

CASE #18

Stories of Power and Diversity During COVID: Building an Online Exhibition with Primary Sources

AUTHOR

Rachel Bohlmann
American History Librarian and
Curator of North Americana
University of Notre Dame
rbohlman@nd.edu

Erika Hosselkus
Curator of Latin Americana
University of Notre Dame
ehosselk@nd.edu

LEARNING OBJECTIVES ENGAGED FROM [GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY SOURCE LITERACY](#) BY THIS CASE STUDY

- 4.B. Critically evaluate the perspective of the creator(s) of a primary source, including tone, subjectivity, and biases, and consider how these relate to the original purpose(s) and audience(s) of the source.
- 4.D. As part of the analysis of available resources, identify, interrogate, and consider the reasons for silences, gaps, contradictions, or evidence of power relationships in the documentary record and how they impact the research process.
- 4.F. Demonstrate historical empathy, curiosity about the past, and appreciation for historical sources and historical actors.

CASE STUDY LOCATION Rare Books and Special Collections
Hesburgh Libraries
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN
<https://library.nd.edu/>

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Introduction and Institutional Context

There are three primary repositories of cultural and historical objects at the University of Notre Dame:

- Rare Books and Special Collections (RBSC),
- University Archives, and
- The Snite Museum of Art.

RBSC is home to approximately 132,000 volumes of printed books and periodicals and more than 6,000 linear feet of non-book materials including manuscripts, printed ephemera, broadsides, prints, posters, numismatics, and philately. Departmental strengths include Catholic studies, Irish studies, Italian literature, Latin American and Iberian history and literature, sports and physical culture, and theology and church history. The University Archives holds the official records of the university and hundreds of collections reflecting Catholic life and culture in and beyond the United States. The Snite Museum of Art's permanent collection contains more than 25,000 works of art, representing Hispanic and African cultures as well as Renaissance, medieval, and nineteenth-century European traditions. Staff in each of these campus repositories supports and encourages original research by undergraduate and graduate students at the university, but often through separate instruction and outreach efforts.

This one-credit course, offered as part of the University of Notre Dame's 2021 online Winter Session, brought students, from first year through graduate, together with primary sources from all three campus repositories. The instructors, Rachel Bohlmann and Erika Hosselkus, curators in Rare Books and Special Collections at Notre Dame, developed the course, "Stories of Power and Diversity: Inside Museums, Archives, and Collecting," around themes of diversity and inclusion in cultural repositories. They connected content, activities, and assessment to three broad outcomes. They asked students to:

- critically examine and discuss issues related to collecting and exhibiting,
- collaboratively create a single, group-curated online exhibition, and
- engage in peer review and self-reflection related to the process of creating an online exhibition.

To offer the course, Bohlmann and Hosselkus collaborated with colleagues in University Archives and the Snite Museum as well as the team responsible for the Hesburgh Libraries and Snite Museum's joint Andrew W. Mellon-funded [MARBLE project](#), which seeks to develop a unified online collections platform for materials held by our three campus repositories. Students accessed many of the primary sources utilized in this course via the [beta-version MARBLE platform](#) and their work serves as an example of the sort of innovative joint projects that the grant seeks to facilitate. The instructors also collaborated with faculty in campus departments to offer this course for credit through the College of Arts and Letters and the Departments of Art History, American Studies, and History. A faculty member from the Department of Film, Television, and Theater leading the development of a new interdisciplinary media and entertainment arts management minor sat in on, and contributed informally to, the course. Lastly, the instructors invited speakers from museums and archives settings to balance out our special collections-based experience.

As curators in Rare Books and Special Collections, the instructors engage with questions around diversity and inclusion in their own collection development, instruction, and research as well as in broader professional and social discourse. Students are also aware of, and interested in, historical and contemporary biases. The instructors designed this course to connect students to campus collections and to help them bring their own experiences and questions related to diversity and inclusion into the

world of collecting and exhibiting. Bohlmann and Hosselkus also envisioned a series of more practical outcomes associated with the course. They saw it as an opportunity to work toward shared instruction and outreach goals across campus repositories. They used it to test the feasibility of student-created public, online exhibitions as well as group online exhibitions. The instructors also wanted to test the capabilities and limitations of parts of Hesburgh Libraries’ exhibition software (DEC) and of the MARBLE platform. Finally, the course responds to a demand among undergraduates and graduate students in some humanities fields for practical and “alt-ac” (alternative academic careers) experience. Given the short timeframe of the course (one month) and the fully online mode of delivery, the instructors considered this an ambitious undertaking and anticipated complications and a need for flexibility and adjustments.

Course outcomes align with 4.B., 4.D., and 4.F. of the [Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy](#). Given the class’s focus on diversity, students spent significant time evaluating the intentions of creators and issues of representation both within primary sources and as they themselves created an exhibition. They considered whether or not our campus collections might even be regarded as diverse at all. Their [group-curated exhibition](#) is evidence of their “historical empathy, curiosity about the past, and appreciation for historical sources and historical actors.”

Narrative

The University of Notre Dame offered a 2021 online Winter Session as part of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The administration solicited course proposals with cross-disciplinary themes that encouraged experimentation and practical learning. In this spirit, Bohlmann and Hosselkus designed the course around the co-curation, by students, of an online exhibition, and opened it to any students enrolled in the College of Arts and Letters. The instructors assessed students on discussion participation, an interim report on their exhibition work, a first draft of their exhibition work, peer review, a presentation, and a final version of their exhibition work, as indicated in this table:

ASSESSMENT	
Discussion participation:	30%
<i>Exhibition</i>	
Interim report on exhibition showcase progress: (Note: 2.5% for providing a 5-minute oral report; 2.5% based on quality of the report.)	5%
Submission of beta version of showcase for peer review: (Note: 2.5% for submitting your showcase; 2.5% based on the quality of your progress.)	5%
Peer review write-up:	10%
Final presentation:	15%
Final showcase:	35%

Each student was responsible for selecting one item or set of items to interpret and present in a visually linear showcase composed of text and image slides. The instructors also tasked students with determining an overall theme for the exhibition and with incorporating their individual work into a joint and shared final product. In addition to this interpretive, curatorial work, the instructors asked each student to include a “personal statement” at the end of their showcase reflecting on their work with the item(s) that they chose and their efforts to connect to the theme of diversity. Bohlmann and Hosselkus felt that including this element would provide viewers with an opportunity to peek behind the curatorial curtain. The instructors also envisioned the personal statement as an opportunity for students to remove their curatorial hats and to more candidly connect their work in the course with our recent national experiences related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, if they chose to do so.

Given the short time frame of the course (January 4–27, 2021), online delivery, and the significant workload, the instructors provided detailed information regarding assessment and course activities in the form of a [Course Guide](#). They also asked students to select their item or set of items from a [pre-selected list](#). The instructors included options from all three of our campus repositories relevant to themes of diversity and inclusion in collecting. They limited the selection to twentieth-century American artifacts in order to control the scope and parameters of class discussion of diversity and inclusion and of the final exhibition.

Seven students enrolled in the course, including one first-year student, four upper-level undergraduates, and two graduate students. Their programs of study included classics, liberal studies, art history, anthropology, history, English, and Francophone studies. This range in academic levels and experience as well as interests was ultimately a great benefit as students were able to support one another and share expertise in ways that made the final exhibition successful. The course was entirely online and included thirteen synchronous, 75-minute sessions as well as six 75-minute sessions dedicated to independent work, where the instructors were available on Zoom for questions and assistance as needed by the students. The instructors dedicated the first seven meetings of the four-week course to seminar-style discussion of shared readings. Bohlmann and Hosselkus briefly covered elements of collecting in special collections, archives, and art museum environments as well as the development of rare book and map collecting. They discussed curatorial activism for improved representation of non-white and female work in modern art museums, professional standards for collecting Native American religious objects and sources, the ethical and scholarly importance of making sources about African Americans and other minority groups visible and accessible for research, best practices for exhibition development and label writing, and the significant role of metadata. This week also included presentations by three guest speakers from museum and archives environments designed to deepen the students’ connections to cultural collections and the challenges of gathering, representing, accessing, and interpreting sources about the past, particularly of historically silenced and marginalized groups.

During the second week of class students selected the item or set of items they wished to exhibit, the instructors introduced students to the library’s online exhibition platform (DEC) and its backend interface—Honeycomb—and students began independent work on their objects. The instructors asked students to identify a first, second, and third choice of their preferred item or set of items. Six students worked with their first choice and one with their second choice. Four students selected items from the Snite Museum of Art’s collection, two selected Rare Books and Special Collections items, and one selected materials from University Archives. Students began independent background research, and at the end of the second week (January 14) gave brief, preliminary reports on their choices, research progress, and use of DEC.

The [Course Guide](#) provided basic guidance on secondary research and the instructors met with students individually and worked with them over email as they contextualized and interpreted their items. The preliminary reports were important benchmarks that helped the instructors gauge how well the students were interpreting their sources and contextualizing them using course themes, readings, and further secondary literature. The reports also gave students early indications of how their peers presented items in DEC and revealed a range in the quality and extent of students' work. A few students had begun to integrate ideas from course readings and guest speaker presentations, and to use secondary literature to help them interpret their sources. Others remained focused on close examination of the source or had not begun to put their item(s) into DEC. For example, a student working on a photograph depicting a Navajo woman reflected on how to apply the Society of American Archivists' [Protocols for Native American Archival Materials](#), presented by a guest speaker, in her own analysis. Finally, these reports pointed to the need for instructors to work with students to create additional exhibition documentation, including an [exhibition checklist](#) and an [exhibition style guide](#). The former identified all required components of the exhibition and specified which elements required group or individual input. The latter modeled consistent style for exhibition layout, text, and metadata.

In week three (January 18–22), students completed beta versions of their own showcases and peer reviewed another student's showcase. Students wrote draft text, created captions, entered metadata, and manipulated images of their primary sources to present an interpretation of their item(s) and relate it to course themes. A few students had begun to draft personal reflection statements. Beta showcases were due on January 19. January 20 was originally dedicated to individual work. However, when the instructors reviewed the beta showcases on January 19, they realized that the students needed immediate, direct guidance on how to structure their showcases as well as how to contextualize them with critical selections of secondary sources. Because of the course's condensed timeline, students did not have time to develop redrafts as they fitted their analysis into course themes of diversity and inclusion, and figured out the best ways to present their sources in DEC. To assist the students, the instructors requested ten-minute, individual meetings with students during class time on January 20. The instructors gave feedback on the students' analysis, which ranged from nearly non-existent or engaged but poorly articulated, to quite substantial and well-developed. With a longer course timeline, the instructors would dedicate additional class time to secondary source research techniques and tools. Based on the beta showcases' visual variety, the instructors also prescribed a uniform showcase layout: introductory text slide including showcase thesis, followed by an image slide.

On Thursday, January 21, students submitted two-page written peer reviews. Instructors intentionally paired students examining similar sources and considered the strength or weakness of each beta showcase when making peer review assignments. Thursday also included a presentation and Q&A session by Rare Books and Special Collections' digital project specialist. The class reviewed and discussed color and graphic options for the show's title banner and other common components. The class on January 22 focused on solidifying an overall exhibition theme and thesis, and on finalizing as many elements of the exhibition as possible, in preparation for a full beta version unveiling on the following Monday, January 25. In order to elicit as much student input and feedback as possible, the instructors led a full group discussion and placed students in Zoom breakout rooms without instructor presence to articulate the show's thesis and big themes.

Based on student input, the instructors drafted an introduction and afterward for the exhibition on Sunday, January 24. The next day the class finalized the show's common components. To foster a class-based consensus, the instructors first led a full group discussion on these components, then placed students into breakout groups and asked them to report the results of their discussion in the Zoom chat

window. Through these combined methods, students decided on a banner image, a title, and a showcase order with minimal input from the instructors. Final showcases were due on Tuesday, January 26, and students gave oral presentations of their showcases on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 27 (the final day of the Winter Session term). (See: [evaluation rubric](#)). The instructors provided quick and detailed feedback on the students' final showcases and asked that final changes be made by Tuesday, February 2.

Because of the short term, the instructors did some cleanup on the show after the class had ended, which they notified the students of before starting. They lightly copyedited the students' texts for clarity. The instructors also were not able to obtain high resolution images for a few students' items until after the course had ended. Once these images were uploaded students were notified and given a week to review and offer final comments and edits before the exhibition, [Still History? Exploring Mediated Narratives](#), was made public.

Results

Because this was a for-credit course, the instructors assessed the students on how well they had fulfilled the course outcomes. All students engaged in critical discussion, successfully contributed to the course exhibition, engaged in peer review, and wrote personal reflections, equating to successful completion of these outcomes. A few students were exemplary in integrating ideas discussed in the readings into their exhibition showcases. By these measures, the instructors were generally quite satisfied with the course's effectiveness and the ways students engaged with analyzing, interpreting, and displaying a primary source in this class project.

In addition to the course's broad outcomes, the instructors evaluated students on learning objectives 4.B., 4.D., and 4.F. of the [Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy](#). This course's focus on diversity and inclusion in collecting and in cultural repositories required students to critically evaluate the perspectives of their item's creators, to consider how the primary sources were received by contemporary audiences, and how they could be seen by audiences today (4.B.). The students' final showcases uniformly question the motivations of, and assumptions made by, creators. In one example, a student examining Ernest Klee's photograph of the chapel of Our Holy Child of Atocha in La Manga, New Mexico (1941), states, "Klee's photographic style fits into the aesthetic canon of Western landscape photography aside the likes of Edward Weston and Ansel Adams. Yet, as history would have it, this photograph is also an imperfect and muted document of an underrepresented and economically struggling community—very much alive beyond the lens." Students also frequently addressed the intentions of creators and audience reception in class discussion. During discussion of broad exhibition themes on January 14, a student commented in the chat window that "we are working on breaking silences, no matter the limitations of the authorship in representing. I see that the works from 1930s–1940s seem to have someone representing the other, in good intentions but still speaking for others. Then the latter works, there seems to be those who are breaking the silences about their own communities."

The course also challenged students to identify and question silences and gaps in the documentary record—particularly in the documentary record preserved in the University of Notre Dame's campus repositories (4.D.). One showcase, for example, chronicles efforts by Notre Dame's LGBTQ students to establish a recognized student organization on campus. Entitled, "Breaking the Silence: A Community's Struggle with Acceptance," this showcase reflects on the historical silencing of LGBTQ individuals and

groups on campus and hones in on a series of confrontations over the 1994–1995 academic year, when the “campus exploded into sound.”

The students showed historical empathy for historical actors throughout the course by exhibiting care contextualizing and visually interpreting the sources in their showcases (4.F.). The class attended to the ethics of presenting sources created by white artists of non-white subjects without their consent. During class discussion on January 14, a student reflected on the importance of recognizing the intentions of the creators and how expectations of representation have changed over the course of the twentieth century. The student wrote in the chat window, “I think the theme of breaking silences . . . is a good idea, and bringing to light the intentions of the author/artist. I think we could also note the way that photography and representation changed between the two 'eras' mentioned, how in fact those communities have taken their representation into their own hands, and . . . maybe how they used information to empower themselves?”

The students’ personal statements, included at the end of each showcase, also attest in a unique way to their expression of historical empathy (4.F.). In their personal statements, the students speak as individuals rather than curators and directly address their interactions with, and struggles to, interpret their items. Students also used these statements to express thoughts and perspectives that they could not articulate within the more formal analysis of their showcase texts. Several students describe how they struggled to make sense of complex contemporary questions and issues (such as LGBTQ rights), or to give a fair reading to a photographer whose work was opposed by the people she photographed. The personal statements gave the students space to explain these challenges and reflect on the development of their ideas over the class’s three-and-a-half weeks, while also offering final thoughts or lessons learned. In reflecting both on her items and her own experience in the course, one student offers that, “growth comes when we step outside our comfort zones.”

The instructors also received course evaluations. Several students appreciated the focus on professional practices in the readings and guest speakers. One student wrote, “the assigned readings were very effective in giving an introduction into different aspects of museum presentation. I also enjoyed the variety of speakers you brought in so we could talk to professionals in different aspects of the industry.” Another commented, “I really appreciated the guest speakers describing their jobs (a wide variety) and also the professors' sharing their own experiences.” Students also valued the process of peer review and exhibition collaboration. One wrote, “Having multiple classes devoted to peer review and discussion about the direction of the showcase was also very helpful for creating the showcase.” Another commented, “Student collaboration and the peer reviews were very helpful to balance individual and group work. . . Great mix of theory and hands-on work! Doing our showcases was a great way to gain some curatorial experience and hone our skills in researching and portraying topics for an audience.”

After the class ended, four students leveraged their class experience to explore new opportunities. Two applied for summer internships at a number of national museums and archives. A third applied for a place in the Sorin Scholars, a competitive honors program at Notre Dame for first-year students designed to support their intellectual development and professional goals. A fourth student applied for a Snite Museum Object-Based Teaching Fellowship. Bohlmann and Hosselkus supplied letters of recommendation for two of the students and agreed to serve as references for the other two students.

Finally, this project was selected by the university's development office as a featured story for Notre Dame Day, an annual fundraising project on April 18–19, 2021. One student, selected by the instructors, represented the course and the exhibition and was interviewed for the event.

Lessons Learned

Overall, the instructors are gratified by the outcomes of this course, particularly the level of student engagement and investment in the final exhibition. The exhibition successfully reflects the course's overarching themes and questions as well as the effort students committed to their individual and collective work. Many of the lessons learned in teaching this course emerged as normal adjustments required when offering a course for the first time. Some are directly related to the abbreviated aspect of the Winter Session. The instructors would like to offer this course during a full semester and in a face-to-face setting, which would allow students more time to develop and articulate their analyses and conclusions. Specific lessons learned are:

1. Obtaining images of sufficient resolution for clear display on the platform was more complicated and time-consuming than the instructors anticipated. Not surprisingly, delays occurred when getting copies across campus repositories. In the future, the instructors will attain copies of preselected images before the class begins.
2. When students submitted their beta showcases in week three, the instructors realized that students needed guidance in interpreting their sources within the course themes of diversity and inclusion. The instructors added individual consultations with students at the end of that week. The instructors found that the students were challenged by learning objective 4B, which asked them critically to evaluate the perspective of the creator of their source. This question emerged repeatedly in class discussions, particularly around the photographic sources, and resulted in the show's subtitle about mediated narratives.
3. Because part of the final project entailed group work and cooperation, the instructors found that the students needed more time to develop these final, common components of the show: the show's title, searching capabilities (metadata), design features, captions, and citations and bibliography. Group curation is an iterative process that requires time and evolving discussion. The short duration of Winter Session compressed the development process and forced some decisions that could have benefited from further review.
4. Offering the course online placed a barrier between the students and their sources. Since none of the students were able to see their objects in person, they faced the challenge of interpreting and presenting their items as original objects, not digital surrogates. The instructors addressed this factor in class, but further consideration and discussion of the implications of this would be warranted in future online offerings.
5. Course enrollment should be limited. Achieving a coherent and unified, group-curated exhibition requires significant input, shepherding, and editing from instructors in addition to student work. It also requires successful facilitation of group discussions and achieving full student participation. In short, although this course was labor intensive it was rewarding.
6. The exhibition software does not currently allow viewers to provide feedback on exhibitions. The library shared the show through the library's institutional social media, where we were able to hear

from viewers. The instructors also received some feedback via email which was shared with the student curators. But adding a feedback component to the exhibition platform is a request the instructors have made to the developers.

7. When the instructors proposed this course, they saw it as an opportunity to work toward shared instruction and outreach goals across campus repositories. This class took initial steps to create collaborative relationships between Rare Books and Special Collections, University Archives, and the Snite Museum of Art. In future iterations of this course, the instructors look to further involve campus colleagues in actual course instruction and design, with an eye to a more integrated instruction program.

Appendix 1

Course Syllabus

Stories of Power and Diversity: Inside Museums, Archives, and Collecting

AL 21000, AMST 30980, ARHI 21000, HIST 30977 (1 credit)

Winter Session 2021

Zoom link:

<https://notredame.zoom.us/j/99809024023?pwd=c0JJYjdoZEhsbGk5cm51RXh0MmVxdz09>

Instructors

Rachel Bohlmann, PhD (rbohlman@nd.edu), Curator of Special Collections and American History, American Studies, and Gender Studies Librarian, Rare Books and Special Collections, Hesburgh Libraries

Erika Hosselkus, PhD (ehosselk@nd.edu), Curator of Special Collections and Latin American, Iberian, and Latinx Studies Librarian, Rare Books and Special Collections, Hesburgh Libraries

Introduction

What do the paintings and sculptures in museums and the manuscripts and antique books in archives tell us about our collective past? What do they tell us about how value, importance, and worth have been ascribed across time? As users of these cultural collections, how might we address inequities and silences within them? The first half of this one-credit course provides a lightning introduction to the history of cultural heritage collecting and its many issues. Through the Zoom window students will apply a critical gaze to the collections held in our campus repositories—the Snite Museum of Art, Rare Books and Special Collections, and University Archives—and in museums and archives beyond the Notre Dame campus. In the second half of the course, students will reflect on what they have read and discussed, and collaboratively build an online exhibition around the theme of diversity in our campus collections. This exhibition will be published on [the Hesburgh Library's Digital Exhibitions and Collections page](#) and students will be given curatorial credit for their work.

Course Outcomes

In this course students will:

- critically examine and discuss issues related to collecting and exhibiting;
- collaboratively create an online exhibition;
- engage in peer review and self-reflection related to the process of creating an online exhibition

Conduct of the Course

The class will meet via Zoom every day from January 4 through January 8, and on January 11, 12, 14, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 27, between 2:00 and 3:15 pm EST. The remaining course days (January 13, 15, 18, 19, 20) will be dedicated to individual work on exhibition showcases. Instructors will be available as necessary between 2:00 and 3:15 pm EST for Zoom consultations on those days.

Attendance

Attendance and participation are important parts of learning in this class. In order to ensure that you have the best possible learning experience in this class and due to the brief length of the winter session, you are allowed a maximum of ONE (1) UNEXCUSED ABSENCE. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a grade drop of 5%. Only absences permitted by University policy and verified as per section 3.1 (pages 4-5) of the Undergraduate Academic Code will be excused.

Assessment

Students will be assessed on participation in discussions of assigned readings and exhibition planning, completion of the exhibition showcase and personal reflection statement, completion of peer review, and completion of final showcase presentation. A rubric will be provided to students with specifics on how the final exhibition showcase will be evaluated. Areas of assessment will include quality of research, creativity, and successful incorporation of the personal reflective statement into the final showcase.

Discussion participation:.....	30%
Exhibition	
Interim report on exhibition showcase progress:	5%
(note: 2.5% for providing a 5-minute oral report; 2.5% based on quality of the report)	
Submission of beta version of showcase for peer review:	5%
(note: 2.5% for submitting your showcase; 2.5% based on the quality of your progress)	
Peer review write-up:	10%
Final presentation:	15%
Final showcase:	35%

Statement on Smart Use of Technology

This course relies heavily on access to computers, specific software, and the Internet. At some point during the semester you may have a problem with technology: your laptop may crash, a file may become corrupted, a server may go down, or something else may occur. Technology problems will not normally be accepted as excuses for unfinished work. Count on “stuff” happening and protect yourself by planning ahead, starting early, saving often, and practicing safe computing. In particular, this course uses the library’s Digital Exhibitions and Collections (DEC) software. You will put text and images into DEC over the course of class. However, we strongly encourage you to produce and save your text outside of DEC! When working inside of DEC, you should also save frequently and refresh frequently to avoid overwriting and error codes!

Honor Code

Notre Dame students are expected to abide by the Academic Code of Honor Pledge. “As a member of the Notre Dame community, I will not participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty.”

Accommodations

Any student who has a documented disability and is registered with Disability Services should speak with the instructors as soon as possible regarding accommodations. Students who are not registered should contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible since accommodation typically needs to be arranged well in advance. <https://sarabeadisabilityservices.nd.edu/>

Inclusiveness

We are committed to and strive to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. In this class we will not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sex, age, economic class, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

Class Schedule

Monday, January 4

Course Introduction

Video: [Alain Resnais, Toutes les mémoires du monde](#)

Readings—Optional:

Tazalika M. te Reh, [“Reading Against the Grain: Black Presence in Lower Manhattan, New York City,”](#) *Trialog 118/119: A Journal for Planning and Building in a Global Context*, vol. 3-4/2014-February 2016: 58-63.

Tuesday, January 5

The Concept of Collecting and Collecting Today in Special Collections Repositories

Readings—Required - Complete before class meeting:

David McKitterick, *The Invention of Rare Books: Private Interest and Public Memory, 1600–1840*. Chapter 1, “Inventio,” pp. 15-27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

William Finnegan, [“A Theft in a Library: The Case of the Missing Maps,”](#) *The New Yorker*, October 10, 2005.

Wednesday, January 6

Collecting Today in Museums

Invited Speaker: [Joseph Becherer, Director of the Snite Museum of Art and Curator of Sculpture](#)

Readings—Required - Complete before class meeting:

[The Transformative Power of Inclusive Storytelling in Museums](#)

[Diversity of artists in major U.S. museums](#)

Maura Reilly, *Curatorial Activism: Towards an Ethics of Curating* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2018), Preface and Chapter 1, “What is Curatorial Activism?”

Thursday, January 7

Collecting Today in Archives

Invited Speaker: Patrick Milhoan, Lead Processing Archivist, Hesburgh Libraries

Readings—Required - Complete before class meeting:

[Protocols for Native American Archival Materials](#) (skim)

[SAA Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics](#) (skim)

Matthew Connelly, “Why You May Never Learn the Truth about ICE,” *New York Times*, February 4, 2020.

Lesley M. M. Blume, “This Year Will End Eventually. Document it While You Can,” *New York Times*, July 14, 2020.

Readings—Optional:

Simon Fowler, “Enforced Silences,” in David Thomas, Simon Fowler, and Valerie Johnson, *The Silence of the Archives*, (London: Facet Publishing, 2017): 1–39.

Friday, January 8

Collecting and the Digital Turn and Exhibition Ethics and Practice

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

Find and select a digital collection to share with the class

Also, take a look at:

[Documenting Ferguson](#)

[On Excess: Susan Sontag's Born Digital Archive](#)

[Transatlantic Slave Trade Database](#)

[The Knotted Line](#)

Read:

David B. Driscoll, "Snapshots from the Family Album: Constructing a Public History Exhibition," *Milwaukee History*, 22, no. 3 (1999): 78–94.

Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*, second edition (2015), Chapters 1 and 2.

Kris Wetterlund, "If You Can't See It Don't Say It: A New Approach to Interpretive Writing," [2013], (skim only).

Monday, January 11

Exhibition Practicalities

Introduction to DEC/HoneyComb and metadata fields

Begin work on exhibition showcases

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

Have your item(s) selected by today; submit your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices to Sakai

Readings—Optional:

Grace L. Barth, et al., *Digital Exhibitions: Concepts and Practices* (Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, 2018).

Tuesday, January 12

Invited speaker: [Marcia Walker-McWilliams, PhD](#), Executive Director of the [Black Metropolis Research Consortium](#)

Individual work on exhibition showcases (Instructors available as necessary)

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

[Read about the Black Metropolis Research Consortium and its work](#); prepare questions for Dr. Walker-McWilliams

Wednesday, January 13

Individual work on exhibition showcases (Instructors available as necessary)

Thursday, January 14

Interim reports on showcase progress and metadata progress

Discussion of connections with class themes and emerging overall exhibition themes, ideas, and questions

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

Prepare a 5-minute oral update on your progress that you will share in class today. How is your research going? Your personal statement? How has your experience using DEC been thus far? Are you encountering any challenges? Share your screen and show us what you've done so far! (Note: 2.5% for providing the oral report; 2.5% based on the quality of the report.)

Friday, January 15

Individual work on exhibition showcases (Instructors available as necessary)

Monday, January 18

Individual work on exhibition showcases (Instructors available as necessary)

Tuesday, January 19

Beta version of showcase due for peer review

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

By class time today, your first (semi-polished, though not perfected) draft of your exhibition showcase should be ready for peer review. (Note: 2.5% for submitting your showcase; 2.5% based on the quality of your progress.)

Wednesday, January 20

Individual work on exhibition showcases and peer review (Instructors available as necessary)

Thursday, January 21

Peer review write-ups due

Preparing to pull the exhibition together: Discussion with Sara Weber, Rare Books and Special Collections Digital Project Specialist about the project's overall digital design elements.

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

Submit your peer review to Sakai by class time today. Find more details in the Course Guide.

Friday, January 22

Discussion of exhibition themes, strengths and weaknesses (what is left out? missing? why?), introduction outlined, integration and order of showcases, exhibition images, conclusions?

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

Look at all showcase drafts and read all peer review submissions in preparation for discussion

Monday, January 25

Unveiling of beta version of overall exhibition and discussion and student input

Tuesday, January 26

Final showcases due!

Final showcase presentations

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

By class time today, your final draft of your exhibition showcase should be ready. Final showcase presentations begin today. Find more details in Sakai.

Wednesday, January 27

Final showcase presentations

Course wrap up

Readings/Assignments—Required - Complete before class meeting:

Final showcase presentations continue today. Find more details in Sakai.

**Note: Syllabus subject to change.