

This assignment asks students to use a single QAP digital archival object as a “gateway” into Lafayette’s Queer history. It has multiple goals:

- I provide guiding questions to help students *hone their analytical skills*. They also must reflectively *describe that process in a short piece of writing*.
- It also requires that *students try to connect their interpretation to a WGS 340 reading* and link their work to the larger theoretical frameworks of the course.
- Finally, *students have to communicate their findings to the class* so they learn from each other about both the interpretive process itself and the challenges of situating findings within a broader conceptual context.

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### **WGS 340: Sexuality Studies**

**Professor Mary Armstrong**

#### ***An Object of One’s Own: “Reading” and Presenting a Queer Archives Project Artifact***

This assignment has two parts:

1. A written reflection/analysis.
2. A short (5 min) presentation “introducing” your artifact and connecting it to a class reading.

#### **1. Reflection/Analysis (80%)**

Pick an archival artifact from the QAP digital humanities site ([qap.lafayette.edu](http://qap.lafayette.edu)). Any object/item *except an oral history interview* is fair game. To get ideas, you can explore “4: Themes from Interviews” or “5. LGBTQ+ Keywords” or you can jump into “7: All Archival Artifacts” and see what catches your eye. Don’t spend too much time choosing the artifact.

*Once you have picked your artifact, write a short analysis (2-3 pages) that covers three aspects:*

- a) Describe the artifact: What kind of object is it? Does it have a date? Author? Why was it made or created? What is its ostensible purpose? Does the object speak to specific people, organizations, or institutions?
- b) Extrapolate from the artifact to imagine the Queer past: what does it reveal or suggest about LGBTQ+ history at Lafayette? How does it reflect one of our readings and/or discussions? How does it fit into our thinking about the ways identities are created and/or shaped by institutions?
- c) What more do you want to know? What do you wish you could ask the creator(s) of your artifact? What would you like to learn about the item that now seems lost to time? Why?

#### **2. Super-short presentation (20%)**

Share your main findings with the class (the one slide you show should be the artifact itself!): first, briefly describe the object, then share what you think it suggests about Lafayette’s LGBTQ+ history, and note some ways you think it connects to our broader work as a class.

You won’t have time to go into your shared analysis with as much depth as your written reflection. Just give us a sense of what you found and the directions in which the object pointed you.