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C-30: Developing Collections: Donors, Libraries & Booksellers
7–12 June 2015

Narrative Course Evaluations

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Did you do any additional preparation for your course? Are there any books or articles that you would like to see included in future years? Any that you might suggest removing?*

1. There were none assigned for this course.
2. N/A
3. There were no pre-course readings for this section, which was explained. I understand that the wide-ranging themes and attendees influenced this choice, but I feel that a handful of readings would have been nice for contextualization—especially for a first-time student.
4. There were none. Having attempted to research the topic previously, I'm aware that there's a definite lack of literature to refer to. However, some historical texts regarding the book trade might have provided some reference points.
5. Would be nice to have some sort of advanced reading—possibly the “Beyond Carter” PDF?—just to come in with a bit of background.
6. No pre-course readings, although we did get a reading list to use after the course; I just did research on the instructors.
7. No pre-course prep was required!
8. No pre-course assignments for this course, but a detailed bibliography was provided for later use.
9. There were none assigned. I would like to have had articles or program notes to consider, though there is not a specific direction that the course required.
10. No pre-course reading required.
11. N/A

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. Teaching materials distributed in this course were stellar—and will continue to be useful when I return to my home institution.
2. All will be helpful: modern home and office printing processes, custom paper fasteners and custom bindings; JK's survival kit for processing archives on site, and “Beyond Carter” (terms for non-traditional material).
3. There were a number of *very* thoughtful handouts distributed during class. I plan to use and share them with colleagues.
4. Yes—I expect that the reference materials/handouts will prove very useful, especially the handout regarding printing technologies.
5. Practical and helpful.
6. Yes, we received catalogs from booksellers that I will definitely use. The teaching material was helpful, and will be, especially what to be aware of when accepting a

collection.

7. I absolutely *loved* the variety of materials used in our course! The handouts will be *very* useful.
8. Unique and useful materials were provided by the instructors.
9. I'm thankful for the guides, though likely a percentage of the glossary is entirely too basic/common knowledge. The class is, after all, comprised largely of professionals.
10. All of the teaching materials provided ("Beyond Carter," "Common Paper Fasteners and Custom Bindings") will be incredibly useful.
11. Yes, useful.

3) *If you've taken previous RBS courses, how did this one compare?*

1. While I learned a tremendous amount in both courses, the instructors in "Developing Collections" did a particularly good job shaping us into a real, learning community.
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. N/A
6. This is the first course.
7. N/A
8. This course was excellent, and comparable to the others I have taken.
9. In some ways, more immediately useful for my business model, and for approaches to real-time situations.
10. N/A
11. Different in tone, but just as useful.

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

1. Deeper understanding of the world of booksellers; vastly improved understanding of relationships between academic institutions and booksellers; I plan to contact appropriate booksellers to begin building relationships to assist my institution.
2. Hands-on examples were great ("Beyond Carter" and originals vs. photocopies).
3. This course was a great intro to the world of book dealers, about which I knew little. Through this introduction, I learned a lot of terminology and practices about the dealer/librarian ecosystem.
4. Having entered the course with some familiarity of the subject, the course best served as a means of refining my thoughts, and of learning about the strategies of others (both of faculty and of colleagues).
5. It was useful to understand the point of view of a librarian, their specific needs and struggles. The specific twentieth-century material was relevant to my interests as a bookseller.
6. The section about how to work with donors and collections, how to identify gaps and future casting. The guest lecturers were insightful, especially Kevin {last name?} and his talk on scripts.
7. The sections on donor relations were very useful, as was learning how to spot forgeries of certain materials. I have tons of ideas for future programs and

collections!

8. The most useful was the incorporation of multiple instructors (two to four, simultaneously), providing a panel of contrasting views.
9. Many new, large- and small-scale ideas; a great understanding of the approaches to mid- and long-term goals.
10. I enjoyed that we had perspectives from three distinct individuals who each had their own specialties and approaches.
11. {no response}

5) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Was anything left out or undeveloped? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*

1. Yes.
2. Good interaction among instructors for strategies for buying and selling.
3. I feel I learned the skills that were promised. There was perhaps a slight over-emphasis on counter-culture archives and ephemera. I did not mind this, as my library has related collections, but some did, I think. The donor side of things was a bit underrepresented, too.
4. Perhaps there was too much focus on a particular genre of collections. However, I felt very satisfied with the educational experience (which is perhaps based more upon anecdotal experience and strategic experience than the other RBS courses are).
5. The focus on non-traditional materials and their particular challenges was useful.
6. Yes, in terms of the printing process and how it relates to the larger, societal issue of war. Also, about forgeries and fakes—how to potentially spot them.
7. Yes! No! I learned much more than I expected!
8. The instructors took the time to provide ample opportunity to ask questions throughout the course.
9. {Private response}
10. I would like to learn more about specific material differences among duplication procedures (mimeo, &c.), but this may be beyond the scope of the course.
11. Yes.

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

1. Learn more about evaluating the market for collections that are appropriate to my institution; begin establishing relationships with booksellers to help add appropriate materials to our collections.
2. I plan to work on developing collections of counter-cultural and underrepresented groups.
3. I'm hoping to continue to increase my skillset/knowledge in the collection development arena, and make the case that I am qualified, eventually, to purchase material—something I do not currently do.
4. To better develop collections.
5. I have greater confidence and direction in approaching curators and developing mutually beneficial relationships with them.
6. In developing collections, and going back into the collection to see where the gaps are.

7. 1) Seek new collections; 2) enhance programming; 3) recruit more donors; 4) look for alternative funding sources; 5) include more instruction/outreach in our special collections.
 8. I will use the skills in my Internet-based bookshop—locating and evaluating stock, and building a customer base of collectors and institutions.
 9. I feel I have more depth of understanding as to what motivates all parties in an archival transfer; KR and TC were thoughtful and generous.
 10. Everything learned will be very helpful for my work as a curator/special collections librarian.
 11. {no response}
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*
1. Academic librarians; archivists and curators; booksellers; paper and ephemera sellers.
 2. Any level would benefit. Good intellectual level, but also down to earth.
 3. The intellectual level was fairly high—though dependent on the students present. I think the course would most benefit an early-career archivist/librarian or dealer, or a more experienced practitioner moving into new, related areas.
 4. It largely incorporated anecdotal and strategic thinking, as was to be expected.
 5. It was very practical—booksellers and librarians who deal in non-traditional material and twentieth-century material would benefit from this course.
 6. Booksellers who want to understand the challenges and lives of the instructors; librarians who want ideas about how to create/improve collections; donors who want to see how they can navigate the marketplace.
 7. At first, I felt the course was over my head, but that changed by the second session on Monday. I think anyone who needs a foundational course on collecting would benefit, whether librarian, seller, or donor.
 8. The level of the course is targeted to professional booksellers, librarians, archivists, and serious collectors.
 9. Someone new to the field; it was, at times, stuck in a “freshman” mode.
 10. Not too intellectually demanding. The course requires that you be open to seeing the value in subject areas that have been ignored by traditional bibliography and traditional institutions: hip-hop, countercultures, &c.
 11. Not rigorous, but useful.
- 8) *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. Learning about the transitions from the traditional book trade (if it ever was traditional) to the new, vast array of materials that scholars don’t yet know that they want.
 2. Loved the guest lecturer and the booksellers’ roundtable. I’m so glad they stayed for more than one period.
 3. The candid “in the trenches” stories were informative for their example and frankness.
 4. The case studies were instructive—especially in the instances where dealers and

- librarians were paired up. The guest speakers were well chosen.
5. N/A
 6. I think the realization that, with modern materials, not everything has to be perfect—as opposed to the more traditional collecting strategies that have been employed.
 7. Too many to share! Being told that my input was valuable and spot on gave me much more confidence in this course, and in my career as a whole.
 8. The best for me were the thoughtful explanations of the *motives* of buyers and sellers of a wide variety of printed materials.
 9. {no response}
 10. 1) Hearing from other students' experiences; 2) discussion of ethical issues; 3) focus on preserving *current* culture for the future.
 11. {no response}

9) *How could the course have been improved?*

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. KR was wonderful and knowledgeable, but having the perspective of another experienced librarian/curator would be nice.
4. The rhythm of the course seemed to have been modified this year because of faculty availability: there was an over-concentration of twentieth-century collection strategies on the first two days, without a more general overview of collection-development mechanics.
5. Perhaps broadening the scope of collecting interests.
6. N/A
7. I think the course was great as presented.
8. I would have liked a broader scope than focusing almost entirely on hip-hop and the counterculture.
9. Less specialty-dealer, high-point name-dropping, absent of a sober, general development purpose.
10. No suggestions; I think it was great. Will RBS begin collecting materials in this area? Guest booksellers were great.
11. Course was front loaded with 'zines and counterculture. Would have been better spread out, with other types of materials discussed in more depth.

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

1. Yes, and absolutely.
2. Yes, to both. The perspectives of dealers and institutions was excellent. The "donors and libraries" discussion provided great interaction involving the entire class.
3. Yes, and yes.
4. Yes. Yes, depending on their need for an opportunity to approach the subject strategically.
5. Yes, and yes.
6. Yes, especially if they are librarians/archivists who are responsible for creating collections, and who want to know about the basic selling trade, and how to

- negotiate with donors.
7. Absolutely! Absolutely, again!
 8. Yes.
 9. I would recommend to a new dealer, inexperienced in the workings of institutional purchases.
 10. Yes, and yes.
 11. Yes, mostly.

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

1. {no response}
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. N/A
6. No trip.
7. N/A
8. N/A
9. N/A
10. No field trips.
11. N/A

12) *If you attended any of our optional evening events, do you feel that they were a good use of your time? Were there any that were particularly important to your RBS experience? Any that you could have done without?*

1. I found the lectures by Drs. Zachs and Bonnell to be thoughtful, accessible, and entertaining. Time very well spent.
2. I attended Tuesday's lecture, on Boswell's *Life of Johnson* from manuscript to book, Wednesday's presentation on digital publishing, and Thursday's Booksellers' Night. Tuesday was highly scholarly and somewhat interesting. Wednesday was interesting because the publisher's perspective on this topic was new to me. Thursday was great. I could have done without Tuesday.
3. {Private response}
4. To be frank, I was disappointed with the quality of the programming. But thoroughly enjoyed spending time with colleagues.
5. I enjoyed the lecture I attended (the Boswell lecture).
6. I attended the Monday lecture and Booksellers' Night.
7. I could have done without back-to-back lectures. After being in class all day, a lecture was a little tedious. I would like to see an educational trip as an option.
8. Lectures were of a high quality.
9. Yes, though a more diverse lecture series would be welcome.
10. I think that the workshop at 7-8:30 p.m. was a bit late in the day, and overly long. The subject was fascinating, and I'm glad I went, but I was very tired afterwards.
11. Yes, especially the Boswell lecture. I did not attend the digital publishing lecture.

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

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. As with most of RBS, the relationships with people are the key. Don't skimp on making friends and contacts.
4. {no response}
5. Half the value of the course is engaging with the other students. Drink beers on the Lawn.
6. Be open minded and willing to listen to different perspectives than your own.
7. Come with no expectations, because this course offers much more than can be predicted/expected. And come with an open mind and an eager desire to learn.
8. Expect to focus on the relevance of archives to current and future scholars.
9. {no response}
10. {no response}
11. {no response}

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

1. I cannot wait to take my next class at RBS!
2. Excellent.
3. In the dark courtyard/the wine and wisdom merging/we flow—sackin' out.
4. "It's just my face!"
5. A great experience overall.
6. {no response}
7. I can't wait to come back!
8. Intense and engaging.
9. The tribe comes together/alight in the flicker of seeking/and love for the found.
10. Intellectually invigorating and highly useful.
11. More useful for the networking than for anything else.

Student Data

Number of respondents: 11 (of 11)

How did you arrange for time off to attend this course?

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 6 (54.55%)

I am self employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 4 (36.36%)

I am retired, and can arrange my own schedule: 1 (9.09%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

I paid 100% myself: 5 (45.45%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (18.18%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 4 (36.36%)
Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 6 (54.55%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (18.18%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (9.09%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (9.09%)
I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 1 (9.09%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 4 (36.36%)
My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (18.18%)
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (9.09%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (9.09%)
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (9.09%)
I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 1 (9.09%)
My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (9.09%)

*Which of the following **best** describes your current occupation?*

Library disciplines:

Archivist: 3 (27.27%)
Curator: 1 (9.09%)
Special collections librarian: 2 (18.18%)

Book trades:

Antiquarian bookseller: 5 (45.45%)