The Center for Renaissance Studies promotes the use of the Newberry collection by scholars in the fields of medieval, Renaissance, and early modern studies (c. 1100 – c. 1800), making available programs that may not be feasible for individual institutions to mount alone. Founded in 1979, the center works with an international consortium of universities in North America and Europe. It offers a wide range of scholarly programs and digital and print publications based in the Newberry collection, and provides a locus for a community of scholars who come from all over the world to use the library’s early manuscripts, printed books, and other materials.

The Center for Renaissance Studies collaborates with the Folger Institute in Washington, DC, which also works with a consortium of universities. By a reciprocal arrangement, faculty members and graduate students from either consortium may apply for admission to the other’s programs, and if they are admitted some fees may be waived. Faculty and graduate students of Center for Renaissance Studies consortium institutions are eligible to apply for travel grants to participate in programs or to do research at the Newberry Library or the Folger Shakespeare Library. Some member institutions may limit eligibility to certain departments, colleges, or other units within the university, and each member sets its own policies, limitations, and deadlines.

For medieval, Renaissance, and early modern studies, the Newberry collection is especially outstanding in six subject areas:

- early modern colonialism
- history of the book
- humanism, education, and rhetoric
- maps, travel, and exploration
- music
- religion

Other strong subjects and genres include:

- French political pamphlets
- British local history and heraldry
- British political pamphlets, broadsides, and prints
- eighteenth-century periodicals, especially British and French
- languages, historical linguistics, and philology
- biographies
- works by women writers in all genres
- archival materials for Italy, Portugal, and the Spanish Empire

Funding for the Center is provided in part by the Bernard P. McElroy Fund in Renaissance Studies.
SEEING RACE BEFORE RACE

Exhibition, Public Programs, and Digital Resources

Dissertation Seminar

Alongside our fall 2023 gallery exhibition, Seeing Race before Race, CRS will host a series of public programs and create a number of digital resources that explore the exhibition themes and their relevance today. Taking place throughout the academic year, the public program series will feature conversations, performances, and presentations by artists and leading scholars such as Olivette Otele (SOAS, University of London), Noémie Ndiaye (University of Chicago), and others that draw connections between medieval and early modern material witnesses of race-making and the challenges and opportunities of our present moment.


COURSES AND SEMINARS

Dissertation Seminar

Premodern Critical Race Studies

Led by Ambreen Dadabhoy (Harvey Mudd College) and Roland Betancourt (University of California, Irvine)

Four meetings across the academic year: October 13, 2023; December 8, 2023; February 23, 2024; and May 10, 2024, from 9:30 AM–12:30 PM Central Time

In-person at the Newberry

APPLICATION DEADLINE MAY 15, 2023

This seminar provides an interdisciplinary, supportive community for graduate students in the early stages of the dissertation who are working on critical race studies in the ancient, medieval, and early modern worlds (before 1800). Participants will learn research methodologies for utilizing archival sources and explore interdisciplinary approaches to the study of race in the premodern world, particularly considering intersection of racialization and race-making processes with the study of gender, sexuality, geography, and space. Each student will workshop a draft dissertation proposal or chapter and receive constructive feedback from the instructors and seminar members.

Four-week Reading Group

Ho‘i i ka mālama: Introduction to Critical Indigenous Studies for Early Modern Scholars

Led by Lehua Yim (Independent Scholar)

Four weeks of meetings in Fall 2023 (exact dates TBA)

Virtual via Zoom

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 15, 2023

This reading group will introduce readers to select works from the large, complex, twinned fields of Native American & Indigenous Studies (NAIS) and Critical Indigenous Studies (CIS). Our reading aims to provide an introduction to major issues in NAIS/CIS with a critical examination of why early modern studies should learn from NAIS/CIS. Over the course of four weeks, participants will read and discuss these selected works in order to identify central analytics and best practices meant to unsettle colonizing premises and tropes at work in early modern studies.
Ten-week Undergraduate Seminar
The World in Books: 1100–1800

Led by Lia Markey, Rebecca L. Fall, and Christopher Fletcher (Newberry Library)

Tuesdays and Thursdays, January 9–March 14, 2024, 1:00–2:30 PM Central Time

APPLICATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 1, 2023

This 10-week course will use the multidisciplinary field of book history to explore how medieval and early modern people used different media—theological texts, maps, letters, travel narratives, reference works, literature, and more—to make sense of a changing world. Through lectures, discussions, and interactive workshops with faculty from CRS consortium institutions, participants will learn how book history can illuminate the ways in which premodern people used religion, science, art, and technology to grapple with new economic, intellectual, and cultural challenges in a rapidly-expanding global community.

Ten-week Graduate Course
Unpacking the Early Modern Collection: The Newberry’s Altemps Inventory

Led by Lia Markey (Newberry Library)

Thursdays, March 28–May 30, 2024, 1:00–4:00 PM Central Time

APPLICATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 1, 2023

This interdisciplinary graduate course will examine from various vantage points the Newberry’s enormous early seventeenth-century inventory of the Altemps palace in Rome (VAULT Case MS oversize Z 491.A.468). Through the study of paleography, book history, collecting history, art history, architectural history, and beyond, we will consider the way in which this complex document provides evidence regarding the consumption and use of books and other household goods and the function of palace design. We will also think about what we can and cannot learn about the people behind this inventory and others like it from the early modern period. Ultimately, the course’s aim is to determine how to develop a digital humanities project from this rich primary source at the Newberry.

RESEARCH METHODS WORKSHOPS

Black Feminist Premodern Book History

Led by B.K. Adams (Arizona State University) and Carissa Harris (Temple University)

Friday, October 6, 2023, 9:30 AM–4:30 PM Central Time

In-person at the Newberry

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 15, 2023

This workshop approaches premodern book history through a Black feminist lens and asks participants to consider what Black feminist book history looks like in theory and in practice. In it, we will think about the types of questions that scholars including Kim F. Hall and Imtiaz Habib bring to traditional practice in book history. We will also consider how Saidiya Hartman’s work on archives can introduce larger questions about how book historians don’t consider race and perhaps why they should. Using items from the Newberry’s collections, we will discuss topics such as material philology, codicology, and censorship.

Seeing Race Before Race: Planning a Public Humanities Project

Led by Lia Markey, Christopher Fletcher, Rebecca L. Fall, and Yasmine Hachimi (Newberry Library)

Friday, November 10, 2023, 9:30 AM–4:30 PM Central Time

In-person at the Newberry

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 15, 2023

The workshop, led by co-curators of the Newberry’s Seeing Race before Race exhibition, explores how scholars can use the medieval and early modern past to help diverse audiences work through contemporary challenges. Through discussions, hands-on work with Newberry collection items, and exercises in the galleries, participants will consider how to effectively use material objects (books, documents, maps, visual art, etc.) to create moments of curiosity and instruction for uninitiated viewers through public programs and exhibition spaces.

Programs are open to the public unless otherwise noted, but registration in advance is required for most events. Program dates and times are subject to change. Please see individual calendar entries on our website for registration and cost information.

All times are given in Central Time.
The Scientific Authority of Large Illustrated Books in Premodern Europe
Led by J.B. Shank (University of Minnesota), Suzanne Karr Schmidt (Newberry Library), and Lia Markey (Newberry)
Friday, January 12, 2024, 9:30 AM–4:30 PM Central Time
In-person at the Newberry
**APPLICATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 1, 2023**

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw a particular convergence among artists, printers, book publishers, and erudite scientific researchers who created new large-size, lavishly illustrated print treatises and multi-volume books. This one-day workshop questions the role of such large illustrated books in premodern European culture, examining their materiality (flaps, foldouts, movable parts) and questioning their function and significance. Were these books designed to demonstrate authority over knowledge? Or were such publications little more than objects of commercial decadence destined only for the amusement of the very rich?

Thinking and Working Beyond the Medieval Archive
Led by Tarren Andrews (Yale University)
Friday, March 1, 2024, 9:30 AM–4:30 PM Central Time
In-person at the Newberry
**APPLICATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 1, 2022**

This workshop aims to support medievalists thinking creatively about careers outside academia by encouraging thoughtful reflection about medieval studies skills and their wide-ranging utility. We will explore the range of archival skills scholars in medieval studies develop and consider their application in places outside of the institutionalized medieval archive. Bringing together the Newberry Library’s robust collections of medieval and Native American materials, participants will think through the very different ethical stakes of each of these archives and consider how the skills honed by medieval studies research and training can be useful in unexpected places like tribal, state, or national governments.

The Digital Afterlife of Ephemeral Print: Research and Pedagogy with French Pamphlets at the Newberry
Led by Elisa J. Jones (College of Charleston) and Sara K. Barker (University of Leeds)
Friday, April 5, 2024, 9:30 AM–4:30 PM Central Time
In-person at the Newberry
**APPLICATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 1, 2023**

This workshop will explore how digitization transformed the potential uses for the Newberry Library’s collection of 38,000 early modern French pamphlets by focusing on the *Early Modern French Pamphlets Digital Initiative*, a digital resource for research and pedagogy. Participants will learn about the creation of this resource and its potential uses for digital research, undergraduate instruction, and public-facing academic work. Through discussions, presentations, and hands-on work with pamphlets, we will consider the implications of materiality in digitization and explore how the digital humanities can be used to bring early modern history to new audiences. Knowledge of French is not required.

Indigenous Mapping
Led by Analú María López and David Weimer (Newberry Library)
Friday, May 3, 2024, 9:30 AM–4:30 PM Central Time
In-person at the Newberry
**APPLICATION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 1, 2023**

Indigenous people in what we now call the Americas have always produced spatial and geographic knowledge, but not always in forms readily legible to colonizers and settlers. After European invasion, Indigenous people used that knowledge to shape European mapping by acting as informants, guides, enslaved laborers, cartographers, and scholars who provided essential information in areas Europeans knew little about. In doing so, Indigenous mapmakers combined Indigenous languages and visual communication with European cartographic conventions. With particular emphasis on maps made in response to the needs of the Spanish colonial government, this workshop will explore Indigenous contributions to European mapping by comparing Nahuatl maps in the Newberry’s collection with other Indigenous manuscripts and early modern maps. Participants in this workshop will gain a better understanding of Indigenous pictorial techniques as well as a robust introduction to the production and circulation of European cartography.

Programs are open to the public unless otherwise noted, but registration in advance is required for most events. Program dates and times are subject to change. Please see individual calendar entries on our website for registration and cost information.

All times are given in Central Time.
CONVERSATION SERIES

Race in Dialogue
Virtual
This series of virtual conversations brings together scholars across professional generations to discuss the past, present, and future of premodern critical race studies and critical Indigenous studies.

About Allyship
Featuring Patricia Ahkimie (Folger Shakespeare Library) and Jean E. Howard (Columbia University)
Friday, September 15, 2023, 12:00 PM Central Time

Considering Race in Global Medieval Contexts
Featuring Andrea Achi (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) and Bryan Keene (Riverside City College)
Friday, April 5, 2024, 12:00 PM Central Time

CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA

2024 Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Conference in Premodern Studies
Thursday, February 1 – Saturday, February 3, 2024
In-person at the Newberry

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 15, 2023
The Center for Renaissance Studies’ annual graduate student conference, organized and run by advanced doctoral students, has become a premier venue for emerging scholars to present papers, participate in discussions, and develop collaborations. This supportive, welcoming conference comprises as many as sixteen panels with nearly fifty presenters, plus plenary and professionalization sessions.
Social and Moral Communities in Early Modern Text and Image

Part 1: Thursday, April 18 – Friday, April 19, 2024, in person at the Newberry Library

Part 2: June 2024, in person at the University of Bologna

This symposium explores early modern representations of and debates about the concepts of concord and tolerance. It addresses how images (e.g., allegories and emblems) and texts (such as religious and political treatises) promoted and codified systems of pacification and ideal communities. How did images and texts forge individual and collective visions of perfection and happiness? Did these materials play a role in political thought, religious policies, and moral philosophy? How did they challenge or legitimize social inclusion or exclusion, military campaigns, and imperialistic propaganda?

Organized by Maria Vittoria Spissu (Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Fellow, University of Bologna/Newberry Library)

Cosmic Ecologies: Animalities in Medieval Jewish Culture

Monday, May 13, 2024 – Tuesday, May 14, 2024

In-person at the Newberry

Held in conjunction with the Medieval Academy of America’s centennial, this symposium addresses a plethora of topics: cosmic ecologies and their continuities across the animal-human-divine-demonic spectrum; visual and textual collisions between humanities and animalities; bestialization as a heuristic; animalization of Jews in Jewish and Christian discourses; zocephaly in material and literary sources; and monstrosities and hybridities as sites of wonder and liminality. Speakers come from a variety of fields, and the program includes established scholars as well as the new voices in art history and religious studies.

Organized by Elina Gertsman (Case Western Reserve University), Julie Harris (Independent scholar), and David Shyovitz (Northwestern University)

NEWBERRY INSTITUTE SEMINARS

Premodern Studies Seminar

This seminar provides a forum for new approaches to classical, medieval, and early modern studies, allowing scholars from a range of disciplines to share works-in-progress with the broader community at the Center for Renaissance Studies. Our sessions feature discussion of a pre-circulated paper and a presentation of materials from the Newberry collections. We meet three times a year. Every meeting is free and open to the public, and participants are encouraged to attend as many seminars as they are able.

Organized by Lydia Barnett (Northwestern University), Timothy Crowley (Northern Illinois University), Christopher Fletcher (Newberry Library), and Megan Heffernan (DePaul University).

Programs are open to the public unless otherwise noted, but registration in advance is required for most events. Program dates and times are subject to change. Please see individual calendar entries on our website for registration and cost information.

All times are given in Central Time.
Eighteenth Century Seminar
In-person at the Newberry

The Eighteenth Century Seminar is designed to foster research and inquiry across the scholarly disciplines in eighteenth century studies. It aims to provide a methodologically diverse forum for work that engages ongoing discussions and debates along this historical and critical terrain. Each year the seminar sponsors one public lecture followed by questions and discussion, and one work-in-progress session featuring a pre-circulated paper.

Organized by Timothy Campbell (University of Chicago), Jason Farr (Marquette University), Lisa A. Freeman (University of Illinois Chicago), and Richard Squibbs (DePaul University).

Seminar in European Art
In-person at the Newberry

This seminar series brings together a diverse community of art historians and those in related fields for intellectual exchange, collegial conversation, and debate. We construe art history in broad terms, embracing painting, sculpture, graphic art, architecture, caricature, manuscript illumination, book arts, and material culture.

Organized by Suzanne Karr Schmidt (Newberry Library), Lia Markey (Newberry), and Walter Melion (Emory University).

Sponsored by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

SUMMER INSTITUTES
Center for Renaissance Studies Institute in French Paleography

Led by Elizabeth Hebbard (Indiana University)

July 8–19, 2024

In-person at the Newberry

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MARCH 1, 2024

This two-week summer institute will examine French manuscripts and archival materials from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Participants will explore the history of handwriting in France, receive intensive training in paleographic transcription, and become familiar with the development of handwriting as well as further aspects of written communication in the late medieval and early modern period.

2023 – 2024 FELLOWSHIPS
Newberry Center for Renaissance Studies Consortium Fellowships
APPLICATION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 15, 2023

These short-term fellowships support scholars at Center for Renaissance Studies consortium member institutions. They offer support for one month’s work in residence at the Newberry for one PhD candidate with ABD status and one postdoctoral scholar working in medieval, Renaissance, or early modern studies. The postdoctoral scholar could be a full-time faculty member, adjunct faculty, librarian, curator, or other staff member (with preference given for non-tenured faculty).

See all the Newberry’s long-term and short-term fellowships: www.newberry.org/fellowships.

STAFF
Director: Lia Markey
Assistant Director: Christopher Fletcher
Program Manager: Rebecca L. Fall
Public Humanities Fellow: Yasmine Hachimi

renaissance@newberry.org | (312) 255-3514
www.newberry.org/renaissance
## CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

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Indigenous Chicago

Chicago is, and always has been, an Indigenous place. As Potawatomi, Odawa, Ojibwe, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Myaamia, Wea, Thakiwaki, and Meskwaki homelands, along with several other nations whose homelands intersect with present-day northeast Illinois, the Chicago area has long been a historic crossroads for many Indigenous peoples and continues to be home to an extensive urban Native community. Indigenous Chicago is a multifaceted project that explores these histories, centers Indigenous voices, lays bare stories of settler-colonial harm, and gestures toward Indigenous futures.

Newberry staff from the library’s D’Arcy McNickle Center for American Indian and Indigenous Studies and Carleton College faculty have been hosting ongoing listening sessions to ensure that community members are intimately involved in the brainstorming, development, and execution stages of the project. Project components include an exhibition (spring 2024), a digital website with an interactive mapping component, curricular materials for K-12 students, new oral histories, scholarly and public programming, and more.

E. White, “An Imaginary view of the site of Chicago in 1779, (then called Eschikago), showing the cabin of Jean Baptiste Point De Saible [sic], (colored) the first permanent settler,” in Alfred Theodore Andreas, History of Chicago: from the earliest period to the present time: in three volumes (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, publisher, 1884–1886), Ayer 160.9 .AS 1894, v. 1 (PrCt)
Center for Renaissance Studies
2023–24 Programs

Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), author; Charles Perier, Publisher. *Les Quatre livres d’Albert Dürer, peintre & geometrien tres excellent, de la proportion des parties & pourtraicts des corps humains (The Four Books on Human Proportion)* 1557. Book with letterpress and woodcuts. Wing folio ZP 539.P412