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L-25v: References Sources for Researching Rare Books  
22–26 July, 2024, Online

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. The pre-course readings were succinct and very appropriate. I felt prepared and grounded during the coursework.
2. Yes. The readings were useful as an introduction.
3. Pre-course readings were really helpful to achieve the knowledge base needed for the course. No further suggestions—they were just right.
4. Excellent.
5. Yes.
6. Pre course readings were good and helped me recognize the categories of sources we would look at, and I felt prepared.
7. Yes, the pre-course reading assignments were very useful. I refer back to them often.
8. Pre-course readings were incredibly useful and led me to even more resources outside of the assigned readings.
9. The pre-course reading assignments were very useful!
10. Extremely helpful, good to prepare in advance for this intensive course.
11. It was helpful.
12. Yes, very helpful.
13. Yes, very useful.
14. I thought the book that we had to read was very outdated. It didn't seem relevant.
15. Fine, gave an idea of what to expect in discussion.
16. Yes, they provided a good introduction to the genres we would be discussing.
17. Yes, feel free to recommend additional optional reading.
18. Yes, although I was already familiar with *ABC for Book Collectors*. The Kraus video was great.

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 workbooks were very useful during the course. I took detailed notes based on the wonderful lectures by JS, and my annotated workbooks will be a tremendous resource upon my return to work in the library. I'm excited to put this knowledge to use!
2. The extensive bibliography of selected resources was— and will continue to be— useful. I appreciate the instructor taking the time to curate this selection of resources.
3. The course workbook was worth its weight in gold, especially when supplemented with the notes from JS's lectures. I appreciated how JS provided different types of information for each source, even if not all of it applied to me (I work in a library and don't care how easy it is to buy a resource for myself, but other people in the class who are collectors might). I also really like that the workbook included sample pages from selected resources, which will save me time in figuring out which source will have the

information I need. I wish I'd taken this course years ago because I've had no idea where to do this type of research, and with these materials now I feel fully empowered to get in there.

4. Better than expected and more informative.
5. I think that the course workbook included useful material, but I felt that it could be explained more. Workbook I, which listed the various reference resources, is a useful document that I can easily reference. Workbook II, which contains various scanned pages or screenshots, is less useful and somewhat difficult to navigate/know what I am looking at.
6. Yes. Yes. And yes, I will check to see what I have access to and add to our cataloging library guide.
7. The content of the course workbook was fascinating and will continue to be useful to me as a research source in its own right for years to come.
8. Course workbook was great as it gave me a dedicated place to scrawl notes about whatever resource was being discussed directly under/next to that entry in the workbook.
9. The course workbooks were excellent and very well-organized. The content was hugely appropriate and useful, and I will absolutely be referring back to it after the course.
10. Extremely helpful; will be using this as a resource in years to come, I believe.
11. This was useful and will continue to be useful after the class.
12. Fantastic! So helpful! It will be invaluable to me going forward in my research and teaching!
13. I like the workbooks; I will keep and use them forever.
14. The course materials were very helpful, well-organized, and exhaustive. What a resource!
15. Good structure to "see" books in virtual environment.
16. Yes, I anticipate making good use of the bibliographies provided by our instructor.
17. Yes, useful and appropriate.
18. Yes, this was very useful. Personally, I would have liked more discussion of online resources and demonstrations of their use. Things are coming online all the time, and they are not always self-explanatory; also, you have to know it's there before you can use 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. I have a new appreciation for the variety and extent of bibliographic resources, and I will continue to learn more on my own as a result of this intensive preparation.
2. I appreciated learning about many of the bibliographical resources which were previously unknown to me, and also hearing the instructor's anecdotes about the collectors and bibliographers.
3. The number and types of resources materials covered was staggering, and having JS decode dealer references was invaluable. I plan to use the information I learned almost immediately to research some of the oldest materials in our collection and update our catalog, and in the near term to create exhibits in the library.
4. {no response}
5. JS identified numerous reference sources that I was previously unfamiliar with, which I found helpful.

6. I didn't know much about collectors or collecting or where these famous collections came from. I have a much clearer understanding of why I am adding so much to the records I find in OCLC.
  7. I particularly appreciated the information that was provided on general reference sources and the book arts; I believe those are most pertinent to my areas of collecting interest and will also be of use as I attempt to restart my blog on book collecting.
  8. Definitely walked away with an enhanced understanding of bibliography as a lifelong pursuit, not just a scholarly endeavor that has a completion date. I purchased many books during the course, and some have already begun to arrive, so I am now able to try to focus my collecting interests. Also, I have an arsenal of reference resources to consult when we need to uncover more information about objects we are working on in the lab.
  9. I really appreciated the way that JS spoke about the intentions of the people creating the bibliographies and catalogs we discussed. It is a basic distinction that perhaps I should have already identified, but learning which sources attempt to be exhaustive/comprehensive and which include only the best material (and everything in between) gave me a new perspective. For example, I didn't know that Howes only included things he considered important, and that "Not in Howes" just means the work might not be significant. Moving forward, I will be more intentional about which sources I include and smarter about how I address them.
  10. So very much of this was new to me. I am excited to be able to apply better knowledge when researching rare books to purchase at my institution.
  11. How to finally learn to decode the entries in book catalogs and the abbreviations they use. My unfortunate insight was that my job has too many time demands for me to do much of what I learned.
  12. {no response}
  13. All of them.
  14. {no response}
  15. The subject-specific resources and their history. I flagged a lot of books to look at in the next few months!
  16. There were a number of resources that I think will prove useful for my work.
  17. The instructor's insights were fantastic
  18. For me, the most relevant was the material relating to early books, the bibliographies of bibliographies, and the information about auction catalogs.
- 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. I learned all that I hoped to, and more!
  2. Yes.
  3. JS is a treasure. His knowledge was incredibly deep and broad, and he was willing to answer any question, no matter how small. I'm in awe of his pacing, too— I never thought we'd be able to get through all the materials in the workbook, but we did (with 7 minutes to spare) without it ever feeling rushed. I wish I could download all of JS's knowledge into my brain, but I'm willing to take this course as a substitute. This course far exceeded my expectations.
  4. Yes.
  5. Yes.
  6. I got a great start and now need to build on this introduction.

7. This course was exactly what I hoped for, even if the amount of information was overwhelming to me at times.
8. Yes, and more!
9. Yes, the instructor helped me acquire all the skills and information promised. I went in with a pretty open mind, so I wasn't quite sure what to expect. But the course promised to introduce the class to a few hundred reference sources, and it certainly did that. I was not disappointed.
10. I learned so much.
11. Yes.
12. Yes, definitely.
13. Yes, and more.
14. {no response}
15. Yes. It covered not only sources but strategies for using them. Also, it demystified references in dealer catalogs, which are different from traditional scholarly research references.
16. Yes, we covered a tremendous amount of ground.
17. Yes.
18. I did not learn all I had hoped to learn because the coverage was not specialized enough; however, I was satisfied.

5) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*

1. I plan to draw on this knowledge and use the relevant resources every day at work.
2. I am eager to try these reference sources to aid in exhibit research and in cataloging.
3. I'd been hesitant to mount exhibits or do much publicity featuring our rare books because I felt like I didn't know enough about them— and I didn't even know where to start finding that information. That's completely changed thanks to this class. I now know how to find the information needed to understand our rare books materials and feel like I can create exhibits with accurate, interesting information, as well as find and share treasures in our collection with the alumni affairs and marketing groups, who often ask for us to provide interesting content.
4. I plan to complete a certificate of proficiency.
5. To conduct more extensive research on rare books.
6. In cataloging books for special collections.
7. I will use it to continue my self-education in the areas of book collecting, bibliography, and book research. I also expect to need to find much more room on my bookshelves for all the new books I anticipate acquiring as a result of this class!
8. Primarily to investigate items that come to preservation for treatment and to write better descriptive conservation treatment reports, most immediately. It also has inspired me to start perhaps collecting for myself, now that I can narrow down my interests and have references to go to when I want to find more.
9. I plan to use the information in the course to better identify rare materials and to better articulate their value. I will use this information in creating online listings for books, in catalogue assembly (hopefully), and in rare book fairs.
10. I will use it when researching our own items in our general collection, to possibly transfer to our rare book collection.
11. I plan to practice using the listed resources to research books when I have time.
12. {no response}

13. At work.
14. {no response}
15. {no response}
16. I hope to utilize these resources to produce better outreach and instruction utilizing our rare book collections.
17. I plan to use the reference resources in collecting.
18. I will use the skills in research projects and in cataloging my own collection.

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

1. Anyone who loves books will find meaningful course content at RBS!
2. Rare books catalogers, collectors, curators, librarians, and book dealers.
3. Librarians who work with rare books, book collectors, and dealers. Although I came into the class with relatively little knowledge on how to research individual books, I suspect people with more knowledge than I have also would benefit from getting such a fantastic range of sources.
4. {no response}
5. I think that this class would be most useful to book sellers or library curators.
6. I will recommend it to the people actively collecting.
7. People who work in a book field professionally (librarians, booksellers, &c.) would especially benefit from this course.
8. Anybody with an interest in exploring the methodology of researching rare books; though not strictly a method class, it was most instructive in this regard, and I feel exponentially more confident in my bibliography skills now.
9. I think the course is best suited for people who have a basic understanding of rare books and reference materials but have a need to widen their understanding and perspective. This course might feel overwhelming to someone who either doesn't have a basic understanding of rare books and references or is not invested in the material. The course is best suited for people who are truly want the information.
10. Anyone who works in a rare book library, collectors, and booksellers.
11. People who work in special collections or archives that are better funded.
12. {no response}
13. My colleagues.
14. {no response}
15. Library school students who don't have access to this type of course at their institution, but want to go into special collections; new professionals so they have this important skill set.
16. Any special collections or rare book librarian, especially those who may be new to the field.
17. {no response}
18. It is probably most helpful for booksellers and librarians. As a collector I found it useful but not specific to my interests.

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. Particular sources discussed in the class were frequently revelations to me.

2. Not necessarily "aha!" moments, but the stories about the activities of dealers, collectors and bibliographers were particularly interesting to me. I was also blown away by the depth of expertise and effort that many of these bibliographies and catalogues exemplify.
3. As we covered early printed books, I realized that there were ways to research an incunabulum in our collection (which didn't have a colophon and isn't in our catalog). I'm very excited to get back to campus on Monday so I can start researching it.
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. I was not aware of some of the strong influences on collectors.
7. {no response}
8. Really every single resource we went through was an "aha!" moment; one would never think that some of these reference works even existed unless directly pointed to them.
9. I really appreciated the way that JS spoke about the intentions of the people creating the bibliographies and catalogues we discussed. It is a basic distinction that perhaps I should have already identified, but learning which sources attempt to be exhaustive/comprehensive and which include only the best material (and everything in between) gave me a new perspective. For example, I didn't know that Howes only included things he considered important and that "Not in Howes" just means the work might not be significant. Moving forward, I will be more intentional about which sources I include and smarter about how I address them.
10. {no response}
11. JS showed a book on screen that our archive owns and I have handled. It made the materials more real.
12. {no response}
13. The teacher is knowledgeable and passionate about the subject.
14. {no response}
15. {no response}
16. {no response}
17. {no response}
18. I liked the anecdotes and insider knowledge shared by JS. They made the course enjoyable as well as informative.

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

1. No, it was perfect.
2. Pause a bit longer for questions. Ask more questions of the students.
3. None. It was perfect.
4. {no response}
5. I would have liked for Joel to use screenshare during the Zoom meetings so that we could easily see what he was referencing.
6. Having daily questions in advance of the lectures would help me.
7. {no response}
8. {no response}
9. JS gave us a couple practice questions, and we were meant to identify which reference sources we would potentially be able to use to answer those questions. We then went over the answers in class. I found this to be an extremely useful exercise,

and I think it would be useful to include even more in-class opportunities for practicing using the sources. Otherwise, it was excellent.

10. {no response}

11. I would have liked to see more books and pages, even through the screen.

12. I took notes directly onto the first workbook, which listed each reference resource. An additional space between each entry would leave more room for notetaking.

13. {no response}

14. {no response}

15. {no response}

16. It is an incredibly dense course with a lot of information thrown at you in a short period. I wonder if perhaps a community notes document would be of use, to be distributed to the students after the course to refer back to later.

17. None.

18. The workbook situation is a bit awkward, and the pedagogy is rather static, but it works reasonably well.

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. 10

2. 8

3. 10

4. 10

5. 5

6. 10

7. 10

8. 10

9. 10

10. 9

11. 8

12. 10

13. 10

14. 10

15. 10

16. 10

17. 10

18. 8

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. N/A

2. N/A

3. {no response}

4. {no response}

5. {no response}

6. {no response}

7. N/A
8. N/A
9. No field trips or guest speakers!
10. None.
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. {no response}
15. N/A
16. {no response}
17. Yes.
18. NA

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

1. Take copious notes to retain all the information.
2. Print out the list of bibliographic resources and then annotate it as you listen.
3. Take it! The description doesn't even begin to encompass how useful this course is.
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. {no response}
8. Read as much as you can beforehand and, if possible, try to locate some bibliography related questions that you could try to answer on your own before having this resource list, and then again after.
9. I would want to make sure that everyone taking the course had a basic understanding of what a reference citation looks like in a book listing. And I would also let them know that it's going to be a lot of information and that they should take notes.
10. {no response}
11. Caffeine; it's wonderful, but Zoom is not.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. {no response}
15. It is intense because of how much information is shared in a short period of time. Even though it is virtual, make sure you can disconnect from your day-to-day life and really be present.
16. {no response}
17. {no response}
18. It's 100% lecture but you will learn much if you are patient. There are plenty of breaks to get up and stretch.

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

1. Bibliophilic inspiration!
2. I have learnt a great deal about where to look to learn even more about books and their history.
3. JS is phenomenal —don't miss the chance to take a class with him.
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. Information overload (in the best way!)
8. SUPERB.
9. Wow, so much information! Excellent.
10. so much to see/and hear/from those with experience/in this field/a novice who felt welcomed into this world/rare as it is
11. My first and last online course; in person from now on.
12. {no response}
13. Comprehensive resource and knowledgeable and passionate instructor.
14. You get a full semester of information in a week and meet some fascinating people.
15. {no response}
16. {no response}
17. High quality education on a specialized topic.
18. Informative.