

**ENG 7110/7340: Archive Fevers**

Spring 2019  
Wed 4:40-7:20 pm  
108 Fawcett Hall



**Professor:** Dr. Hope Jennings  
**Office Hours:** Wed 3:30-4:30 pm  
or By Appointment  
**Office:** 451 Millett Hall  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course, we will focus on several current trends in literary texts and theories that explore the politics of the archive. We will think about various manifestations of the “archive,” as a term that functions both literally and figuratively in cultural texts and spaces, and how these inform contemporary memory practices, theories, and narratives. We will interrogate the cultural and political uses of institutional and individual memory in shaping responses to traumatic pasts and precarious futures, and the ways in which such responses articulate apocalyptic anxieties in the face of global climate and refugee crises, cyber-security threats, and extinction politics. Assigned readings encompass debates on collective memory and archives, with attention to the following:

- nostalgia as a political tool for recovering lost homes and “mementos” of the past in response to histories of environmental damage and experiences of mass migrations, deportations, and displacements of indigenous peoples, ethnic or religious minorities, and people of color;
- the construction of globalized memory and/or geographies as an erasure of historical, cultural, and national specificities of traumatic “events,” such as invasion, slavery, genocide, settler colonialism, environmental racism, and ongoing ecological catastrophes;
- and indigenous practices, postcolonial archives, oral history archives, and virtual archives as disruptive forms of historiography and writing/theorizing speculative futures.

Our readings of selected theoretical and literary texts will prompt exploration of the following questions: Are we capable of imagining a future that is politically transformative rather than ending in catastrophic destruction or repeating cycles of violence? What purpose does memory serve and what does it mean to survive or document the past when there is no possible future for human and/or nonhuman communities? How might the tools of new media and the digitization of archives be deployed toward social and environmental justice, or, to what extent might these work toward cultural amnesia and an erasure of the material past? By the end of the course, students will create an archive project alongside a seminar paper analyzing one to two of the assigned novels through a coherent theoretical framework and/or methodology.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

- Lindsey Drager, *The Archive of Alternate Endings* (Dzanc Books, 2019). **ISBN:** 9781945814822
- Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *M Archive* (Duke UP, 2018). **ISBN:** 9780822370840
- Nick Harkaway, *Gnomon* (Vintage, 2018). **ISBN:** 9780525432937
- Valeria Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive* (Knopf, 2019). **ISBN:** 9780525520610
- Brenda Shaughnessy, *The Octopus Museum* (Knopf, 2019). **ISBN:** 9780525655657
- Tom Sweterlitsch, *The Gone World* (Putnam, 2018). **ISBN:** 9780425278901
- Alexis Wright, *The Swan Book* (Washington Square Press, 2018). **ISBN:** 9781501124792

*Additional assigned and recommended readings in theory are available in Pilot as PDFs.*

## COURSE EVALUATION

Grades are based on the following points (1,000 total)

Assignment	Points
Participation & Leading Discussion	200
Notes (10x20 pts each)	200
Short Paper/Theory in Practice	200
Seminar Paper/Archive Project	300
Project Presentation	100

The grading scale is as follows:

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
0-59%	F

### Participation (15%) and Leading Discussion (5%)

You are expected to attend all or most of the class sessions and come prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Participation entails a willingness to think aloud and to think alongside others about the course material; active, respectful listening; responding thoughtfully to others and making contributions that generate further discussion, including remarks that take up others' ideas and make room for your peers to contribute. **Once** during the semester, each of you will lead discussion of one of the literary texts. The discussion will last approximately 45 minutes, and should do the following:

- facilitate rather than control discussion on the given reading
- draw out, through class discussion, a clear sense of the reading's main themes and arguments, including clarification of questions raised by the reading, especially in connection to theory.
- encourage informed, focused, and inclusive dialogue between members of the class.

In other words, in leading discussion, you are not responsible for "teaching" the material, but for structuring and guiding collective elucidation of it. In general, we want to think about how the text *generates knowledge or dialogue* in relation to other things/ideas we've read and discussed. Here's a suggested structure for accomplishing the above:

- Begin with a brief introduction situating the text in relation to previous readings and/or discussion, then briefly discuss how key concepts from the text(s) relate to any reading in theory. **You are responsible for bringing into discussion a theoretical essay or text from your own research, NOT one of the assigned readings from Weeks 1-3.** Please make the essay available to the rest of the class by posting to the discussion board in Pilot; if you are using material from a book, then provide in the discussion board the bibliographic information and a brief summary of the section or ideas that you've prepared for class discussion. Your introduction should take no more than 10 minutes.
- You should then move on to discussion by identifying implications and questions that come out of the text. Suggest a question, then invite others to contribute their own implications or questions. Each implication or question could result in 10-15 minutes of conversation. Throughout the discussion, you should try to include as many participants as possible.
- When there are about 5 minutes left, summarize what you think are some of the main takeaways from the discussion, and any outstanding problems or questions. This is another good moment to put the text "in conversation" with theories, insights, and interventions.

Sometime soon, you should choose your first, second, and third preferences for when you'd like to lead discussion. These can be for any week when we are discussing one of the assigned literary texts (Weeks 4-7 and 9-15, for a total of 10 available weeks). Once you submit your preferences, I'll make a schedule that attempts to accommodate everyone's choices.

**Notes (10 x 20 pts each=20%)**

Students will submit a total of 10 note pages—3 for any of the assigned readings in theory from Weeks 1-3 and 1 for each of the assigned literary texts from Weeks 4-15 (7 total). You may submit notes for any literary texts on which you are leading discussion (see above). All notes should be no more than **one page long** (250–300 words), single-spaced, and using bullet points where applicable. **Notes are due Wednesday by the start of class on the day the reading is discussed.**

For the **theory notes**, these should be focused on understanding the readings rather than criticizing them. Please do not include any general information on the critic’s biography or historical contexts; focus on the text itself. Theory notes should consist of:

1. List of key concepts/terms (e.g. “discipline,” “orientation,” “governance,” “critique”)
2. Summary statement (four sentences maximum) of the author’s main argument. This statement should be written in your own words, relying on quotation as little as possible.
3. Three or four issues or questions raised by the reading, in connection with the themes of (and/or other readings from) the course.

The **literature notes** (on the assigned literary texts) should do the following:

1. Identify at least 1 key passage in the text that speaks to an issue, key concept, or point of inquiry discussed in one or more of the theory readings—do not reduplicate the passage; simply summarize in 1-2 sentences the passage and cite the page number(s).
2. Explain in 3-4 sentences how the passage illustrates an issue, concept, or inquiry in the theory.
3. Provide 1-2 substantive discussion questions raised by this passage from the literary text by placing it in connection with the theoretical issue, concept, or inquiry.

**Assessment:** Notes are largely assessed according to completion, rather than scrutinized for varying quality. Notes turned in on time and that are sound (coherent, generally accurate in their summary, posing relevant questions) will receive full credit; notes that do not meet this standard will receive no credit. If I find a set of notes to be below standard, I will return them and give you the opportunity to revise. Once you have received credit for your notes on a particular reading, you have the option of uploading it to a shared notes archive in Pilot. You may share all, some, or none of your notes—it is entirely up to you and has no bearing on your grade for these assignments.

**NB:** “Leading Discussion” and “Notes” adapted from Dr. Andrew Strombeck’s ENG 7110 syllabus.

**Short Paper: Theory as Practice (min. 1500 words—6-7 pages) (20%)**

For this assignment, you should select any assigned theoretical or critical essay(s) from Weeks 1-2 and put these in conversation with a literary analysis of *The Swan Book* or *Lost Children Archive*. Your essay should make some claim about how reading these texts together helps us think about questions raised by key concepts, themes, and problems explored in this class. For example, you might consider how the literary text asks us to reimagine concepts of archives, the politics of the archive and collective memory, and/or current global crises that we are facing. What kinds of demands might these texts be making with regard to genre, style, or form in relation to arguments, concepts, or debates concerning the Anthropocene? In what ways do they require us to become different kinds of readers, as opposed to the normative expectations of Eurocentric/humanist literary traditions? Papers are due at the end of Spring Break (3/8) and will be assessed according to the general evaluation criteria for written work (see below).

### **Seminar Paper/Archive Project & Presentation (min. 3500 words—14-15 pages) (40%)**

This paper asks you to develop a theoretical model (generated from assigned texts in theory and your own research beyond those texts), and then apply your model to one of the assigned literary texts discussed in this class. You may further develop your analysis of any text(s) you wrote about in the short paper but should also include discussion of one of the novels from Weeks 9-15. Begin by framing and outlining your theoretical model in careful detail (the literature review) and then offer your own detailed reading of the literary text(s) through this theoretical lens, using additional secondary literary criticism to flesh out the text's contexts. For the archive project that accompanies your paper, you will create or map out a possible archive based on issues, themes, documents, artifacts, places and/or events described within your selected novel (or inspired by the novel). During our scheduled exam time, you will present your archive to the rest of the class, explaining its components, its relation to the text(s), and how it conceptualizes key concepts, issues, or themes explored in your seminar paper. The presentation should include some form of visual media (digital or 3-D). Guidelines and rubrics for the paper, project, and presentation will be provided.

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### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

Both essays must be formatted according to the most recent MLA style guidelines, using Times New Roman 12-point font, 1" margins with clearly indented paragraphs and no extra spacing between paragraphs. The word count should be indicated at the end of the paper ("WC: 2,500"), excluding the Works Cited page. You must submit electronic copies of all written work, including your notes pages, to the Pilot dropbox in a Word attachment (.doc, .docx, or .rtf); if you do not submit a copy to the dropbox or you submit your paper in a format that cannot be opened, it will not be graded. The dropbox will remain open and I will use the timestamp of your submission to confirm whether you submitted by the deadline. If you experience trouble with Pilot when trying to submit, then you should immediately send me the assignment in an email attachment so that I know you completed the assignment on time—you will still need to submit a copy to Pilot and you will not receive a grade until you do so. The assignment submitted must match the one originally sent by email.

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### **GENERAL EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR ALL WRITTEN WORK**

- A = Demonstrates advanced analytical and critical thinking skills and outstanding knowledge of the readings and other course content. Writing is clear, concise, free of basic errors and easy to follow. Ideas are original and depth of analysis is excellent. Illustrations and examples are concrete, appropriate, and vivid. Sources are varied, high-quality and always cited correctly.
- B = Demonstrates solid analytical and critical thinking skills and familiarity with readings and other course content. Writing is coherent, concise, easy to follow, and nearly free of basic errors. Interesting illustrations and examples. Sources are cited, but not all of them scholarly.
- C = Demonstrates basic understanding of the readings and other course content and can provide a good summary of material but shows lack of development and support for issues raised. Sources are cited, but some are insufficient or not of high-quality.
- D = Demonstrates minimal understanding of readings and course content. Shows lack of, or simplistic analysis. Writing lacks coherence. Ideas are vague or not supported. Few or poor outside sources.
- F = Demonstrates serious lack of understanding of readings and other course content. Incoherent or serious lack of articulation and analysis. Sources are not cited properly or, entirely absent.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY GUIDELINES & POLICY

Penalties for academic dishonesty and student procedure in academic dishonesty prosecution are clarified in the *Wright State University Student Handbook* and on the Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct website at: <http://www.wright.edu/students/judicial/integrity.html>. Plagiarism is using other people's ideas and/or words without crediting them and is considered intellectual theft; paraphrasing also requires citations and page numbers. For further information about plagiarism, refer to: <http://www.wright.edu/academics/writingctr/resources/plagiarism.html>. **INSTRUCTOR POLICY ON PLAGIARISM**: If any portion of submitted work is plagiarized, you will receive a "0" on that assignment; if you commit a second offense, regardless of circumstances, you will receive an F for the entire course and may be subject to disciplinary action.

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## GENERAL CONDUCT & COURSE POLICIES

- **Attendance Policy:** More than two unexcused absences could significantly impact your final grade, especially since we only meet once a week. If you have three or more absences, you will receive an automatic "F" for the course. I allow grad students at least one absence without any deduction in participation points; I will only excuse absences due to emergencies, death in the family, etc. Written verification is required, and work conflicts are not excusable absences.
- You are expected to compose yourself as if in a professional environment. This includes attending class regularly and on time, being prepared for each class session, and contributing to course requirements as if you were in a workplace. Unprofessional behavior will imperil your ability to get a good grade, but also your ability to receive a letter of recommendation from me should the need arise. I request that you address me as Dr. Jennings and not by first name. For some of the contexts and reasons behind this general preference and standard of professional etiquette, I recommend reading this *New York Times* essay: "[U Can't Talk to Ur Professor Like This](#)".
- Electronic devices may only be used for taking notes and/or referring to assigned readings. Cell phones must be on silent and video/audio recording of class discussions are not permitted.
- Respect toward peers and the instructor includes active listening, even if your views differ, and refraining from bigotry and intolerance toward others. Although your individual opinions about the texts and issues explored in this class are encouraged, you must be able to present your interpretations or stance through an informed lens, using critical thinking and/or verifiable evidence beyond personal beliefs or anecdotal experiences (such as reference to textual examples, reliable secondary sources, or socio-cultural, historical, and political contexts).
- You are expected to follow the class calendar and assignment guidelines. If you are confused about any of these it is your responsibility to ask for clarification, and NOT the night before something is due. I do not accept late submissions and any missing assignment will receive a zero. All submission deadlines are posted in the class calendar below as well as in Pilot.
- Extensions are granted ONLY in extreme cases of illness or emergency, which must be documented and, if possible, communicated to me *before* the due date and not after the missed deadline. Regardless of circumstances, I reserve the right to deny any requests for extensions and will only grant incompletes to students who have consistently attended class and are missing no more than 1-2 assignments. I do not offer individual extra credit opportunities; extra credit assignments are rarely provided and only as an option available to the entire class.
- Raider Mail is the best way to communicate with me. You can expect to receive a reply within a 24-hour period on weekdays; I normally do not respond to e-mail on weekends. Check the newsfeed on the course homepage in Pilot for any class updates or info. If I make changes to the syllabus or class calendar, I explain these in class and post them in Pilot.

## USEFUL CAMPUS & ONLINE RESOURCES

**University Libraries:** The University Libraries are the scholarly information center for the University. In support of the University's mission of educational excellence, the Libraries collect, organize, preserve, and facilitate access to scholarly resources in all formats; support teaching, learning, and research in an intellectually open environment; and provide instruction in the use of traditional and new information resources and technologies. The libraries' online catalog, databases, and interlibrary loan service is essential for conducting research. Web page: <https://www.libraries.wright.edu/>

**The Student Technology Assistance Center (STAC):** Located in the Paul Laurence Dunbar Library, the STAC provides Wright State students with the tools to make productive use of multimedia. Students can create original academic and creative works using either Windows or Macintosh computers. The STAC employs trained student mentors who share a wealth of experience, skills, and backgrounds. In a unique peer-to-peer learning environment, knowledgeable mentors are available to assist students with their projects several hours each week. At other times, the STAC is open and available as a DIY space with access to the latest software applications. The library has technology to borrow such as cameras, tripods, green screens and more for your multimedia projects. Students can also schedule individual appointments with STAC staff for individual help on projects.  
<https://libraries.wright.edu/stac/>

**New Media Incubator (Inc):** The Inc is an innovative and welcoming space where students get hands-on training with professional production equipment and processes. The editing suites are equipped with industry standard technologies where students learn to create long and short form marketing spots, documentaries, podcasts, news segments, cultural programs, and other projects. Web page: <https://liberal-arts.wright.edu/about/new-media-incubator>

**CATS:** Faculty are not experts in trouble shooting Pilot or computer programs of any type. The quickest way to resolve technical issues is by using the resources at the HELP Desk: 937-775-4827 or 1-888-775-4827.

**Counseling and Wellness Services:** If you are suffering from depression or have any other mental health concerns, please be aware that counseling services are available on campus. Counseling and Wellness offers a wide range of services to the Wright State University community, including the following: group, individual, couples, and family counseling, crisis intervention, and outreach. They offer specialized services on a variety of mental health, multicultural, diversity, and wellness issues. Location: the bottom level of the Student Union off the Atrium and below the Admissions Office in suite 053. Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Call 775-3407 or stop by to set an appointment. Web page: <http://www.wright-counseling.com/>

**Disability Services:** If you require course accommodations due to a disability, please inform me so we can make arrangements early in the quarter. For more information about support services offered by Disability Services (E186 Student Union), call 775-5680; TTY: 775-5844. Or visit their Web page: [http://www.wright.edu/students/dis\\_services/](http://www.wright.edu/students/dis_services/)

<b>CLASS CALENDAR (subject to changes)</b>		
<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>READING &amp; WRITING ASSIGNMENTS (Readings for Weeks 1-3 available in Pilot)</b>
<b>Archives Theories, Anthropocene Reading, and Decolonized Geologies</b>		
<b>ONE</b>	1/15	Jacques Derrida, "Archive Fever" (pp. 9-19) and Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces" Andreas Huyssen, "Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia" Marlene Manoff, "Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines" Schwartz and Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory" Achille Mbembe, <a href="#">"Decolonizing Knowledge and the Question of the Archive"</a>
<b>TWO</b>	1/22	<b>Selections from <i>Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times</i></b> Menely and Taylor, "Introduction" Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Anarchy" Steve Mentz, "Enter Anthropocene, Circa 1610" Matt Hooley, "Reading Vulnerably: Indigeneity and the Scale of Harm" Derek Woods, "Accelerated Reading: Fossil Fuels, Infowhelm, and Archival Life" Stephanie LeMenager, "Climate Change and the Struggle for Genre"
<b>Eco-Catastrophe, Displacement, and Posthuman/Postcolonial Archives</b>		
<b>THREE</b>	1/29	Alexis Pauline Gumbs, <i>M Archive</i> (212 pages)
<b>FOUR</b>	2/5	Alexis Wright, <i>The Swan Book</i> (pp. 1-147)
<b>FIVE</b>	2/12	Alexis Wright, <i>The Swan Book</i> (pp. 149-302)
<b>SIX</b>	2/19	Valeria Luiselli, <i>Lost Children Archive</i> (pp. 5-186)
<b>SEVEN</b>	2/26	Valeria Luiselli, <i>Lost Children Archive</i> (pp. 191-350)
<b>EIGHT</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
	3/8	<b>Due: Short Paper/Theory in Practice (Sunday 11:59 pm)</b>
<b>Apocalypse, Dissonance, and Digital/Embodied Archives</b>		
<b>NINE</b>	3/11	Brenda Shaughnessy, <i>The Octopus Museum</i> (68 pages)
<b>TEN</b>	3/18	Lindsey Drager, <i>The Archive of Alternate Endings</i> (154 pages)
<b>ELEVEN</b>	3/25	Tom Sweterlitsch, <i>The Gone World</i> (pp. 1-173)
<b>TWELVE</b>	4/1	Tom Sweterlitsch, <i>The Gone World</i> (pp. 177-388)
<b>THIRTEEN</b>	4/8	Nick Harkaway, <i>Gnomon</i> (pp. 3-229)
<b>FOURTEEN</b>	4/15	Nick Harkaway, <i>Gnomon</i> (pp. 233-411)
<b>FIFTEEN</b>	4/22	Nick Harkaway, <i>Gnomon</i> (pp. 415-666)
<b>EXAM WK</b>	4/29	<b>Due: Archive Project Presentation (Wednesday 5:00 pm)</b>
	5/1	<b>Due: Seminar Paper/Archive Project (Friday, 11:59 p.m.)</b>