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LIT 6856
Fall 2014
W 6-8

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Into the Archive: Reading in the Baldwin Library

This seminar has a dual focus and will be structured accordingly. First, everyone will develop projects in the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature, one of the most comprehensive collections in the world. Suzan Alteri, the Curator of the Baldwin, will work with us closely and participate in the seminar. Some meetings will concentrate exclusively on those projects; we'll look at texts, present findings, and workshop research in progress. The Baldwin is an extraordinary resource even for those not specializing in children's literature, and one aim of the course is to encourage you to explore the collection. Meanwhile, we will read scholarship on the archive, the library, the collection, the canon, English studies, and children's literature and childhood studies. In effect, class will be conducted as both a seminar and a workshop. My hope is that the course will be both practical and theoretical, in ways that we can't yet anticipate. Some students who participated in the previous iterations of this course (Fall 2004 and Fall 2008) have since published their research.

You'll notice the reading is frontloaded (and overloaded) in the first month or so; that's intentional, to allow you more time for work in progress later in the term.

Baldwin website: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/baldwin/Index.aspx>
Baldwin blog: <http://ufbaldwinlibrary.wordpress.com/>

Sakai site, for assignment submission, under LIT 6856, section 1E43, Fall 2014:

<https://lss.at.ufl.edu>

Books

Matthew Battles, *Library: An Unquiet History*
Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*
Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*
Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees*
Geoffrey O'Brien, *The Browser's Ecstasy: A Meditation on Reading*
Lissa Paul, *The Children's Book Business*
Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*

Essays and Chapters

Selections from e-reserves, under my name and LIT 6856 (section 1E43)

Suzan's essay "The Classroom as Salon: A Collaborative Project on Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe" can be accessed here:

<http://english.illinoisstate.edu/digitaldefoe/features/alteri.html>

The following will be available as pdfs:

Gaston Bachelard, "Introduction" and Ch. 1, *The Poetics of Space*

Stephen Greenblatt, "Scholarly Publishing and the Dream of the Imperial Message"

Emily Murphy, "Unpacking the Archive: Value, Pricing, and the Letter-Writing Campaigns of Dr. Lena Y. de Grummond."

Robert Ray, "Introduction: Reinventing Film Studies," and "Ch. 3: Invention Finds a Method: Surrealist Research and Games," *The Avant Garde Finds Andy Hardy*; "Introduction, *Walden x 40*."

Lisa Stead, "Introduction," and Isabella Cosgrave, "Untrustworthy Reproductions and Doctored Archives: Undoing the Sins of a Victorian Biography," in Stead and Smith, *Boundaries of the Literary Archive*.

G. Thomas Tanselle, "Reproductions and Scholarship" (1989), from Tanselle's *Literature and Artifacts*

Assignments and Evaluation

There are two tracks for writing assignments, one aligned with the conventional model of research and analytical writing, the second more experimental. There are three writing assignments in total. You need to try the "experimental" track at least once, and if you like, you can do all your work in that track. The first two essays are short, 5-7 d-sp pp, on projects of your own devising. The third essay can be an elaboration of either of the first two papers or an entirely different project. It should run 15-20 d-s pp.

The "conventional" track can be any kind of research project that grows out of your existing or developing research interests – treatments of particular genres, texts, authors, or some combination thereof. You might be interested, say, in series fiction, or a particular run of school stories, or editions of a certain text. Your paper would necessarily still be exploratory but would have a traditional academic tone and organization, with some kind of argument or thesis. You may or may not refer to scholarly research, depending on the topic.

The alternative or more experimental track pushes against the above, makes space for new methods of discovery, invention, and composition. Here are your options, keyed to readings in class that model some possibilities:

1. *Browsing as Research Method*. Chapters 15-18 of O'Brien's *The Browser's Ecstasy* make a distinction between browsing and "proper reading" (63), and those chapters especially, and book at large, is a kind of browsing experiment or report. Browsing occurs somewhere between aimless drifting and focused research; it's academic channel surfing. It isn't as explicitly instrumentalist as traditional research; it's without a clear purpose. That doesn't mean it's entirely unmotivated. But its logic is associative. Browsing allows flirtation with interests and objects. It might be a bit harder to browse in the Baldwin, but it can be done, and you can certainly browse in the digital collection. For this option, devise and report on a browsing project, explaining the terms and reflecting upon the activity as a mode of information gathering or the satisfaction of desire. O'Brien provides one possible model. What does browsing look like or do as a research method? What can be learned or unlearned?
2. *Graphs, Maps, Trees*. Franco Moretti suggests some quantitative models for literary study, designed to push us beyond close reading the fetish of the (familiar) literary text. Make a graph, map, or tree, using Baldwin materials, and analyze what that exercise

- allows you to do or see (if anything). What might we know or find out from this exercise? Moretti isn't worried that these practices of "distant" reading results in more questions than answers; you shouldn't, either. What questions should be asked?
3. *Textual Criticism*. Textual criticism these days is pretty far removed from literary criticism as understood and practiced by literary scholars. Develop a textual analysis of Baldwin material(s), drawing on the insights of Larkin, McGann, and G. Thomas Tanselle, most principally the distinction between the text and the work. Compare variant editions, perhaps, in terms of typography, binding, or other aspects of material form. Although Tanselle doesn't talk about the paratext, that's another approach: how is the text always already both plural and piecemeal – both part of a network of texts and itself a kind of fragment?
 4. *New Methods for Children's Literature?* Our colleague Robert Ray's work has centered around the reinvention of film studies through classic and contemporary experimental methods of discovery and composition. I'm not sure that either children's literature or archive/library studies needs to be reinvented, but that's an open question. Either way, the methods he employs could be productively used with Baldwin materials, from the classic surrealist games (Exquisite Corpse) to the fragment/anecdote to the ABC exercise. Here, the challenge is to approach a literary text from a different angle (rather than asking the traditional questions about theme or genre or ideology). If this method does seem to unsettle what we know about a text, or a field like children's literature, please discuss. Ray's methods work best with texts that are "well-known"; his are exercises in defamiliarization and new vision. Most of the books you'll encounter in the Baldwin are not familiar. Even so, you can still approach them differently.
 5. *Topoanalysis*. Topoanalysis, Bachelard writes, is "the systematic psychological study of the sites of our intimate lives" (8). He studies "felicitous space" by way of "images of intimacy," and "images that attract" (xxxvi). He focuses on the house. What about the archive/library? He writes that "hostile space is hardly mentioned in these pages." Is hostile space part of the archive/library? Is the archive/library the site of daydreaming, dreaming proper, nightmares? What about spaces within that (in?)felicitous space?

You'll also give 1-2 in-class, informal reports on your work in progress, in which you describe what you're doing, bring in materials, and take questions. The report and discussion should run around 20 minutes. I'd suggest that you provide some written materials -- a draft of the essay, perhaps, maybe a short essay or bibliography. The format should remain informal, though; don't just read a paper to us.

Regular attendance and active participation are essential; come prepared and plan to miss no more than 1 class.

Grading Criteria

Short Essays	40%
Seminar Essay	50%
Reports and participation	10%

Schedule

August

27 Introductions and tour.

September

- 3 **Reading (in) the Baldwin Library.** Smith, "Caught Up in the Whirlwind"; Kidd, "The Child, the Scholar"; Alteri, "The Classroom as Salon"; Murphy, "Unpacking"; Basbanes, "Obsessed Amateurs"; Tanselle, "Libraries, Museums, and Reading." Start reading Battles, *Library*.
- 10 Tour of preservation with John Freund. Battles, *Library*.
- 17 **Collecting Childhood.** Benjamin, "Unpacking," "Old Forgotten Children's Books", "Children's Literature," "Program"; Chow, "Fateful Attachments"; Benjamin and Leslie, *Walter Benjamin's Archive*; Sanchez-Eppler, "In the Archives of Childhood." Background reading by end of September: "A. S. W. Rosenbach"; Lundin, "'A Dukedom Large Enough'"; Hoyle, "The Kerlan Collection".
- 24 **Archive Fever.** Derrida, *Archive Fever*; Steedman, *Dust*. (I know. Too much. But we'll manage.)

October

- 1 Derrida and Steedman continued, if necessary. Burton, "Introduction"; Taylor, "Acts of Transfer"; Stead, "Introduction" and Cosgrove, "Untrustworthy Reproductions."
- 8 **Methods for Literary Studies, Part 1 (The Text and the Work).** Larkin, "A Neglected Responsibility"; McGann, "The Socialization of Texts"; Tanselle, "Reproductions and Scholarship". Visit with E. Haven Hawley, Chair of Special Collections.
- 15 Reports; Essay 1 due.
- 22 Paul, *The Children's Book Business*; Weikle-Mills, "'My Book and Heart'".
- 29 Reports.

November

- 5 **Methods for Literary Studies, Part 2 (New Reading Strategies).** Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees*. O'Brien, *The Browser's Ecstasy*; Bachelard, all selections; Ray, all selections.
- 12 Reports.
- 19 Reports. Essay 2 due.
- 26 No class (Wed. before Thanksgiving)

December

- 3 Greenblatt, "Scholarly Publishing"; Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge*.
- 10 Reports.

Seminar essay due December 15

Baldwin Recommended (i.e. Rejected) Reading

Gillian Avery, *Behold the Child*

Nicholson Baker, *Double Fold: Libraries and the Assault on Paper*

Pierre Bayard, *How to Talk About Books You Haven't Read*

Patricia Crain, *The Story of A*

Robert Darnton, *The Case for Books*

James English, *The Global Future of English Studies*

Gesa E. Kirsch and Liz Rohan, eds., *Beyond the Archives: Research as a Lived Process*

Alberto Manguel, *A History of Reading and The Library at Night*

Francis Spufford, *The Child that Books Built*

Susan Stewart, *On Longing*