What is an archive? Is it a library, a legacy, a school of thought? For that matter, what does each of these terms mean? Derrida’s *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (1995) has provoked intense conversations among archivists, philosophers, historians, psychoanalysts, and social scientists about the archive and its relation to questions of memory. But what is he actually arguing? In this seminar we will read *Archive Fever* and the literary, philosophical and other works that underlie and are necessary to understand it: Freud’s controversial *Moses and Monotheism* and his famous essay on the death drive, “Beyond the Pleasure Principle”; Jensen’s novella *Gradiva: A Pompeian Fancy* and Freud’s detailed response to it. Our aim is to learn to read Derrida's famously difficult writing accurately and with pleasure, and our seminar will culminate in a visit to Derrida's archive, now held at Princeton University, where thousands of his books and other items are preserved, catalogued and can be keyed to the particular projects for which he used them. This is one of very few surviving libraries owned by a modern philosopher and Princeton Professor K. Chernowith will lead us in a workshop on how we can use it to understand and engage with his work. [For a description of the archive see https://www.princeton.edu/news/2018/06/18/deconstructing-derrida]

Class format and requirements
This seminar meets once a week for two and a half hours (with a short break in the middle). Electronic media are not allowed: *readings must be purchased or printed out and brought to class in hard copy*. Each meeting will be conducted as a group discussion (professor will not lecture) and participation in the conversation is required. **No prior knowledge of any of the reading is expected.** But reading Freud, (one of the great experimental thinkers of the twentieth century) is difficult, and reading Derrida is harder still, so seminar members must be prepared to commit real energy to the task! You must come to each meeting with the reading, having done the reading, and being prepared to discuss the reading even if you have not understood it! (The struggle to understand is what will build your intellectual muscle). **Some of this reading is hard, and takes considerable time and effort: on such weeks we will be reading less than the usual 60-100 pages.** Since our syllabus is designed to prepare the way to an informed reading of *Archive Fever* missing class meetings will surely have a negative impact on your final grade. Requirements: two short papers (5 pages) (each 25% of final grade); one long paper (10 pages) (% 40 of final grade); and informed participation and one in-class presentation (10% of final grade). This seminar is designed to produce rapid growth for those students who want to work hard, so each of the two first papers may be re-written for an improved grade.

**Disability Disclosure Statement:** Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. The Moses Center website is [www.nyu.edu/csd](http://www.nyu.edu/csd). Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting
academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Please do not hesitate to talk to me about any struggles you are having with the material or with any other circumstances that are impacting your progress in the seminar.

The following 5 books should be purchased from the NYU Bookstore. All other materials will be posted on our classes website and should be printed out in hard copy for study.

Sigmund Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*
Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*
Sigmund Freud, *Writings on Art and Literature* (with an introduction by Neil Hertz)
Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable.*

September 5 Expectations: how to read and write at the university level. How to read (and write about) Freud, how to read (and write about) Derrida, how to read (and write about) Derrida reading Freud.

September 12 Freud, from *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* [1901] (c. 80 pages)
September 19 Jensen, *Gradiva: A Pompeian Fancy* [1902] trans Helen Downey, 1918 (pp. 3-118) on classes website
September 26 Freud, from "Delusion and Dream in Jensen's Gradiva" [1908] (SE IX, pp. 7-95) **first paper due** [response paper, 5 pages, typed, double spaced]

October 3 Freud, "Two Principles of Mental Functioning" [1911] (8pp), "Recollecting, Repeating and Working Through" [1914] (9pp), Laplanch and Pontalis, from *The Language of Psychoanalysis* (10pp), on classes website
October 10 Sabina Spielrein, "Destruction as the Cause of Coming Into Being" [1912] (30 pp).
October 17 Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* [1914] (50 pages)
October 24 Freud, "The Moses of Michelangelo" [1914] (30 pages) **second paper due** [response paper, 5 pages, typed, double-spaced]
October 31 Freud, from *Moses and Monotheism* [1939] (100 pages)

November 14 Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression,* pp. 1-33
November 21 Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression,* pp. 34-103

December 5 Visit to Princeton
December 12 Student presentations of work in progress
December 15 **Final paper due** [10 pages]