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C-90: Provenance: Tracing Owners & Collections  
1–6 June, 2025, Charlottesville, Virginia

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Are there any readings that you would like to see added or removed in future years?*

1. Very useful, though I didn't get the chance to finish them.
2. The Provenance *Handbook*, which served as the structural basis for this course, was especially useful. Having read it, I felt well prepared for the class. The other recommended readings were compelling but not directly impactful on the coursework.
3. I found the readings to be very helpful. Even though DP did not mark any as mandatory, I would say that having read his *Handbook* before class was important for me. I think keeping on top of the flood of information that happens during the week without having read that would have been difficult.
4. The books and resources were all relevant to the course, fantastic reference materials to know about for after, and gratefully DP doesn't ask for much in terms of advance work compared to other courses.
5. They were useful, but definitely {illegible}
6. Yes, I found the readings useful! However, if you're pressed for time, I would prioritize *Provenance Research* by DP.
7. I primarily read DP's book and it was an excellent foundation. Adding some short readings on the history of paleography (in examples) would be helpful.
8. The suggested readings were very helpful, though I haven't finished them yet. I will.
9. {no response}
10. They were optional and all relevant, however there were a lot, which made it hard to decide which I might review. May narrow/prioritize some of them.
11. Yes, useful; none to be added.
12. They were helpful. I appreciated having digital links.
13. Yes—author was instructor.

2) *What are your thoughts on the course workbook and/or other teaching materials distributed during class? Was the content appropriate and useful? Will it continue to be useful for you after the course?*

1. The workbook is very helpful, will definitely use it in the future. It would be more helpful if the bibliography of each chapter was at the back of the chapter instead of at the end of the book.
2. The course workbook was well structured, though there were several additional handouts throughout the week which might have been reasonably included in it.
3. Workbook was helpful, especially as it cuts down on frantic note-taking. Wish there was also an electronic copy.
4. I am always thankful to have course materials to reference during the session and then take home for when I need certain information. Honestly, they are a great accessible tool for those of us who struggle with memory and recall.
5. {Illegible}

6. I really appreciated being given the PowerPoint notes and bibliography ahead of time. It allowed me to focus better during the lectures. I will definitely return to it after the course!
7. I loved everything! I annotated my workbook and will keep it for reference in the future.
8. The workbook aligned closely with the lectures, and I will have this to refer to. My notes will have the framework.
9. Yes. Content for all workbooks I have received are well organized and will be useful in the future.
10. I found it to be incredibly helpful in that it allowed me to be more actively engaged instead of having to write down everything that was being said. It was all detailed and allowed for me to make notes around the workbooks.
11. The course workbook is excellent. However, the Google Drive was not used by the instructor. I would have preferred electronic copies of the materials.
12. It was good and helpful, but I don't think I will encounter too many British crests.
13. Well done and colorful (heraldry) with plenty of useful examples. The course workbook is great. I can tell I will continue to refer to it after class and there are a lot of great resources included in it.

3) *Which aspects of the course were most intriguing and relevant for you as an individual? Did you walk away with any new insights, ideas, or project plans?*

1. The heraldry part.
2. I feel better prepared to advocate for increased recording of provenance at my institution, which we are notoriously bad at tracking. Though not directly related to the course itself, I found the methodology employed by Janine Barchas to be especially interesting as a way of going about my own academic research into modern publishing history.
3. Paleography practice was of most use to me. Heraldry was the most fun.
4. I absolutely, fully enjoyed getting to 'groupthink' and solve provenance mysteries both for myself and others. This was an engaging and practical exercise that I am so thankful we had time for. Certain other lesson units, like basic heraldry terms and identification, were and will be fantastic to add to the arsenal of provenance knowledge.
5. Heraldry and paleography—no new insights, but a better understanding.
6. The paleography, bookplates, and heraldry will all be relevant to the collections I work with.
7. I enjoyed learning about heraldry and \$ connection to provenance research and I have an idea for a pop-up activity at my institution. I also want to take the binding class now.
8. The stated objective was to provide a 'toolkit' for provenance research. This was achieved. I hope to create an exhibit from our collections, based on the various examples of provenance we learned.
9. Most intriguing was a discussion on armored bookplates and learning about heraldry. This was new territory. I am definitely inspired to do more provenance research for items in my institution's collections
10. All of it—I think from not only the provenance aspect but also learning what the correct language/terminology to use was really great/helpful. The tools I learned around identifying individuals is going to directly impact my current projects

11. Yes, I have been wanting to research the provenance of our collection and am now better prepared to do that.
  12. The interpretation of inscriptions and group work helped. I've thought of different blog or social media posts that could be crafted on provenance.
  13. Use of varying types of bibliographical information to puzzle out simple and complex problems—I need to work on heraldry and handwriting!
- 4) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*
1. Yes and yes.
  2. Yes, this was exactly what it was supposed to be.
  3. Yes! I definitely learned what I hoped to learn, and then some.
  4. Absolutely, and then some!
  5. Yes and yes.
  6. No notes! DP was an excellent instructor.
  7. I learned everything I hoped to and more. Even though I had limited previous experience in the topic, I was able to keep up with the instruction and expand my skillset.
  8. Yes. I did not know anything about heraldry before the class. I am not inspired to study this further but am glad to know that others do.
  9. Yes. The course was well planned, systematically laying out the various types of provenance evidence culminating in a day of putting it all together with hands on exercise/presentation to class.
  10. Yes! Above and beyond. Clearly an expert at the top of his field and was very good at explaining each of the topics we explored. Class activities were super helpful.
  11. Yes and no. The course was extremely British-centric and I have fewer titles of British origin in my collection. The large amount of time spent on British heraldry will likely not be useful to me. I would have appreciated a more global approach or at least larger incorporation of other European countries.
  12. I believe so. I think my next course might be on paleography to focus more on handwriting.
  13. Yes—we learned a huge amount in only five days.
- 5) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. It's been incredibly relevant to my work, especially when it comes to cataloging, condition notes, and provenance research. I'm excited to share more takeaways when I'm back and would love to brainstorm how we might incorporate some of these methods and resources into our own practice.
  2. I expect to use these tools most often when I am teaching with materials in the Wisconsin Historical Society collection which lack proper provenance records in order to help place them in context for students.
  3. In my daily cataloging work.
  4. I will use what I learned in my cataloging work and will take away even more resources and new ideas for how to track provenance conundrums old and new.
  5. Providing more {illegible} provenance descriptions if and when possible.

6. I will use these skills to assist my colleagues with improving our catalog records with more robust provenance information.
7. I'm excited to incorporate provenance information into our open house, expanding the topic beyond primary and secondary sources.
8. We will refine our local notes in our bibliographic records.
9. Conduct additional research on provenance.
10. I have many books in our collection with provenance not recorded and known. I can use the tools learned from this course to better track and record provenance in our CMS.
11. I plan to begin researching the provenance more deeply in my library's collection.
12. I mostly plan to use the skills to help identify provenance markings better.
13. Professional work—purchasing and teaching with older materials

6) *Who might benefit the most from taking this RBS course?*

1. Collectors and people in the trade.
2. That's hard to say. Many of my classmates came from a cataloguing background and had a clear connection to the material, but I and some of the others who were not cataloguers also found benefits. I'd say that it has broad appeal.
3. Special collections librarians of all types, graduate students, faculty, collectors.
4. So many people! Librarians of all types, booksellers, historians, collectors, the list goes on...
5. Researchers and catalogers.
6. Anyone with any provenance markings in their items!
7. Catalogers and individuals who perform instruction and outreach.
8. Library professionals, book collectors, archivists.
9. Cataloger's deciphering provenance evidence for cataloging notes; special collections librarians/rare book librarians telling the story of the individual object in classes or exhibits; rare book dealers making descriptions to market books.
10. Anyone that works in special collections.
11. Librarians.
12. Anyone that encounters a lot of provenance research needs.
13. Early grad students?

7) *If applicable, what were the most original, powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any "aha!" moments you'd like to share?*

1. A lot of moments in the heraldry part.
2. In particular, the final day of spending time with items and getting to put the lessons into practice was helpful. It is more useful to see items as they would appear in actual objects than in a vacuum.
3. {no response}
4. Definitely the 'groupthink' moments. It was nice to help others, and be helped, in making new discoveries and solving puzzles.
5. {no response}
6. The entire heraldry section. I felt way more confident after that lesson.
7. Being able to review a text and present my findings at the end was excellent independent practice. I also loved our "groupthink" about fellow students' puzzles.

8. The exercise to describe and present markings in individual books was interesting and fun. There are many passionate professional researchers in this class.
9. Heraldry; detective work in deciphering handwriting, heraldry, &c. was fun with classmate input and enthusiasm.
10. Getting to apply everything we learned in the final exercise where we presented provenance evidence in a specific book.
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. There were many—the idea of color-coding black-and-white armorial shields was eye-opening.

8) *Are there any other ways in which the course could have been improved?*

1. If there would be more handling section in the class that would be great.
2. I'm sure there are, but I can't think of them.
3. {no response}
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. No!
7. None I can think of.
8. No... It was well conceived and perfectly executed.
9. Cannot think of any other than perhaps an exercise/opportunity to get up and move around at approximately 2 p.m. on the first, second, and third day of course when I felt post-lunch fatigue, but that is of course just my metabolism.
10. Maybe more control over some students that dominate discussions that go off track.
11. I don't believe the RBS collection rules were as closely followed in this course as I have come to expect. I witnessed a lack of hand washing among my peers, keeping large bags at their seats instead of on the shelf, and today someone had a water bottle out while we were handling materials.
12. Maybe a little more group exercise.
13. No—it was great.

9) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? How likely are you to recommend this course to others? On a 1-10 scale, 1 would indicate that you disagree that you got your money's worth, 5 would indicate a neutral response, and 10 would indicate that you agree that you got your money's worth.*

1. 9
2. 10
3. 10
4. 10
5. 8. Money's worth and would suggest to others.
6. 10
7. 10. I got my money's worth and would recommend this course to colleagues.
8. 10
9. 10
10. 10

11. 10
12. 10
13. 10

10) *If your course made any (virtual) field trips outside of the classroom or had guest speakers, do you feel that they enhanced the course experience?*

1. Yes, I hope there will be more field trips.
2. {no response}
3. {no response}
4. Yes! Seeing examples at the SC was very useful.
5. {illegible}
6. I really loved the books pulled in SC! It was great to see even more physical examples.
7. Our trip to tSC to look at provenance examples in the UVA collection was great. I do wish we could have touched the books.
8. YES; THE SC VISIT GAVE US ACCESS TO MORE BOOKS.
9. N/A as far as guest speakers field trip to SC on 4th day useful to break up sitting in classroom/move around avoid fatigue
10. YES.
11. Our trip to SC was nice.
12. SCvisit was good, but the layout wasn't ideal for a big group. It was hard to see the books being discussed
13. Yes, the trip to SC was a highlight.

11) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. This is a wonderful course, you won't regret it.
2. {no response}
3. Do it!
4. Do it! This was actually one of the most fun courses I've had the pleasure of taking at RBS. Well, they are all fun, but this was particularly enjoyable.
5. {no response}
6. Bring a pillow, blanket, hand soap, and an extra roll of toilet paper if you're staying in Bond House.
7. Not that I can think of.
8. {no response}
9. Cannot think of anything other than take some examples along of provenance. puzzles to share with class. This was very fun and interesting and educational
10. Loved it. I am sad to leave and look forward to taking more in the future.
11. {no response}
12. I hope they like puzzles.
13. {no response}

12) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*

1. Camp for book nerds. Reunion every summer.
2. It was motivating and highly educational.
3. {no response}
4. Another excellent week to be a book nerd.
5. Pleasant and insightful.
6. Provenance is fun!/I love the camaraderie./Eat all the bagels.
7. Learning is fun! Silly (and simple) as it sounds, it was so true. And, because of that, I felt like I learned so much. My class was a comfortable place to ask questions and receive feedback. DP is a tremendous instructor and person; I intend to take his bindings class next. Please update the Charlottesville PDF—the cab ride from the airport was not \$30. It was \$55 before tip!
8. Summer book camp for librarians. We might need a song.
9. Great.
10. Nothing short of amazing!
11. {no response}
12. It could be sweeter—the tea. It could be sweeter.
13. A busy, informative, fun week.