ROM-STD 130:
Diaspora Archives:
Transnational Stories of Immigration and Citizenship in Historical Perspective

Wednesdays 3:00-5:00 p.m.
Boylston Hall 335

Instructor: Dr. Lorgia García-Peña
garciapena@fas.harvard.edu
Office Hours by appointment only
Barker 147

Guest Artist: Medhin Paolos
mpaolos@fas.harvard.edu

Course Description: Official Archives—libraries, record offices, museums, repositories, books—function as depositories of truth, where knowledge about past events can be stored and recovered. Yet, we know that the “truths” found in traditional archives are incomplete: books are often biased while silences and omissions enter every level of archive-making and historical production. This course proposes an innovative approach to archiving and researching through the engagement, analysis and recovery of oral histories and artistic productions of immigrants (loosely defined to include second generations, refugees, undocumented, and new citizens) in transnational perspective. Setting off from the stories, students will engage in the critical analysis of the historical relationship between race, diaspora, and citizenship. Building on the original stories and artistic materials, students will then contribute to the production of a digital archive and network that connects people, objects and events across the globe. Our goal is to make the archive a tool for teaching and learning as well as a functional artistic piece for the larger Harvard University community.

Resident Artist: Students will have the opportunity throughout the semester to work with a resident artist, Italian filmmaker, activist and musician Medhin Paolos (www.medhipaolos.com). Paolos is the co-director of Harvard’s Mind the Gap project which connects story-telling and archiving through digital media.

Visiting Artists and Speakers: Arisleyda Dilone (filmmaker, New York), Jean Jean (Oscar-nominated actor and filmmaker, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic/ Port-au-Prince, Haiti), Rahel Sereke (Activist and scholar, founder of the Refugee organization Cambio Passo, Milan, Italy).
Assignments:

Reading and Participation (20%): Students are expected to come to class prepared for discussion, having read/watched/listened (to) all assigned materials.

Research Assignments (20%): There will be two short research assignments based on the readings:
   1) Students will be required to identify aspects of a reading/film and conduct research to fill in silences left by the text/film.
   2) Students will participate in a “Wikithon” to collectively edit Wikipedia pages based on their findings.

Writing Assignments (10%): There will be two short writing assignments. Students will have the option to write a film commentary, an Op-ed piece, a blog entry, a Wikipedia entry, or an edited interview based on a text/film. All written assignments will be no longer than five pages and must be thoroughly researched.

Final Project (50%): Your final project will be integral to the class. Students will work in groups to develop an original archival entry on one of the provided topics. The entry will be archived in the Mind the Gap website and will be open-sourced and publicly available. Under the guidance of the professor, guest artist and TA, groups will work throughout the semester on developing the final project. Every member of the group is expected to work equally on their collective project. Groups will be graded based on their communal product. Findings will be entered in the website throughout the semester and edited accordingly.

FINAL PROJECT TOPIC LIST: (PLEASE SIGN UP FOR GROUPS ON CANVAS):
To sign up for your groups, please FIRST listen to the stories and pick the topic story that is most exciting and interesting to you.

1. Undocumented Lives:
   a. Oral testimonies collected by Harvard Students (mp3 on Canvas)
   b. Sonia Espinosa (video on canvas)
2. Citizenship and Race:
   a. Black Italians:
      Elena Woldegabriel
      https://vimeo.com/223009264/135fdddbea
      Theophilus Kwesi Imani
      https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJmO2BR2Kls
   b. Dominican-Haitians:
      Deisy Toussaint
      https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBsCEQ0R5kU
3. Immigrant Artists:
   a. Liliana Wilson (see link to Website by Sofia Shapiro)
      http://www.lilianawilson.com/
   b. Scherezade Garcia (visual images)
      http://www.scherezade.net

4. Colonialism, Wars and Refugees:
   a. Central American Wars: Story and testimony researched and curated by
      by Karla Alvarado, Elijah Ezeji-Okoye, Ruben Reyes Jr., Elmer Vivas Portillo
      (https://medium.com/@ezejiokoye/beyond-the-dreamers-the-parents-and-their-stories-22a8b542bd0a)
   b. Tseghans Weldeslassie (Ziggy): (password protected link on Canvas)

5. Queer Immigrant Lives:
   a. Interview with Arisleyda Dilone (password protected video on Canvas)
   b. Julio Salgado and the Undocuqueer Art Collective

6. Sex Trafficking and Sex Tourism:
   a. Yolanda’s Feminism (video link on canvas)
   b. “Dólares de arena” (film, a suggestion).

OUTSIDE EVENTS: While I do not require students to attend events outside of class time, I do encourage you to participate in lectures and events that are directly related to the class and those that include scholars and artists that we are engaging with. Periodically, we will make announcements in class and on canvas to invite you to relevant events. We encourage you to do the same. Please mark your calendar for the following two class-related events:
   March 22, Film screening and discussion of “Si Bonye Vle, Yuli” at 6.00 p.m (location TBA)
   March 29th, Film screening of Asmarina and discussion with Medhin Paolos and Angela Davis at 6.00 p.m. Harvard museum (limited seating).

CLASS CALENDAR:

January
I.  (De) Constructing the Archive

   24: Course Introduction On Minding the (historical) Gap

   31: Primary text: “Thiara and Yolanda” (video interviews on canvas)
   Secondary readings: García Peña. Dominicanidad in Contradiction (Introduction)
   Taylor. The Archive and the Repertoire (introduction and pp 1-16)

Further Reading:
Taylor. The Archive and the Repertoire (Rest of Chapter 1)

FEBRUARY
II. **Archives of Colonialisms and Diaspora**

7. Primary texts: Paolos and Maglio. *Asmarina* (film)
Golderer e Scifo “Stranieri a Milano. Volti di una nuova immigrazione” (photography)
Secondary readings:

Further Reading:


**Research Assignment 1a (Asmarina)** due in class: After watching the film identify five different topics, stories, or cultural texts (music, photography, objects, geography) from which we can enter the film. Identify at least ONE silence/omission in the film as related to questions of Italian colonialism and diaspora.

GROUP FINAL PROJECT TOPIC DEADLINE

Memorandum U.S. Occupation (distributed in class)

21: **Group Project Proposal, Methodology and Plan for Research Due**
Students should bring 1 page group project proposal and 1 page individual plan for group research contribution. Groups should be ready to present their proposal to class for feedback.

III. **Race, Immigration and Undocumented Lives**

28. Primary texts: Undocumented Testimonials (video and sound on Canvas).
America, intro.
Angela Davis. Interview with Derek Washington.
http://citizens4immigrants.tumblr.com/post/18411245917/angela-davis-on-the
dreamact-civil-rights

Research Assignment 2a (Wikithon): Based on previous class discussion on collective Wikipedia entry, students will turn in their individual research to populate Wikipedia entry.

MARCH

7. Wikiton Workshop (Class will meet at Arrow 2, 4th floor):
Research Assignment 2b due (Wikipedia Entry)

FIRST DRAFT OF DIGITAL ENTRY DUE BY 12 NOON, MARCH 10 VIA CANVAS

SPRING BREAK

21. Primary text: Jean, Jean. “Si Bondye Vle, Yuli” (2016) Film

LAST DAY TO TURN IN WRITING ASSIGNMENT I
CLASS VISIT BY DIRECTOR AND ACTOR JEAN JEAN
There will be a public screening and discussion of “Si Bonye Vle, Yuli” at 6.00 p.m. location TBA.

Further Reading:


Listen to: Mike Samaniego “Prospective” from Strainer A Chi?
Amir “Straniero Nella Mia Nazione”

Further Reading:

APRIL

4: Visit by Italian Immigrant Rights Activist Rahel Sereke
Read press material provided on Canvas
IV. **Transnational Queer Feminisms**

11. Primary texts: “Arisleyda”
Dilone, Arisleya. “Mami, yo y mi Gallito” (film)

**Class visit by Arisleyda Dilone**

Secondary Readings: TB provided.

18. Primary texts: The Undocuqueer Movement Archive
[https://equalityarchive.com/issues/](https://equalityarchive.com/issues/)
Salgado. “I am undocuqueer” (visual art)

Secondary readings: El-Tayeb, Fatima. Selections from European Others. Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe.

**LAST DAY TO TURN IN WRITING ASSIGNMENT 2**

25. WORKSHOP

**REVISED DRAFT DUE IN CLASS, DIGITAL VERSION FOR ARCHIVE UPLOAD BY 12 NOON, APRIL 28.**

**May 3: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATION AT 2.00-5.00 PM**

LOCATION TBA

Students should bring completed digital project to class and three-page reflection on final project engagement and methodology.