

Matthew Edney  
H-65: Material Foundations of Map History, 1450–1900  
21–26 July, 2024, 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. They were all useful and I intend to read them in coming years.
2. Yes, they were all useful, though reading them during the week was more useful than pre-reading.
3. Yes.
4. I thought the readings were useful as introductory texts to prepare for the course. I don't think that the in-class sessions focused on them as much as I anticipated, but I'm still happy to have read them as a way to better understand the course.
5. {no response}
6. I found the assignments useful for the most part. They provided a helpful foundation for a quick-moving course, especially the Besse, Dym, Lois, and ME. I enjoyed the Bruckner, but found it less impactful than some of the other Bruckner texts that I have read, and I did not think back to it as much as I did the others. Given the emphasis in this course on the social circulation of maps, perhaps a Schulten or a different Bruckner could be interesting. We verbally referenced Schulten quite a bit, so I was glad to have read her work previously. For students that had not, perhaps it would have made a positive addition to the pre-course reading.
7. What I read was very useful; being given access (much) earlier via the shared Google Drive would have been helpful.
8. Yes, useful.
9. Yes. The reading assignments were very useful in preparing for the course. I would have benefited from knowing which readings would be reviewed which days so I could read them in order. The recommended readings, especially ME (2019) and Akerman and Karrow (2007) were fantastic.
10. Yes, they were very useful. There were some that were difficult to access without an academic institutional affiliation.
11. Pre-course readings were good, but not useful in the 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. Absolutely. I am very grateful to have this bibliography of map-related scholarship and plan to use it regularly.
2. The bibliography will continue to be useful.
3. Yes, very useful.
4. Yes, it's super helpful and I especially appreciate the bibliography that was included with additional references to those used in class.
5. The bibliography that's in the course packet is going to be absolutely indispensable. So, indeed, will the slides that ME has shared with us. The course presents a lot of material to take in in just one week, so it will be great to go back and review specific areas of interest.

6. The bibliography is astoundingly useful, and I am certain that I will reference it often going forward. The other content was useful but was outshone by the wealth of information in the bibliography.
7. N/A? The only thing distributed was the course book, which was very helpful.
8. Yes. Highly appreciate ME sending the PowerPoint every day after the lecture. Very useful for reviewing what is covered for the day, and to preview what is to be covered the next day. The course workbook is great too! Very well organized, and very informative!
9. Very useful. The heart of the materials is an extensive bibliography that I will use frequently in the future.
10. Excellent. The bibliography and slides from lectures will be essential reference material.
11. The PowerPoint slides will be useful. The workbook had a good bibliography.

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. This course has resolved several important issues in my research, helped me develop a large vocabulary for maps and atlases in print culture, and helped me think of new publications I might attempt. The section on cartobibliography was especially amazing.
2. {no response}
3. I learned much more about maps than I knew before. The course opened up other areas of knowledge that I was not aware of before.
4. Absolutely! I especially thought that learning about the printing and production processes illuminated maps and their material context in ways I had not really thought about before. I plan to see maps in a new light after that in particular.
5. The course has solidified the methodology for the two projects that I approached it with. I am sure that I could generate other projects, but I came for specific reasons, and the course has helped me figure out how to accomplish those projects.
6. ME's expertise is incredible. Some of his passing comments and references to other readings seem to point in a direction that will help me resolve some ongoing questions I have had regarding social gatherings around cartographic objects. I don't know if I am any closer to a dissertation topic, but I do feel that I have a more solid foundation of critical approaches to cartography, a better understanding of cartobibliography and historiography, and a stronger material understanding of printing processes that I am sure will inform my research going forward.
7. I found the first two days, in which we thought deeply about the historiographic structure and stakes of map history, to be especially interesting and extraordinarily helpful for my own research—it helped me rethink the structure of my current project and gave me important critical vocabulary for what I think is a much better structure. I also really enjoyed the discussion on the last day about cartobibliographies, in that it helped us think critically about sources for map history.
8. The instructor's in-depth knowledge, guided by the very informative and visually enriching PowerPoints, provided clear and easy-to-follow thought flow and transition of contents during each session and between each session. Visits to SC are wonderful. Only regret is not able to touch those materials, which in a sense counter the focus of this course: the materiality of map history.

9. I came here with the aim of becoming more knowledgeable about the scene of map history and mapping. I have so many new insights and an entire list of ideas for projects.
10. Honestly, all of it was intriguing and highly relevant. I not only left with new insights and ideas, but I also made contacts who will be helpful in implementing those ideas.
11. Exercises were the most useful to apply what we had learned; needed more breaks to look at physical (not virtual) materials.

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 some more.
2. {no response}
3. Yes, I learned much more.
4. Yes, very much so. The course's focus on the modes of map use really stretched my understanding of map history.
5. I did learn exactly what I came to learn: I have a better handle on the history of maps and how they were produced and used. I also have a better grasp on the technical vocabulary to use to describe maps.
6. Yes. ME is extraordinarily knowledgeable, clear in his explanations, and attentive to his students. The printing press staff were also incredible. I learned more than I could have expected and am abundantly grateful.
7. Again, I found the structure of the first two days to be excellent, and incredibly useful for my own thinking and research. They set up the third and fourth days, which were very informative, but were perhaps less structured in their presentation. There was, in particular, a strong emphasis on print techniques on day three, but less on the stakes of those techniques. Since the purpose of the course was not to learn to identify different printing techniques (nor were there examples or time to do so), I would have really appreciated the chance to think through what we can do with identification in historical practice.
8. Yes!
9. Yes. Extremely satisfied.
10. Yes.
11. The description needs to be clearer that it is 90% Western materials.

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

1. In research and teaching.
2. {no response}
3. Hopefully I will be a better collector.
4. In instruction, at work, and potentially in research projects.
5. I am going to use what I learned to make better descriptions of maps to make their long histories more accessible.
6. The skills I acquired at RBS are likely to factor into my Ph.D. dissertation, which I will be writing a prospectus for in the coming month. Above all, I believe that the perspectives ME was able to provide on historiography and theories for approaching

cartography will shape my methodology. I am eager to get into the archives and find some social histories.

7. They will feed immediately into current research and teaching.
8. In research consultations for faculty and students. In teaching/primary source literacy instructions. In enhancing bibliographical descriptions about my library collections.
9. I aim to write more about maps in my area of study.
10. I will return to my collection with new perspectives; I have new information and insights that will provide direction for research into specific new acquisitions.
11. Incorporating more print materials, including maps, into classes I teach .

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

1. Historians, scholars of print and media culture, curators, librarians, teachers, and collectors.
2. {no response}
3. Professionals in the library or other professional fields.
4. Anyone with an interest in maps and the roles they played in history (not just cartographic/geographic). I think there are myriad ways to use the information gained from this class for research or exploration in other historical contexts.
5. I do think you need some background in geography or cartography to fully appreciate the course. I liked seeing the mix of library professionals, collectors, graduate students, and booksellers in the course.
6. This course has a strong emphasis on European and American maps. I believe it is most helpful for those with an interest in that geography, but in terms of technical skills, there's something for everyone. Whether you are an experienced scholar and collector or new to working with maps, ME offers such a depth of expertise that I'm certain you will take something away from the course.
7. Those researching, curating, caring for, or collecting maps; anyone with a strong interest in the history of maps.
8. Librarians, archivists, faculty, graduate students, and book dealers.
9. Academics, librarians, dealers, and collectors could all benefit from this course in various ways. Extraordinarily useful survey course.
10. Any librarian, curator, or scholar who deals with maps.
11. Collectors new to map collecting looking for a broad intro to rare books, &c.

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. I figured out what globes actually do.
2. Printing on the rolling press brought home our discussion of shading, relief, and identifying copper plates.
3. N/A
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. I found the discussion about a "processual history of cartography" rooted in modes, rather than genres, to be especially valuable.

8. Enlightenment/epiphany to my previous limited understanding of Western cartography.
9. The breadth of the instructor's knowledge, his readings and recall, all led to very useful moments. The organization of the course led to some great moments of insight as we progressed through the material.
10. Most powerful moments occurred while integrating information from readings and lectures during hands-on exercises.
11. Printing was a highlight.

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

1. More time in SC would be great.
2. {no response}
3. {private response}
4. I think the small space constrained the ways we were able to experience the material in the classroom.
5. {private response}
6. {no response}

I think the course would greatly benefit from access to a stronger map collection. Personally, I would consider whether it ought to be hosted at another institution RBS partners with.

More handling/touching/interaction with materials. Broader perspectives, encompassing non-Western cartographic traditions.

7. Knowing the order in which we'd discuss readings in advance would have been useful.

A larger space would be appreciated.

8. More physical materials, fewer slides of maps. More encouragement to share materials with other students during the week (Discord, &c.)

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. 7
6. 10
7. 8
8. 10
9. 10
10. 10
11. 6

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. Absolutely. The trips to SC to view atlases and presses were wonderful.
3. Absolutely!
4. {no response}
5. {private response}
6. The printing press is incredible. I will think about that forever.
7. N/A
8. Absolutely!
9. Yes—the printing demonstration was so much fun and so informative. So many “aha!” moments in SC.
10. Both the visit to the printing studio and to SC were worthwhile.
11. Printing was a highlight of the class.

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

1. N/A
2. Thinking about physical comfort, hydrate and caffeinate before class, as you won't be able to do so during class.
3. Be aware of the weather in Charlottesville!
4. ME is unpretentious, approachable, and friendly, but also seemingly all-knowing. He's also got a great sense of humor and is a pleasure to learn from.
5. {no response}
6. There is quite a bit of terminology, and the intense week moves quickly. A basic understanding of certain key terms will help you.
7. N/A
8. {no response}
9. Take the course! It's so good!
10. Do the pre-course reading, you will get more out of the course.
11. {no response}

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

1. Transformative.
2. {no response}
3. A productive experience!
4. {no response}
5. Intense and rewarding!
6. Thank you! Until next time!
7. RBS is a really wonderful week at book camp!
8. Awakening/epiphany.
9. Magical.
10. Fortunately, I do not have to sum up...
11. {no response}