Memory Work as a Method

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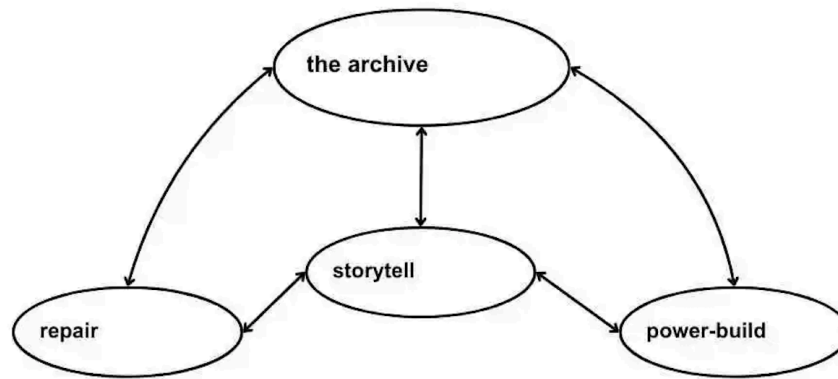Class time: TBD
Location: TBD
Office Hours: Hahn 105
or by appointment calendly.com/magalintzin
Class Zoom: https://ucla.zoom.us/j/96705764060?pwd=WjlSLzNVc1NoME5tb2FWS3Q2TXNxUT09

The diagram, Nasir Anthony Montalvo

Course Description

This course offers the concept of *memory work* as a critical method for exploring how marginalized communities engage in self-documentation, storytelling, and media practices to preserve, make meaning and contribute insights into personal and collective experiences. Memory work as a method explores how memory-based methodological interventions and innovations can work to trace invisibilized and devalued people, places, things and relations, reframing spaces of erasure as sites of meaningful social and cultural practices. In this course, students will read from a wide range of research on memory work and critical archiving practices, largely though not exclusively from a Chicanx/Latinx studies perspective. Students will also engage with communities of practice, analyzing how acts of media-making (from informal and everyday to more formal and institutional) can function as world-making interventions that challenge dominant narratives, institutional exclusions, and showcase alternative ways of being in the world. Alongside readings, students can expect to engage with real-world memory work projects and learn from practitioners to consider how the production, collection, management and circulation of artifacts and metadata are not incidental or happenstance occurrences but intentional and socially conditioned practices where identity, culture and values are put on display. Students currently working on memory work projects are highly encouraged to enroll, though this is not a requirement. This course emphasizes research approaches that honor the liberatory potential of grassroots memory work while resisting the extractive logics of traditional archival systems or fetishistic approaches to datafication.

[US Latinx studies is] not as a discipline but as a field of study and intellectual community that, inspired by the political and social mobilizations from the 1960s and 70s, produces decolonial and alternative knowledges that aim to relocate the lives and struggles of U.S. Latinx communities at the center of our epistemologies.
in "Latinx Studies: Notes from an Emerita," Frances R. Aparicio

Learning Outcomes

1. **Understand memory work as a methodological intervention** by scholars, activists and everyday people to elevate the storytelling, self-documentation, and media practices of marginalized communities
2. **Engage with and evaluate real-world memory work projects** to understand the social dimensions of production, circulation, and preservation of cultural artifacts
3. **Develop and apply interdisciplinary research approaches**

Collective Community Care Agreements

Pomona College has adopted several policies for faculty, staff, and students in line with public health guidance from the CDC; these policies are in place to keep us all safe and healthy. All Pomona students are expected to adhere to Pomona College COVID policies.

Of equal importance is our collective commitment to create a community of care in this class. We each have an important role to play in caring for each other, and we share a responsibility to help keep each other and those close to us safe. The following agreements will preserve our community of care:

Masking and frequent sanitizing during class and in-person meetings: In our classroom we will take care of each other by always wearing a properly placed mask, covering nose and mouth. We will be kind and compassionate with each other and not stigmatize mask-wearing or other precautions or concerns about COVID and its variants. We will take care of each other by taking care of ourselves, masking, sanitizing frequently and keeping our area clean and sanitized. Even if we meet outdoors, for office hours or engage in class-related activities or field trips we must remained masked.

Communication: If anybody feels ill, they will let me know as soon as possible, observe university protocols, and receive support and assistance.

IMPORTANT: If any student is experiencing COVID symptoms, is placed in any form of isolation or quarantine (including moderate quarantine) or believes that they have been exposed to COVID-19, they will inform me and refrain from attending class in person until they receive clearance from Student Health Services. I will work with students who are unable to attend class on accommodations so that they can keep up with coursework. I may also make the determination that our entire class will migrate to online (Zoom) format until it is safe to return to in-person instruction.

Accommodations, Accessibility & Inclusion
COVID-related Accommodations
Our present reality under COVID has increased the need to be open minded, patient and determined about how and when we learn. Stay curious, creative and invested. This is a moment to cultivate new tools of accountability and we will do it together. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with me via email. If you need to miss class, feel that you are falling behind, or feeling overwhelmed by class materials, let me know. Please allow 48 hours during business days (Monday-Thursday) for me to respond to your questions and/or concerns. If you email me over the weekend, please expect a delayed response.

More on Accommodations: If you live with an illness and/or any physical, sensory, cognitive or psychiatric disabilities, please do not hesitate to meet with me to discuss how I can make the course more accessible for you. I am happy to discuss these needs with students, but you may also request accommodation by contacting the Pomona Academic Support Services (PASS) for more information on accommodations. Students from other Colleges should seek accommodations through the Office of Student Affairs on their respective campus.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: This course will cover various topics and issues that may bring up strong feelings. Remember that we are creating and sharing knowledge collectively and therefore must practice respect and patience toward one another. We are all works-in-progress and we are constantly making mistakes and learning. As students, we are all in process towards consciousness and are coming from different backgrounds and experiences. While the present challenges of pandemic and mass uprisings against anti-black violence is are universal issues, we are all affected differently. I ask that each of you attend sessions with your best intensions and be present, patient and curious with one another. Racist, sexist, classist, ableist, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic (anti-migrant), islamophobic, anti-Semitic, or other discriminatory/disrespectful comments will not be tolerated.

Class Assignments & Grading
Please Note: The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus at any time.

Late Assignments: Late submissions will not be accepted, unless otherwise discussed in advance.
General Assignment Guidelines: All work must be double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1" margins, page numbers inserted, and your name clearly printed on the first page of our paper. Page limits do not include images or your Works Cited page. For more information on citation standards, see https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/.
Academic Integrity: All students in the course must comply with the University's code of academic integrity, including policies prohibiting plagiarism. The academic conduct code is available for you to review at: https://www.Pomona.edu/student-life/student-code-of-conduct/.
Pomona Writing Center: offers comprehensive in-person and virtual support to students enrolled in Pomona classes. This includes one-on-one in person and video conferences with peer Fellows trained to work with writers on assignments across the disciplines and at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming ideas to polishing a final draft. Specialized consultations are available for senior thesis, fellowship, and multilingual writers. In addition, a research librarian offers weekly consultations on all aspects of the research process. For more information or to book an appointment, visit https://www.Pomona.edu/writing-center/.

Weekly QQC Responses (10)	**40%**
Facilitation	**20%**
Final Project	**40%**

40% – (10) QQC Responses
   • In the hopes of stimulating engagement with our texts for the week and class participation, students are required to submit a total of (10) Questions, Quotations, and Comments (QQC) responses. QQCs can 1) discuss questions that came up for you as you read 2) involve discussion of a quotation(s) you found interesting and/or 3) tell us about a reaction or connection that arose about the readings or films. QQCs provide an opportunity for you to build your

repertoire of interdisciplinary tools and should be substantive in nature (offer critical reflections), but personal reflections and connections to your personal experience are welcome and encouraged. These should be a minimum of 500 words. You will have multiple opportunities to submit a response, although you are only required to submit a total of 10 posts to receive full credit. Should you choose to write more than 10, I will take the highest scores toward your final grade. They are due before the end of the week.

20% Facilitation

Each week, one students will present on a memory work project (case study) of their choice as a way of connecting our readings to real-world practices. The presentation (30-40 minutes) should introduce the class to the project by addressing: who is behind it (individuals, communities, or institutions), the guiding principles or values informing the work, the platform or infrastructure it relies on, and its broader goals and interventions. Students should reflect on how the project enacts memory work as a method, and pose at least two discussion questions that link the case study to the assigned readings. Presenters will then facilitate a class discussion that encourages critical engagement with both the texts and the case study. A rubric with further instructions will be provided.

40% – Final Project (12-15 pages, double-spaced)

Students will work in small groups (3–5 members) to collaboratively design and present a digital or physical archive that reflects the principles of memory work. This archive should center a community, theme, or set of cultural practices and may include 10-20 curated artifacts (images, recordings, documents, or objects), metadata, and a narrative framework explaining its guiding principles. Each group will submit a short co-authored paper (12-15 pages) that explains the archive's purpose, guiding principles, and theoretical grounding, and critically engages with at least 5 course sources. The archive itself can be hosted on a platform of the group's choice (e.g., Omeka, Scalar, StoryMap, Instagram, zine format, etc.), and should demonstrate an intentional, ethical approach to preservation and representation. Projects will be presented in class at the end of the semester.
Due Monday of Finals Week

Weekly Reading Schedule

The books below are available for purchase or for rent from The Huntley Bookstore. They are also on reserve at The Claremont Colleges Library. All other course materials will be available under the "Resources" tab on our Sakai site.

Recommended books to purchase:
1. Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.
2. Jeannette Bastian and Andrew Flinn, *Community Archives, Community Spaces: Heritage, Memory and Identity*, London: Facet, 2020.
3. Schreiber, Rebecca M. *The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Lives and the Politics of Visibility*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018.
4. Weld, Kristen, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala.*

Date	Reading(s)

Intro to Memory Work

	● Michelle Caswell, Ricardo Punzalan, T-Kay Sangwand, "Critical Archival Studies: An Introduction" Critical Archival Studies, Vol. 1 No. 2, 2017.
	● Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, and Mario H. Ramirez, "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Affective Impact of Community Archives," The American Archivist 79 (Spring/ Summer 2016): 56–81.

CASE STUDIES: *Memory is in the Present (Puvungna Collective artists Cindi Alvitre, Carly Lake and Scott Wilson)* and *Memory and Futurity in Yaangna: https://www.meztliprojects.org/memory-and-futurity-in-yaanga*; Mapping Indigenous LA: https://mila.ss.ucla.edu/

Archival Absence/Archival Presence

	● Mario H. Ramírez, "The Task of the Latino/a Archivist: On Archiving Identity and Community," *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies*, Vol. 1 No. 5, 2009.
	● Diana Taylor, "Introduction," *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.

CASE STUDIES: Pocho Research Society (Sandra de la Loza) https://smarthistory.org/pocho-research-society-sandra-de-la-loza-echoes-series-interventions-memory-place-gentrification/; AND Royal Chicano Air Force: https://smarthistory.org/rcaf/

Being in the archives?

	● Jamie A.cLee, "Be/Longing in the Archival Body: Eros and the 'Endearing' Value of Material Lives," Archival Science 16(1) (2016): 33–51.
	● Omelawe, Yusef. We Already Are. Medium. https://medium.com/community-archives/we-already-are-52438b863e31

CASE STUDIES [LOCAL!]: The Southern California Library: https://www.socallib.org/; Chicano Studies Research Center Library: https://guides.library.ucla.edu/csrc; On the Side of Angels https://vincentpriceartmuseum.org/exhibitions-on-the-side-of-angels.html (@kafkaesquite); CSULA Special Collections Library: https://www.calstatela.edu/specialcollections

Personal Archiving

	● Jorge Nicolás Leal, "Rock Archivo de LÁ: Mapping Transnational Latinx Music Scenes," *Aztlán* (2024) 49 (1): 193–206.

	- Personal Archiving: A DIY Guide to Building Your Personal Archive by CENTRO CUNY Hunter: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HMorz_vPbdnBJW0cwnwsM9EBn5wN__19/view

CASE STUDIES: Rock Archivo LA: https://rockarchivo.com/; Veteranas y Rucas https://www.instagram.com/veteranas_and_rucas/?hl=en; Jotxs y Recuerdos https://jotxsyrecuerdos.com/

Community Archiving

	- Rebecca Taves Sheffield, "Archival Optimism, Or How to Sustaining Community Archives," In *Community Archives, Community Spaces: Heritage, Memory and Identity*, eds. Jeannette Bastian and Andrew Flinn (London: Facet, 2020), 3–20.
	- AND
	    ○ "Ch. 6: Popular music…"; OR
	    ○ "Ch. 8: Indigenous Archiving and Wellbeing"; OR
	    ○ "Ch. 9: Housing Displacement and Gentrification"

	- Excerpts from Damien M. Sojoyner, *Against the Carceral Archive: The Art of Black Liberatory Practice*, Fordham University Press, 2023.

CASE STUDIES: Stop LAPD Spying Archives https://stoplapdspyingarchive.org/; Sustainable Futures Community Archives: https://medium.com/community-archives

The Politics of Visibility

	- Schreiber, Rebecca M. "Introduction: Migrant Lives and the Promise of Documentation" *The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Lives and the Politics of Visibility*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018. - Schreiber, Rebecca M. "Chapter 1: We See What We Know": Migrant Labor and the Place of Pictures" *The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Lives and the Politics of Visibility*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018.
	- Schreiber, Rebecca M. "Chapter 6: Reconfiguring Documentation: Mobility, Counter-Visibility, and (Un)Documented Activism" *The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Lives and the Politics of Visibility*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018. - Schreiber, Rebecca M. "Conclusion: Counter-representational Acts" *The Undocumented Everyday: Migrant Lives and the Politics of Visibility*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2018.

CASE STUDY: Fanny Julissa García's *Separated: Stories of Injustice and Solidarity* https://voiceofwitness.org/oral-history-in-practice-stories-of-family-separation/	

Storytelling for Justice

	● Michelle Caswell. "Imagining Liberatory Memory Work," In *Urgent Archives: Enacting Liberatory Memory Work (1st ed.).* Routledge, 2021.
	● Emilia Yang, "AMA y No Olvida Collectivizing Memory Against Impunity: Transmedia Memory Practices, Modular Visibility, and Activist Participatory Design in Nicaragua," *International Journal of Communication* Vol. 16, 2022.

CASE STUDY: AMA y No Olvida: https://www.museodelamemorianicaragua.org/;
GUEST LECTURE: Emilia Yang, Assistant Professor of Art and Design, University of Michigan

Story-based Strategy

	● Workshop: The Art of (Re-Framing)
	● Workshop: The Art of (Re-Framing)

CASE STUDIES: Boyle Heights Museum
https://www.boyleheightsmuseum.org/aqu%C3%AD-estamos-y-no-nos-vamos; & Compton Museum:
https://www.comptonmuseum.org/previous-exhibitions/corridos-from-the-hood

Digital Memory Work

	● Melissa Villa-Nicholas, "Latinx Digital Memory: Identity Making in Real Time." *Social Media + Society*, *5*(4), 2019. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305119862643 ● Tonia Sutherland, "The Right to Be Forgotten" In *Resurrecting the Black Body*, 2023.
	● Itza Carbajal, "Digital Keepers: The Ethics of Saving Online Data about Latin American Social Movements" https://itzacarbajal.com/2019/04/06/digital-keepers-the-ethics-of-saving-online-data-about-latin-american-social-movements/ ● Invisible Defaults and Perceived Limitations: Processing the Juan Gelman Files

CASE STUDIES: Chicana por Mi Raza Digital Memory Collective https://chicanapormiraza.org/;
https://chicanapormiraza.org/record/essays-la-mujer-anthology-no1-book-cover-art**;** Bergis Jules,
BestofThrowBackBlackTwitter https://datadryad.org/dataset/doi:10.6086/D15D5N#citations

Decolonizing the Archive

	● T-Kay Sangwand, "Preservation is Political" https://kula.uvic.ca/index.php/kula/article/view/110
	● Hannah Alpert-Abrams, David A Bliss, Itza Carbajal, "Post-Custodial Archiving for the Collective Good: Examining Neoliberalism in US-Latin American Archival Partnerships": https://journals.litwinbooks.com/index.php/jclis/article/view/87

CASE STUDIES: Kim Christen, "Mukurtu: an Indigenous Archive Tool," *Sustainable Heritage Network*. Accessed 09 September 2025, sustainableheritagenetwork.org/digital-heritage/mukurtu-indigenous-archive-tool; Waystation: https://ioa.ucla.edu/content/graduate-certificate-cultural-heritage-research-stewardship-and-restitution-waystation

Memory & Human Rights: The Case of Central America

	● Kristen Weld, *Paper Cadavers: The Archives of Dictatorship in Guatemala,* 2014.
	● Jorge Cuellar, "Archives Under Siege: Views from Central America" ● NACLA Report on the Americas On Isthmian Knowing: Bodies, Archives, Futures

CASE STUDIES: https://salalm.org/; The Guatemala Project: https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/project/guatemala-project;

Centering Care in the Work

	● Nancy Liliana Godoy, Community-Driven Archives: *Conocimiento*, Healing, and Justice: https://journals.litwinbooks.com/index.php/jclis/article/view/136
	● Jennifer Douglas, Alex Alisasuskas, and Devon Mordell, "'Treat Them With the Reverence of Archivists:' Records Work, Grief Work and Relationship Work in the Archives," Archivaria 88 (Fall 2019): 84–120;

CASE STUDIES: A Care-Centered Guide to Digitally Archiving Palestine; AND https://syllabusproject.org/bad-tats/ +{B/qKC}

WORKSHOPPING

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PRESENTATIONS
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Additional Resources & Suggested Readings:

- Howtobuildanarchive.com
- Folksonomies. Indexing and Retrieval in Web 2.0 (Knowledge and Information) by Isabella Peters
- Atomic Light (Shadow Optics) by Akira Mizuta Lippit
- Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression (Religion and Postmodernism) by Jacques Derrida
- Technologies of Speculation: The Limits of Knowledge in a Data-Driven Society by Sun-ha Hong
- Homosaurus Vocabulary; Library of Congress https://homosaurus.org/v4
- Kabul-reconstructions.net
- Chia Amisola
- https://syllabusproject.org/bad-tats/ +{B/qKC}
- https://medium.com/community-archives/limits-and-loss-reflections-on-a-decade-of-post custodial-praxis-a-conversation-with-t-kay-1041faaf10a9
- Shewhoseestheunknown by Morehshin Allahyari
- Texas After Violence Archive https://afterviolenceproject.org/
- https://ccny1-cuny.academia.edu/MarioRamirez