

# **Indigenous Languages and Literatures in the Colonial Archive**

Graduate Workshop in Research Methods

Newberry Consortium in American Indian Studies (NCAIS)

**March 9-11, 2017**

**Amherst College, Amherst, MA**

**Prof. Jenny L. Davis**, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign* (Loksi@Illinois.edu)

**Prof. Birgit Rasmussen**, *SUNY- Binghamton University* ([bbrander@binghamton.edu](mailto:bbrander@binghamton.edu))

**Mike Kelly**, *Head of Archives and Special Collections, Amherst College* (mkelly@amherst.edu)

This workshop will explore indigenous language and literacy resources in the collections of Amherst College. Traditionally the purview of historians, archives are now drawing researchers from a range of disciplines including literary scholars, linguists, art historians, along with tribal communities searching for language records as part of cultural and linguistic revitalization programs.

Considering that archival institutions have historically served settler colonialism by partaking in the erasure of Native voices, literacies, and anti-colonial resistances, but are now being transformed into sites of decolonial practice, this workshop will engage the following questions: Can archives truly be decolonized and if so, how? How can scholars resist, rather than reproduce, the coloniality of such sites and practices? If historical and cultural materials are scattered in ways that are difficult to trace using standard search engines, how might scholars and Indigenous communities recover fragments that current cataloguing practices render invisible? When many archival institutions are dependent upon academic establishments, foundations, and corporate entities what kind of recoveries are possible?

Jenny L. Davis will lead discussions about Native American language recovery and revitalization while Birgit Brander Rasmussen, author of the prize-winning study *Queequeg's Coffin: Indigenous Literacies and Early American Literature* (Duke UP, 2012), will guide explorations of indigenous literacy practices. Mike Kelly (Head of Archives & Special Collections) will show highlights from the Kim-Wait/Eisenberg Native American Literature Collection including extremely rare publications by Samson Occom, William Apess, Gertrude Bonnin, Joy Harjo, Gerald Vizenor, and others. He will be joined by Kiara Vigil, Assistant professor of American Studies.

Participants will examine archival holdings and explore possibilities for decolonization through recovery of indigenous records that support expressions of tribal sovereignty, land claims, tribal education efforts, and collaborations between archives and Native community programs. In addition to such collective interventions, the workshop will facilitate individual research projects using the magnificent holdings of the archives and special collections at Amherst College.

## WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

**Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00** Meet in the Center for Humanistic Inquiry (**Frost Library Room 210**)

**9:10-9:30** Introductions with Patricia Marroquin Norby, Director of the McNickle Center  
Jennifer Davis, Birgit Rasmussen, and Mike Kelly,

**9:30-11:30 Seminar: Indigenous Languages and the Colonial Archives**

Webster, Anthony. and Peterson, T. (2011). Introduction: American Indian Languages in  
Unexpected Places

Hinton, Leanne. (2001). The Use of Linguistic Archives in Language Revitalization

Baldwin et. al. (2016). Myaamiaataweenki eekincikoonihkiinki eeyoonki aapisaataweenki: A  
Miami Language Digital Tool for Language Reclamation. *Language Documentation &  
Conservation*. Vol. 10, pp. 394-410

Recommended:

Gehr. "Breath of Life: Revitalizing California's Native Languages Through Archives"

**11:30-12:00** Prof. Kiara Vigil shares her experiences in the Amherst archive

**12:00-12:45** LUNCH (catered)

**12:45-1:00** Selection of mini projects

**1:00-2:00** Tour/collection viewing with Mike Kelly

**2:00-4:00** Archival research time (archives close at 4pm)

**4:00 onwards** Research time in the library (open until 11pm)

**Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00-12:00 Seminar: Indigenous Literacies and the Colonial Archives**

Brooks, Lisa. "Awikhighawôgan: Mapping the Genres of Indigenous Writing in the Network of Relations" in *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008): 219-254)

Fitzgerald, Stephanie. "The Cultural Work of a Mohegan Painted Basket" in *Early Native Literacies in New England: A Documentary and Critical Anthology*, ed. Kristina Bross and Hilary E. Wyss (University of Massachusetts Press, 2008): 52-56.

Lopezina, Drew. "Wussuckwheke," or the Painted Letter" in *Red Ink: Native Americans Picking Up the Pen in the Colonial Period* (SUNY UP, 2012): 29-85

Round, Phillip H. "Being and Becoming Literate in the Eighteenth-Century Native Northeast" in *Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663-1880* (UNC Press, 2010):46-72

Hilary E. Wyss, "Writing Back to Wheelock: One Young Woman's Response to Colonial Christianity" in *Early Native Literacies in New England: A Documentary and Critical Anthology*, ed. Kristina Bross and Hilary E. Wyss (University of Massachusetts Press, 2008): 93-104.

Recommended:

Birgit Brander Rasmussen, "Toward a New Literary History of the West: Etahdleuh Doanmoe's Captivity Narrative" in *Contested Spaces of Early America*, ed. Juliana Barr and Edward Countryman

Thunderbirds/Gibagadinamaagoom:

<http://ojibwearchive.sas.upenn.edu/category/keywords/thunderbirds>

**12:00-1:00** LUNCH (catered)

**1:00-1:45** Jenny Davis, Birgit Rasmussen, and Mike Kelly share their research

**1:45-4:00** Archival research time

**6:00** Group dinner Johnny's Tavern (30 Boltwood Walk)

**Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>**

**10:00-1:00** Participant mini project presentations

Group Evaluations

DEPARTURE