Over the past few decades, scholars of literary studies have increasingly looked to the archive in order to formulate new understandings of literary and cultural history and develop new interpretations of texts. This course is an introduction to the methods, theories, and politics of the archive in literary studies, using Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) and its extensive archives as the frame. A sensation in the United States and all over the world, Stowe’s novel was the best-selling book of the nineteenth century after the Bible. It inspired not only a dynamic critical conversation but also a vast network of literary, cultural, and political responses, including stage adaptations, visual culture, consumer products, and political rhetoric, among other things. In this course, readings in the methods, theory, and politics of the archive will support and challenge our investigation of this novel’s circulation, reception, and contexts, as well as the adaptations, revisions, responses, and remediations it inspired. This course will also emphasize the development of practical research skills in traditional and digital archives.

**COURSE TEXTS**

Scans of articles and book chapters will be posted on Coursework. Exception: chapters from Sarah Meer’s *Uncle Tom Mania*, we are reading too much of it for me to photocopy it under fair use.

Texts available at the Stanford bookstore:


Highly recommended:


**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Weekly discussion questions:** By midnight the night before class (Wednesday), post one discussion question on Coursework. It should include a specific citation (quoted and with page numbers) from one of the readings.

**Seminar presentation and paper** (11-14 pages): Use an archival method to interpret one of the literary readings on the syllabus or an item in Special Collections related to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. During the final class meeting, you will present a conference-style version of this paper and receive feedback.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

September 25  Week 1: Introduction and Special Collections visit
**October 2**  
**Week 2: Poetics and the Archive**

Readings:
- Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, vol. 1 (*Norton*)

Optional:

**October 9**  
**Week 3: Publication, Circulation, and Reception**

Readings:
- Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, vol. 2 (*Norton*)
- George Sand, “Review of Uncle Tom’s Cabin” (*Norton UTC, pp. 495-499)
- Ethiop, “Review of Uncle Tom's Cabin” (*Norton UTC, pp. 502-503)

Optional:
- Leslie Fiedler, *The Inadvertent Epic: From Uncle Tom’s Cabin to Roots* (Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1979)

*Tuesday, October 14*  
4pm, Wallenberg Hall 314  
We will join Shelley Fisher Fishkin’s “Transnational American Studies” seminar for a Skype conversation with Sarah Meer.

**October 16**  
**Week 4: Paratext and Parallel Texts**
Readings:

* Bring *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
  Margaret Cohen, “Narratology in the Archive of Literature: Literary Studies’ Return to the Archive,” *Representations* 108.1 (Fall 2009), pp. 51-75.

Optional:


October 23

**Week 5: Adaptation, Revision, and Remediation**

Readings:

* Bring *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Optional:

  Thomas Gossett, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin and American Culture* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1985)

October 30

**Week 6: Theory of the Archive**

* Also during this class meeting: digital archives and key word searches

Readings:


**November 6  Week 7: Literature as History**

* In this class, we will informally discuss seminar paper ideas. Be prepared to discuss your preliminary research question and how you plan to approach it.

**Readings:**

- James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*
- Langston Hughes, “Uncle Tom [1],” “Uncle Tom [2],” “Epitaph,” “Colonel Tom’s Cabin”
- Allan H. Pasco, “Literature as Historical Archive,” *New Literary History* 35.3 (Summer 2004), pp. 373-394.

**Optional:**


**November 13  Week 8: Politics of the Archive**

**Readings:**

* Bring *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

**Optional:**


**November 20  Week 9: Influence**

**Readings:**

- Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

**Optional:**


**December 4  Week 10: Conference Presentations**
*Saturday, December 13 by noon (12:00pm): Seminar paper due*