

Matthew Edney
H-65: Material Foundations of Map History, 1450–1900
5 – 10 June in Charlottesville, VA

Narrative Course Evaluations

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. Yes. I suggest assigning a part of the "History of Cartography" (rather than all) and adding Akerman and Karrow's "Maps: Finding Our Place" to provide a broader intro to the history of map making.
2. Everything was very helpful. I prepared questions in advance and increased my understanding.
3. Yes. The bibliography list in the course workbook would be nice to see before the class.
4. The pre-course readings were very helpful. ME's book, in particular, was a great text to help prepare and familiarize myself with the theories and terminology that was to be discussed in class.
5. The readings were very helpful! The material was covered in broad strokes in the class itself (with enough detail to grasp the concepts discussed), but having added/previous context with the ideas was very helpful.
6. Readings and bibliography were very useful and could be expanded.
7. Yes.
8. Yes. It was very helpful to have read the instructor's work and to then hear him explain his reasoning. The mix of additional articles was manageable and helped with context.
9. These readings were useful. ME's blog and other articles were useful as we went through class and some of those could have been on the advance list in place of the bibliography articles.
10. Yes, it helped establish a foundational framework for the class. I wouldn't assign more, though.
11. Yes they were useful although we didn't really discuss them in class.

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. Yes. The bibliography and PowerPoint slides will be good points of reference going forward.
2. Very thankful for getting reference citations. Any concentration material used in ME's normal teaching schedule would be a wonderful addition.
3. The bibliography is useful, an image/book list of things shown in class would also be helpful. Will be using the bibliography to order titles for my institution.
4. The bibliography in the course workbook/PowerPoint slides will be very useful. I am planning to share with some of my coworkers who work in my department, as the sources are great for getting a good understanding of what we are working with.
5. Course materials were fine. We didn't really use the handouts in class, but they included

further reading lists that will be very useful in the future. I also appreciated ME's sharing his PowerPoint slides with us—this will also help in the future.

6. The extended bibliography given out in class will be useful far beyond this class.
7. Very excited to have received so many potential resources. I appreciated the resource list being broken down by thematic categories.
8. Our workbook was largely a bibliography, to which ME referred often, this I'm glad to have as a reference.
9. The workbook was not useful during class but will be invaluable later. ME sent us links to the PowerPoint slides, which will also be very useful.
10. So helpful! I'm planning on sharing it with particular colleagues and keeping it on my desk for reference.
11. Barely looked at the workbook but may use it to refer to the bibliography in the future.

3) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your RBS course? Did you walk away with any "aha!" moments, new ideas, or project plans?*

1. I will be better equipped to understand maps I encounter in our collections and to assist students and researchers with using them. Better understanding the material aspects of maps is particularly helpful.
2. I oversee the composition of analyses, much of it with maps, and an understanding of this material will only improve my analysis and the mentorship of my junior colleagues.
3. All of this will help with cataloging maps in the future and now I want to re-catalog maps that I can add new info to!
4. I plan to use the skills/knowledge in my job. The information I learned will be very useful at the reference desk, as well as for identifying maps when cataloging. In addition, the thought process that was espoused will be useful in blog content creation for our collection.
5. I intend to use the knowledge from this course to develop a workflow for cataloging maps at my place of work. I definitely had several "aha!" moments in the course that made me even more excited to begin the project.
6. The content of this class was tremendously useful for me both in the material that was directly about the work I do as a map curator and the material slightly out of scope, i.e. broader contextual material.
7. I intend to go back and review some of the materials we are currently vetting for digital repatriation and making additional notes based on what I learned in the course. I also intend to use this new viewing lens to update our current map catalog records.
8. I use our map collections primarily in undergraduate instruction sessions, and I feel immeasurably more comfortable offering context and better question prompts based on this week's course.
9. I will use this knowledge in my thesis project. I expected to get some useful info, however, I came away with so much more! I have new understanding of maps that I did not expect to gain. I will also approach my thesis in a whole new way that is much more informed and expect to ultimately create a better project because of this class.

10. Everything I learned will make day-to-day knowledge application in my job easier.
11. Better understanding of the materials in my collection and how to I.D. different printing types by examining the objects.

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. Largely yes. I had hoped we might touch on different approaches to maps and mapmaking in different cultures.
2. Yes, very broad survey of the many disciplines and analytic points that are critical in these studies.
3. Yes!
4. Yes—I feel more confident discussing these topics.
5. Yes, I feel like I learned what I hoped I would.
6. Yes: the course met and in fact exceeded expectations!
7. Yes, yes, and yes!
8. Yes, and then some. I was delighted to receive such detailed info re: printing processes, since a course helping to I.D. printing techniques was my other possible course choice this summer.
9. Yes! I learned so much more than I expected to learn!
10. Yes! This is exactly what I was hoping for.
11. Expected the course to go up to the digital age of mapmaking, but instructor's personal interest was early modern so that was the focus. Would have liked to see more on 1850-1960s.

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

1. I really enjoyed the times we had with the materials in small groups. I would have liked more—especially at the beginning as a way to get to know classmates as well as reinforce what we were learning.
2. No. We need another course for content and iconography Part Two.
3. See and compare more examples of maps.
4. I would have liked a bit more time on atlases, and possibly a bit more info on non-Western mapping.
5. {private response}
6. I would be interested in a class on map history but more narrowly focused, chronologically or thematically. But a general map history class will always be useful.
7. We conducted a few material appraisals but I wish we could have done more for additional practice and to engage in more in-depth discussion.
8. {no response}
9. ME told us he would probably alter his teaching after this first time and that we were sort of experimental. This was fine for me as I enjoyed his tangents and informal adherence to the schedule.
10. I might suggest incorporating some discussion time into the course earlier so that students might get to know each other more quickly. Part of the reason to come to RBS is to make

connections!

11. More time for discussion. Could break the content of the course down into two or three courses.

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

1. Anyone! It was great to have classmates who work regularly with maps, scholars, and those new to maps. We all learned new things.
2. Anyone working with maps.
3. Anyone who could use a broad history of maps. Map catalogers and librarians.
4. Librarians and catalogers who work with maps.
5. Anyone interested in the history of mapmaking and critical approaches to the field understood as cartography/anyone interested in the materiality of cartographical materials from all professional areas.
6. A huge range: graduate students, instructors, catalogers, reference librarians, curators, collectors, dealers.
7. Professionals working with maps or who have maps in their collections.
8. Professors who want to incorporate maps in coursework but need context; librarians (instruction, catalogers) who are new to map collections.
9. Librarians, of course, but anyone who is interested in maps or map design. The history of their materiality is such a rich way to look at how maps have evolved.
10. Anyone interested in map history of material culture.
11. Archivists and catalogers.

7) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? Would you recommend the course to others?*

1. Yes and yes!
2. More than worth what I paid. Yes, unequivocally.
3. Yes and yes! Well worth the cost and time.
4. Yes and yes.
5. Yes and yes!
6. Yes, absolutely: I will highly recommend this class!
7. Yes and yes.
8. Absolutely. The content was fantastic and ME was enthusiastic, encyclopedic, and fun.
9. Yes! Yes!
10. Yes, absolutely.
11. Yes.

8) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*

1. Absolutely. The printing demos helped us understand the printing discussion, and I loved seeing the atlas treasures at SC.
2. SC, as always, was worth the trip in itself. Many thanks to their staff.
3. Yes. The trips to SC and the printing presses were useful to get a better understanding of how

the items were made and consumed.

4. Yes—being able to do the print-making process helped me to better understand how these machines worked and the time spent creating maps.
5. Yes! I especially enjoyed our trip to UVA's SC to view historical atlases, which were visual aides we otherwise wouldn't have had access to and were very helpful.
6. There were no trips made outside the classroom.
7. Yes.
8. Yes!
9. Yes! I really enjoyed the printing session and would happily have spent three hours with the atlases at SC.
10. The trips to the printing press and to SC were incredibly helpful. Loved the hands-on nature of the printing day—I now have an even deeper appreciation of the materials I work with and what went into their creation.
11. The printing demo was awesome. Could have done that all day. Would have liked to see a lithograph demo.

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

1. Check out the reading list and start early. Good stuff but needs a little time.
2. Bring a magnifying glass, bone folder, phone charger for many pictures.
3. Take this class! And read ME's book (which is required) which will really help you understand what the class will be about.
4. This class was extremely informative—do the readings and come prepared to learn!
5. Yes—do as much of the advance reading as possible!
6. {no response}
7. Allocate some time in your travel to acclimate/adjust prior to the course if you are coming in from out of the area. Budget your time wisely throughout the week.
8. {no response}
9. It is well worth the time and expense!
10. Be prepared to learn more than you thought was possible about maps!
11. {no response}

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

1. I loved having a week to immerse myself in learning something new.
2. This is an intellectual sanctuary that is needed in the modern world.
3. RBS has greatly helped me in my career from my first class fourteen years ago and will continue to help me when I return to work next week. Thanks RBS!
4. RBS was wonderful, and I think I am leaving with knowledge that will make me a better librarian.
5. We can and should move past the ideal of cartography—let us be open to surprise!

6. {no response}
7. Heat + lack of sleep + brilliant instructor + great classmates = "RBS Material Foundations of Map History" and I would do it again. :)
8. {no response}
9. Certainly not what I expected but in a very pleasant and exciting way.
10. Like summer camp for map nerds—what could be better?
11. This was a lot of fun. I wish you had more map courses so I could come back.