

Archive Assignment for Caribbean Literature

Prof. Rosamond S. King

Worth 15% of your grade

Due Friday, 2 October, 6PM EST

This assignment asks you to examine how photography historically has constructed the raced subject.

1) Photo Observation & Analysis

- Choose 1 image from the [Digital Library of the Caribbean](#) or the [Art Gallery of Ontario Caribbean Photo Archive](#) (more than 3,000 photos). *You may also choose an image from another archive you have a connection to, but you must send the link to the Professor for permission.*
- Examine the photo and consider the following:
 - The apparent race, gender, and age (child or adult) of the subject(s).
 - Their clothing, expression, the direction of their gaze, the position of their body, whether or not they are doing something, and whether or not they appear to be posed.
 - Their position in relationship to each other, other people, and/or machines, animals, vegetation, buildings or other racial subjects.
 - What do you know about the photographer or what do you imagine he/she was like?

1) Metadata Observation & Analysis

Now, examine the title and existing metadata. Here's an example:

Luxury Cruise to Bermuda Album, pg 2, April 6, 1939

Item:

Title:

Photographer:

Publisher:

Publisher#:

Year: 1939

Height: 7"

Width: 10"

Media: gelatin silver prints

Color: b/w

Country: Bermuda

Town:

Notes: on the R.M.S. Volendam Holland American Line, Capt J.P. Wepster, Commander

As you can see, most of the metadata is actually empty.

- Start by checking the citation. For instance, is the date on the photo the same as that in the metadata?

- Now, do a little online research (say, 10-15 minutes) and see if you can find any of the missing information.
- Then consider what's included and what's missing in the citation (the citation includes the record information or metadata).
- Using your notes from your observation and analysis of both the photo and the metadata, what additional information do you think should be included to make the source more useful for scholars? You should feel free to add categories to the existing list, such as “Subjects” for any people in the photograph.

For your assignment, you’ll create two documents: one for the mini-essay, and one for the metadata.

Part I: Revised Metadata – to be posted in the Metadata Discussion Forum

- Line 1, upper left-hand corner, is your name
- Skip two lines and type the title of the photo you selected
- Underneath the title, paste the URL link to the photo.
- Skip two lines. Type “Original Metadata,” and underneath that, paste the original (as I did above in the example)
- Skip two lines and type “Revised Metadata,” and underneath that, type either the existing title OR a revised title you think is more accurate.
- Underneath that, type only the elements you’ve revised by changing or adding to them – for most of you, this will be the notes

Part II: Mini Essay – to be turned in via the link in the Assignments section of our Blackboard site.

Using your notes from the above questions and considerations, write a mini-essay (300-500 words). The essay should include:

- A brief description of the photo and what you think it says about the subject(s), the photographer (or how they’ve constructed the subject and scene), and/or the context in which it was taken.
- Explain why you made your specific revisions to the image
- Somewhere in your essay, include 1-2 sentences about why you chose this image.
- Include an MLA-style in-text citations and an MLA-style Works Cited section. (See https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style for help).
- Paste the photo from the photo gallery into your mini-essay.

Grading Rubric

Metadata Revision: 5 points

Revisions should demonstrate close analysis of the image, and critical thinking about its elements.

Mini-Essay: 10 points

Description of image	1
Critical analysis of the image	3.5
Explanation of why you made your revisions	2.5

Flow, coherence, mechanics
Citations

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