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L-25: Reference Sources for Researching Rare Books  
3-8 June 2018

**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. I did find pre-course reading useful and in fact ordered a few reference titles based on them. I think having students read a book collector or bookseller memoir might be a nice addition for an overview.
2. Yes.
3. Yes. Definitely. Especially the readings concerning different types of reference material.
4. Yes. To prepare I looked at other JS articles, too. Maybe a section on innovations/shortcomings of electronic resources?
5. Yes, they were useful.
6. Yes, pre-course readings were useful.
7. I enjoyed the reading assignments that were written by the instructor. This gave me insight into how he viewed the topic. The pre-course book was excellent and relevant in spite of not being “modern.”
8. Yes.
9. Yes, readings were short and useful. I did not do any extra preparation.
10. The reading list is super helpful!
11. Yes; no; no; no.
12. Yes, very useful.
13. {private response} Good orientation and working vocabulary for 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. This will be a wonderful resource that I will refer to again and again until I morph into JS and can spout all this stuff out automatically.
2. The course book was appropriate for the nature of this course and will continue to serve as a reference.
3. Yes. Definitely will be a staple on my book shelf.
4. All content in the workbooks is great.
5. Vol II needs new photocopies as many are too faded to be useful. {private response}
6. Absolutely wonderful, so useful, and will benefit me for the rest of my bookselling/mentoring career!
7. Extremely comprehensive! This material will be priceless to me in the future. I believe it will be up to me to utilize so much information in the most effective way. I have been handed a beautiful “book art” tool to create my own story with.
8. Excellent material.

9. Workbook was great and I will definitely refer to it regularly for reference questions at work.
10. It was appropriate and opened up whole new worlds of learning.
11. Very useful for the class and for after class.
12. Both workbooks were useful during class and will continue to be a source of information when I return to work. I like how the image examples were contained in a separate volume to eliminate the need to flip back and forth.
13. So glad to have my course pack! Filled with notes, I'm ready to use it every day! I'll make copies for my colleagues!

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

1. N/A
2. This course was excellent, and better prepares me for the work I am doing.
3. This was my first RBS course.
4. Very text/lecture heavy, less hands-on.
5. {no response}
6. N/A
7. {no response}
8. Other course was more related to what I do, but this was an excellent course.
9. Equally as informative as the other class I took.
10. N/A
11. Same rigor and expertise.
12. I will immediately apply the information I've learned to several areas of responsibility, from reference to cataloging.
13. N/A

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. The reference works we discussed about nineteenth and twentieth century subject material will be most valuable for me, but I appreciated the historical overview of learning about early printed books through the eighteenth century.
2. The bibliographic materials on early books and incunabula, as well as British literature, will be especially helpful in my current work.
3. Learning the vocabulary for discussing rare books with different audiences. I feel more prepared to talk to collectors across various professions.
4. I wish that I'd taken this earlier in my career.
5. {no response}
6. I appreciated the variety of topics covered because you never know what will come up as a bookseller.
7. I have new insight into the importance of "hands-on" material. I have discovered new directions that will guide my future research and collecting.
8. I learned so much!
9. It was all interesting, including subjects I did not expect, as new connections between bibliographies/other resources were made and discovered new paths for research.
10. This was the catalyst I needed to delve deeper into bibliographical research and focus my collecting analysis.

11. Yes.
  12. While I was aware of many resources on the list, I was not aware of the way different sources complement each other and fit together.
  13. Look where you don't expect to find info and never assume! I am already thinking of bibliographical projects to do!
- 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. JS is thorough, but also patient and accommodating for students with wide range of familiarity with course material. I came away with much more than I anticipated in terms of research skill and awareness of what I know and don't know.
  2. In combination with previous courses, I am much better prepared for the new duties I am assuming at my institution.
  3. {private response}
  4. Yes, this course was exactly as expected.
  5. {no response}
  6. I learned a tremendous amount with ease due to JS's fantastic stories and mnemonic devices.
  7. Beyond what I expected.
  8. JS rocks! He knows everything.
  9. Yes, I learned all I expected and more.
  10. JS is a true scholar with an encyclopedic memory. What an experience! This course exceeded my expectations.
  11. Yes, areas on women of nineties underdeveloped. Yes.
  12. Yes. Nothing was left out and I learned more than I had anticipated.
  13. I learned a lot and how to look up what I don't know!
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. I aim to write more authoritative, bibliographically literate book descriptions. And rewrite previous ones!
  2. There are portions of our collections which require fuller analysis and description which will be facilitated by my learnings in the course. Materials from this course will also be vital in collection development.
  3. I plan on using the skills I learned here to help colleagues at my home institution engage with rare books.
  4. Daily, researching my institution's collecting and assisting researchers.
  5. {no response}
  6. I plan to be a much better informed, responsible, and ethical bookseller.
  7. Research, collecting, and personal reading pleasure.
  8. I hope to get into doing more cross-discipline work, and this will be very helpful.
  9. To answer reference questions in my library, as well as to research books for exhibits and other projects.
  10. Personal collecting and course development.
  11. Sharing with colleges in a presentation and assisting researchers. Will also be used for a current book project.

12. Reference, acquisition requests, cataloging citations and descriptions, and finding information about materials for tours.
  13. Every day to enhance how I help patrons, colleagues, and my own research.
- 7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*
1. This course was intellectual and presumed a high level of literacy and passion for print and knowledge.
  2. Graduate students, booksellers, rare book catalogers, and librarians/archivists with limited rare book experience.
  3. This was a well-rounded course and applicable to bibliographers, book sellers, special collections librarians, and anyone working with rare books.
  4. Highly intellectual. This should be required of all subject/reference librarians.
  5. {no response}
  6. I can't think of a single person in the rare book business who would not benefit from this course.
  7. If a person has an interest in researching nearly any topic in a scholarly manner, this course is invaluable.
  8. Middle level.
  9. Anyone who conducts research, collects books, or just reads extensively would benefit from this course.
  10. High level. I would recommend those at graduate or post-graduate level. Anyone serious about books would find this course useful.
  11. Sellers, reference persons, public services persons.
  12. Anyone can find valuable information in this course.
  13. {private response}
- 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. JS's discussion questions and his emphasis of working top down from general references to find direction to more specialized references was my "aha" moment.
  2. The exercises/questions were especially helpful in learning how to utilize varied sources and learn the characteristics of those sources.
  3. All of it really. Learning the rare book lexicon will be key to me being able to utilize these materials in my work as a librarian.
  4. The sheer volume of content was refreshingly overwhelming. The light "homework" was very good!
  5. {no response}
  6. JS offers not only bibliographical information, but is willing to share his vast knowledge regarding all rare book aspects.
  7. {no response}
  8. I just learned so much—hard to isolate a single moment.
  9. Learning about the backstory of how various bibliographies and catalogs were compiled (good and bad traits) made me understand the importance of knowing your sources thoroughly.
  10. N/A

11. N/A
12. {no response}
13. {private response}

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

1. Some references for more contemporary subject research would be helpful.
2. I have no suggestions.
3. {private response}
4. Ask students to bring a tricky research problem from home and tell the class how we went about solving it.
5. Perhaps set aside a block of time to give students the opportunity to look at and “play” with some of the most important resources. Sort of like the “DesBib” museums.
6. Not at all.
7. Allow students to submit anonymous written questions.
8. It couldn't.
9. N/A
10. Continue to add to your reading lists. The work and its importance never ends.
11. More diversity.
12. {no response}
13. {private response}

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

1. Yes. Absolutely. JS should be made into an RBS action figure.
2. Yes!
3. Yes, it was a great foundational course.
4. Yes, and yes.
5. Yes, and yes.
6. Yes, and absolutely!
7. Absolutely, yes. And yes.
8. Yes, and yes.
9. Yes, I highly recommend this course.
10. {private response}
11. Yes, yes.
12. Definitely.
13. Yes, and yes!

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

1. N/A
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. N/A
5. {no response}
6. N/A

7. N/A
8. N/A
9. N/A
10. N/A
11. N/A
12. N/A
13. {private response}

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. Yes. Loved the type ornament class particularly.
2. Yes! The evening lecture on speculative collections was intriguing and thought provoking.
3. They were most useful for networking.
4. Enjoyed the printing demo/Ornament Night.
5. {no response}
6. N/A
7. It was a good opportunity to meet others with similar interests. It might be nice to use Saturday as an optional extension day for those who want to see the area. The days are very full in a positive way, so evenings are necessarily short events.
8. Evening lecture was good. Really enjoyed visiting the used book stores.
9. Yes, I enjoyed all of the evening events and would do so again in the future.
10. {private response}
11. N/A
12. {no response}
13. More printing forever! {private response}

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

1. I think introverts should try their level best to do the work of small talk at breaks.
2. The experience of this class is not unlike hurtling through space at warp speed, but because you are in a starship, you don't really mind so much.
3. JS's class has been an amazing entry into the world of rare books. He is such an expert in the field and learning from him has been really beneficial.
4. Do your readings ahead of time. Bring provisions for pretty rough lodging. Choose the Lawn over the dorm, if possible.
5. {No response}
6. Bring your brain with you. It will be greatly expanded.
7. Enjoy it!
8. {private response}
9. If you need to brush up on your library/reference skills, this is a great course. You will learn more about bibliography and the history of the book than you could imagine.
10. JS is one of the best professors I have had. He is an intellectual powerhouse, but also kind and humble. We need more scholars like him.
11. {no response}

12. {no response}
13. {private response}

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

1. So appreciative of how you all took care of brains and bodies this week.
2. Prepare for light speed, Chewy!
3. Thanks to all of the hard working RBS staff that made this experience so seamless!
4. RBS: Making you better than the rest!
5. {no response}
6. Magical! Stupendous! JS makes education so enjoyable! Best first class at RBS. Cannot recommend enough.
7. JS is an exceptionally brilliant educator with a stunning level of knowledge in his field. Thank you for the learning opportunity!
8. RBS rocks!
9. The week can be challenging but highly rewarding, and well worth your time.
10. JS is golden!
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. See you next year!

### **Student Data**

*Number of respondents:* 13 (of 13)

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

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 8 (61.53%)

I am self-employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 4 (30.76%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (7.69%)

*Who paid your RBS tuition costs?*

I paid 100% myself: 1 (7.69%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 6 (46.15%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 3 (23.07%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive part; I paid the rest: 2 (15.38%)

*Who paid your RBS housing expenses?*

I paid 100% myself: 8 (61.53%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 3 (23.07%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (7.69%)

*Who paid your RBS travel expenses?*

I paid 100% myself: 9 (69.23%)  
My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (15.38%)  
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)  
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (7.69%)

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

**Library disciplines:**

Archivist: 2 (15.38%)  
Cataloger/metadata librarian: 1 (7.69%)  
Public services librarian: 2 (15.38%)  
Subject specialist/bibliographer: 2 (15.38%)  
Other: 2 (15.38%)

**Professional educator:**

Assistant professor: 1 (7.69%)

**Book trades:**

Antiquarian bookseller: 2 (15.38%)

**Other occupations/vocations:**

Book collector: 1 (7.69%)