

UMSAEP Report for travel dates 6-24 September 2019

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Project title: 'Exploring the Nineteenth-century Domestic Archive '

My research visit to the University of Missouri (MU) from 9-23rd September entailed an exploration of the nineteenth-century domestic archive at the State Historical Society of Missouri (SHSM) and MU Library databases, particularly focusing on the writings of lesser-known women. I examined travel writing, diaries, photographs, and memoirs in order to source material for the book project Professor Chang and I are collaborating on, as well as to augment my own teaching practices and current research in this field. Professor Chang and I also had a meeting dedicated to three main objectives. We firstly needed to discuss a way forward regarding our collaboration on our editing project as part of the UMSAEP agreement. Secondly, we discussed our plans and submission schedule for writing and publishing our co-authored teaching and learning paper for COIL. This article will reflect on our experiences of co-facilitating the new Honours course 'British Revisited' that we designed together (as part of our agreement with the MU Hons College). Professor Chang and I presented this course in the first semester of 2019. Finally, we discussed our plans for co-teaching this Honours Course again in 2021.

While in Missouri, I also examined the Mariska Pugsley collection accessible on request from the Kansas City State Historical Society. The collection contains nineteenth and early twentieth century letters and correspondence between Pugsley and English governess Gladys Finlayson (when she resided in China). I also looked at photographs and other writings currently held in other databases like the Hathi Trust. I had hoped to discover material in the correspondence between Pugsley and Finlayson that would illuminate the everyday lived experience of an English governess in China before and during the Sino-Japanese war. This material would have been beneficial to an article I am currently developing on Finlayson. Although the collection had initially seemed promising, by being able to look through it more closely, I was able to discern that key letters from Finlayson to Pugsley were missing and therefore the Pugsley collection proved inadequate for verifying facts in Finlayson's letters (perhaps a point of interest for further research). The rest of the folders contained

miscellaneous photos related to her family and life in Kansas City and snippets of writing that Pugsley had already published in magazines.

With closure on the Pugsley collection, I was able to return my attention to the study of obscure women writers as well as being able to explore my current areas of specialization, in particular the Gothic, Victorian fiction, nineteenth-century detective fiction, the correspondence between Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins (one of the famous literary friendships of the nineteenth-century), and South African author Olive Schreiner's writings. This research was particularly rewarding for my current projects. Schreiner is a key figure in a comparative study I am conducting of nineteenth-century British and South African writings— a project funded by Mellon, for which I am to present a paper and publish an article in 2020. I had undertaken a research trip to the National English Literary Museum (NELM) in Grahamstown in July of this year in order to find unpublished material (documents, letters, or a diary) related to Schreiner's life and writing. While researching Schreiner at the SHSM, I incredibly discovered a collection of letters and a diary of one of Schreiner's purportedly close friends, whose letters clarify Schreiner's contentious relationship with her husband and publisher S.C. Cronwright. The difficulties of their partnership have been omitted from most first-hand sources. In his own accounts of their relationship, Cronwright censored their correspondence of anything that reflected poorly on their marriage in order to benefit himself financially. SHSM also contained the all-important last letter written just before Schreiner's death. Neither the online Schreiner databases (notoriously inaccurate) nor NELM contained this letter. It is therefore an important archival discovery that will add new insights into my research and publication on Schreiner.

During my time at MU, I also examined material related to my interest in South African Coloured historiography and visual history. This is in conjunction with a new project I am developing on South African author Joy Packer's early to late twentieth-century writings, in which she challenged the burgeoning Apartheid regime by publishing the novel *Veronica* (1970), which features a coloured woman as a protagonist. By being in Missouri, I was able to explore the African American archive of photography. The archive holds rare photographs of African Americans from the mid-1800s onwards in Missouri. The narrative emerging from these photographs speaks to the simultaneously marginalized and fractured, but somehow empowered 'other'. I am hoping that this material will enhance future research and writing on

comparative historiography and visual history of South African coloured and African American identity, given their similar contexts of difference, alienation, and displacement.

Apart from making progress with Professor Chang in setting out our collaborations, I was also able to attend several of her 19thC classes, where I learnt much from her students as well as from Professor Chang herself, especially in relation to my ongoing interest and research in teaching and learning. We shall continue to co-teach our 'British Revisited' course in the first semester of 2021 (Professor Chang will be on sabbatical in 2020). I was also able to discuss possible teaching collaborations for 2020 with J.D. Bowers of MU's Honours College and Professor Uphoffr. Bowers and Professor Uphoffr have expressed an interest in co-teaching a text over two sessions.

I wish to conclude by expressing my utmost gratitude and thanks to the UMSAEP fund for granting me this opportunity to continue fostering collaborations between our universities and to enrich my teaching and research interests invaluabley.

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