion of protocols
   --Schedule of TCHA hours; schedule of Paul Schueler’s availability at TCHA
   --The TCHA wish list—collections in urgent need of attention and materials with particularly high use value
   --Special challenges (preservation of paper/textiles/artifacts? Space?)
Free exploration of holdings—the objective is to identify a collection on which you would like to work. Both Paul Schueler and Susan Curtis will be available for consultation.
January 30
Guest Speaker: Sammie Morris, Purdue University Archivist
   --How to create an archives
   --Distinguish “archive” from “archives”
   --Best practices
   --Special challenges
   --The Purdue University Special Collections

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Discussion of Readings from week 2 and today’s reading assignments
Revisit our first mini archival collection

Read:
Sammie Morris, “Starting from Scratch: How to Create a Museum Archives” (CP)
Dallas Museum of Art, Archives Policies and Procedures (CP)
David B. Gracy II, “Archives and Manuscripts”
Nicholson Baker, Double Fold (CP)
Richard J.Cox, Vandals in the Stacks: A Response to Nicholson Baker’s Assault on Libraries (CP)

February 6
Archival Research Narratives:
John Demos, The Unredeemed Captive (CP)
John Kasson, Houdini, Tarzan, and the Perfect Man (CP)
Mary Beth Norton, In the Devil’s Snare (CP)

Discussion of individual projects with the primary focus on your archival project and preliminary ideas on the critical research that might come out of this work
CRITICAL ARCHIVAL PROPOSAL IS DUE TODAY

February 13
Theorizing archives
Jacques Derrida, Archive Fever
Avery Gordon, “Distraction” from Ghostly Matters (CP)

Small Group discussions followed by a report from each group and a discussion by the whole class

February 20
Archival Narratives
Lauren Berlant, The Queen of America Goes to Washington City (CP)
Theodora Penny Martin, The Sound of Our Own Voices (CP)
Anne Myles, “From Monster to Martyr” (CP)
Jean Fagan Yellin, introduction to Harriet Jacobs’s Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (CP)
Henry Louis Gates, introduction to Hannah Crafts’s The Bondwoman’s Narrative (CP)
Elizabeth McHenry, Forgotten Readers (CP)
February 27
Scholarly Reflection on Archives
Carolyn Steedman, *Dust*

March 6
Digital Archiving and Archival Theory
David Brown, “Using Computers and Document Imaging” (CP)
Carolyn Heald, “Is There Room for Archives in the Postmodern World?” (CP)
Dorothy E. Smith, “Textually Mediated Social Organization” (CP)
Sammie Morris, “Preservation Considerations for Digitization of Archival Materials” (CP)

September 11 Archive commissioned by the Library of Congress:
http://web.archive.org/collections/sep11.html
Site organized by the American Social History Project at the City University of New York Graduate Center and the Center for History and New Media at George Mason University—archives emails and other electronic ephemera exchanged on September 11, 2001: http://www.911digitalarchive.org

CRITICAL RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL IS DUE TODAY

March 13
No class—Spring Break

March 20
Research and Archival Projects and Problems
Small Group conversations about projects and challenges
What have you found most interesting about your work?
What aspects have been particularly rewarding or frustrating?
Large Group discussions about “double vision”—seeing archives through the eyes of an archivist and the eyes of a scholar

DRAFT OF CRITICAL ARCHIVAL PROJECT IS DUE TODAY

March 27
Individual Archival and Research time
Professor Curtis will be at TCHA, 2:30-5:00 p.m.

April 3
Individual Archival and Research time
Professor Curtis will be at TCHA, 2:30-5:00 p.m.

April 10
Individual Archival and Research time
Professor Curtis will be at TCHA, 2:30-5:00 p.m
April 17
Research and Archival Projects and Problems
Small-group and whole group discussion
Discussion of Scholars and their Publics—How to bring our work to the community
NEWSPAPER ARTICLE IS DUE TODAY

April 24
Presentations of Critical Archival and Research Projects
CRITICAL ARCHIVAL PROJECT IS DUE TODAY

May 1
Presentations of Critical Archival and Research Projects

May 10 (Wednesday of Final Exam Week)
RESEARCH PAPER IS DUE BY 5:00 p.m.