

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. The reading list was excellent. It was quite long, but they were divided between primary and secondary, so it was easy to prioritize.
 2. Yes! I thought the preparatory readings were great at setting the stage for materials discussed in class in more depth. I had very little subject knowledge on the topic of this course, so I enjoyed diving into the coursework after getting my footing with the preliminary/background readings.
 3. Yes, they were helpful for getting context for the course, though we didn't have much time to talk about them in detail during the actual course itself.
 4. Immensely. I enjoyed and learned from all of them. The entire syllabus was thorough and useful.
 5. {no response}
 6. {no response}
 7. Before the course I browsed all the materials. I appreciated the depth and breadth of DS's reading assignments. I didn't read everything, but absolutely learned from DS's contextualizing, and my fellow students' discussion.
 8. Very useful pre-course readings, particularly the Foster and McHenry selections.
 9. {no response}
 10. The pre-course reading assignments were good for orienting myself and preparing for the main themes of the course (especially the Frances Smith Foster reading). I don't have any potential improvements to suggest.
 11. {no response}
 12. Very useful—and I'll spend the next year reading the ones I didn't get to yet.
 13. {no response}
 14. Yes, the pre-course reading assignments built a shared vocabulary that we deployed and refined in conversations throughout the course.
 15. I think everything was very useful (especially the secondary sources made it easier for me to follow the course)—this week covered a lot of different genres, themes, print technologies, &c.
 16. Dorothy Berry's article, "The House that Archives Built," is a great primer for lots of courses dealing with archival materials.
 17. The preliminary readings were super helpful. I found everything interesting and

relevant.

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 readings and links to collections and events were extremely useful.
2. I thought the course slideshows and assignments were very helpful in processing all the reading I did in a short amount of time. I definitely want to go back and dig deeper into the readings and revisit the guiding questions in the assignments while I read further, so I definitely think the course materials will come in handy in the future.
3. Absolutely! If anything, I have an over-abundance of resources to look through/digest as I move forward with my research projects that involve African American print culture. I found DS's statement on using racialized language particularly helpful, as this has always been a struggle for me in talking about the terms used both historically and in reference to academic research.
4. This course was great on all fronts. I will return to many of these materials, especially when it comes to building my own courses in the future.
5. {no response}
6. Useful resources were shared.
7. The course reading material introduced me to primary sources and genres new to me. I'll follow and engage with this research—and these scholars—for years!
8. Exceptionally useful and well-curated content; will be referring to the articles (and the readings cited in class chats) for years to come.
9. Yes.
10. There were so many great resources provided for this class, from primary sources showcasing African American print culture to online resources that compile and make primary sources available. The secondary resources were well-selected to provide additional context and to help one's understanding of the primary sources. I have many readings and websites to come back to later!
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. The content was appropriate, and the right amount. Supplementary materials were available in the event I wanted to further pursue a question, but I did not feel overwhelmed by the required reading of primary and secondary materials assigned before each session.
15. Utilizing Google Docs was very helpful for us to stay engaged with the course. The lecture slides effectively pointed at where we should pay attention to (which can be overwhelming when reading dated texts).
16. Yes.

17. Everything was highly organized.

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 plan to include some of the readings and course content in my own classes.
2. I work with a lot of self-published or self-produced twentieth-century activist and social/political movement materials, and I think this course definitely illuminated for me some more nuanced historical context that I was missing, and I connected a lot of dots between specifically the nineteenth-century newspapers and convention proceedings with 1960's and 70's Black radical organizing, which was a pleasant surprise for me and really made the course worth it. Now I feel as though I can approach these twentieth-century materials with a more nuanced and complete historical lens.
3. No "aha!" moments, but a lot of confirmation that my independent studies on this subject (African American print culture) were in line with the most recent scholarship on the topic. That was gratifying and reassuring in and of itself, mostly because it confirmed that my own thoughts/feelings on the subject are in line with the field itself. I also definitely want to include Walker's Appeal in any classes I teach on American Literature, especially and perhaps in conversation with Frederick Douglass's Narrative, which is what is most commonly taught. I think the juxtaposition of the two would provide some interesting avenues for discussion.
4. I will absolutely use these materials in my teaching, and also, I found DS's teaching technique (keyword, question, artifact) to be illuminating. I'd like to develop a version of that activity for small groups in my courses. I am going to teach Lee's journal in the future for sure and found some materials in the Colored Conventions readings that piqued my interest and might spark a research project someday. I feel more confident about designing assignments around newspapers now as well.
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. I have new ideas for contributing to DH projects already extant, and research threads to follow that connect my usual area of study to African American print culture of the nineteenth century.
8. So many things! Will be meeting with our special collections librarian and reaching out to our libraries' director and assistant director of collections to discuss holdings; planning to contact administration about Douglass Day and other potential library- and community-wide activities, development opportunities, &c. The course also gave new direction and inspiration to my scholarly projects, which have each been on-hold to varying degrees.
9. This class was wonderful and helped me to better understand how these types of materials can be used.

10. Some of the most useful takeaways from the course for me were all of the digital projects in the works, which I can now direct students and researchers to. I also loved all of the connections we drew between people/events/pamphlets/newspapers and the many layers of networks at play, which is something I want to lean into more in future discussions I might have of nineteenth-century African American history.
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. I hope to apply some of the conceptual frameworks I learned about to more modern contexts by searching for historical through-lines into the twentieth century.
15. The stuff I learned will definitely be incorporated into my dissertation chapter.
16. Potential teaching materials and resources
17. Yes: I plan to apply a lot of what I learned towards my research on Arabic print and Arab American print in particular.

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. {no response}
2. Yes, while there was so much information I feel as though I am still absorbing a good amount of it, but the promise of the course description was definitely delivered on. I also feel for certain areas we didn't go as in-depth on we were given a myriad of resources to further learn and explore these topics on our own time.
3. The materials and sources (both primary and secondary) we talked about were extremely interesting, and I loved how well DS wove them together to create a coherent narrative of African American print culture through the different mediums and temporal parameters of the nineteenth century. I do wish we had had more time to crystallize the "frameworks" of how to talk/read these sources more. I feel like DS was giving us frameworks in his lectures and in our small-group work, but perhaps "summarizing" or sign-posting the ideas expressed as "frameworks" we could use going forward would be helpful.
4. Yes. I was looking for an entry point into this field and received that plus a lot more.
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. Absolutely, I learned as much as I could absorb. DS was fantastic.
8. Absolutely. DS is as brilliant an instructor as he is a scholar. Lectures and readings were well-balanced with class discussion and balanced breakouts. Additionally, it is not easy to create a sense of classroom community in a Zoom room. It's a tribute to DS's skills that I left feeling connected and part of a "trust tree".
9. Yes.

10. We skimmed a bit over the actual technological/mechanical processes of printing—the focus is definitely on the social aspects, with the basics of the physical processes of print creation more informing our discussion than being a subject of it. I thought there would be a little more about the mechanics of printing, but I was not especially disappointed.
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Absolutely. DS went above and beyond in providing the skill set necessary to read through African American print culture artifacts. I feel equipped to handle an array of artifact types, and to approach them with the care and attention of a literary scholar.
15. DS kept an eye on the chat/encouraged us to use the chat function, which was very helpful to ask follow-up questions, &c.
16. Yes.
17. It was a good introduction: I came away thinking of how much more there was to learn.

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

1. {no response}
2. I would have liked to spend more time in breakout groups because in Zoom meetings I feel like interaction with others in the class is always lacking. I really enjoyed the conversations I had in the morning session where we discussed keywords and presented questions to the class. I think it would be nice to do this again in the afternoon session with a different topic, so the lectures would be a little more broken up. I really enjoyed the lectures though, they did not disappoint! I just would have liked some more peer-to-peer communication time within the synchronous meetings.
3. It would have been helpful to have access to the course readings earlier. There was SO MUCH. to read/digest, even and especially during the week itself, that it would have been great to have more than a week or so to get a head start. As it was, I wasn't ever able to completely finish all the homework assignments, just getting the gist, and thus I felt like my experience wasn't as "in depth" as if I had had more time to prepare.
4. I don't think so. It was designed well and covered a lot of ground for such a brief online course.
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. Four and a half hours on Zoom per day was A LOT, but I understand why the course was structured that way. I might prefer 5 afternoons instead.
8. Hard to imagine!
9. {no response}
10. I can't think of any.

11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. I usually have something for this section, but I do not this time around. It was that all-encompassing, that fulfilling, that NECESSARY a course to have on the catalog available to RBS participants.
15. {no response}
16. Not in particular.
17. Not really. Everything was relaxed but also jam-packed. I just wish it was longer (another four hours would have covered a bit more).

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

1. {no response}
2. I think any library or archives professional that works with collections that contain nineteenth-century American printed materials would absolutely benefit from this course. I personally don't even work with these materials, but I had a pretty deep understanding of many different time periods and demographics of print culture throughout the ages, but I feel like for some reason I had never read or studied in depth the nineteenth-century African American press, and I am very glad this course allowed for me a crash course in this material.
3. I think just about anyone would benefit from this course, but particularly scholars who teach American Literature surveys and early humanities courses. These sources are so often only taught in isolated moments (usually around the "Civil War" era) and are only familiar to Black print culture specialists in the higher education sphere (i.e., Ph.D.s, professors, etc.) but our students deserve to know that African American print cultures existed right alongside the Declaration of Independence and didn't just start with abolition and Frederick Douglass. If anything, this course has taught me that there is no such thing as a "token" period of nineteenth-century Black print culture, and so we need to be teaching this literature right alongside the canonized White American Romantics (Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Dickinson, etc.) right from the start.
4. Professors and graduate students in my field (early U.S. studies).
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. Subject librarians, archivists/librarians interested in the print record, digital humanists.
8. The mix of disciplines represented—academics, libraries and archives professionals, antiquarians, and book dealers—was ideal. Would recommend to all.
9. Teachers and librarians.
10. Everyone! People who teach, people who catalog, people who are librarians, people who are archivists, people who are students—this course covers a very important history

that more people should be aware of. It also covers how we talk about this history and how we analyze the printed materials left behind (especially relevant for those who do instruction), along with how we make the history and resources accessible (especially relevant for those who describe materials).

11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Anybody interested in gaining a foothold in nineteenth-century print culture.
15. {no response}
16. Anyone working with Black/African historical materials.
17. {no response}

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

1. Yes, the course fulfilled my expectations and it was well worth the tuition.
2. Yes, I think so.
3. I do! It was such a pleasure and privilege to learn from DS's work, and the work of Brigitte Fielder, and Molly Hardy's work with *Chronicling America*. I do think the price tag was a little steep for a virtual course, though, but it was definitely money well spent.
4. Yes.
5. Yes, absolutely.
6. {no response}
7. Yes, very much so.
8. Yes!
9. Yes.
10. Yes!
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Absolutely.
15. Yes.
16. Not sure.
17. N/A

8) *How likely are you to recommend this course to others?*

1. 10
2. 9
3. 10
4. 10
5. 10

6. 10
7. 10
8. 10
9. 10
10. 10
11. 10
12. 8
13. 10
14. 10
15. 10
16. 8
17. 10

9) *If your course had any virtual field trips or guest speakers, do you feel that they were time well spent?*

1. Yes, the guest speakers were appropriate and very interesting.
2. Yes, we had two guest speakers and I think they really added to the course experience by synthesizing the ideas in the texts we were discussing further and sharing research projects related to the primary sources we were exploring. I enjoyed them both and I am glad to know of the many resources they showed us during their lectures.
3. I enjoyed the speakers who came to share their expertise, though at times their connections to the actual class were a bit confusing/muddled. Brigitte Fielder's research was VERY interesting in itself, but as it wasn't focused on the Colored Conventions movement per se, it was a little confusing to have it on that last day. It might have made more sense on the first day, when we were talking about the wide diversity of materials in Black print culture (since her talk connected a wide variety of paper ephemera).
4. I really enjoyed Molly Hardy's presentation. That was excellent.
5. The guest speakers were excellent.
6. {no response}
7. Yes, both guest speakers were excellent.
8. Yes! Both lectures were entirely distinct from each other and entirely on-point for the course content. I appreciated the balance between the more practical/professional development-oriented talk on Day 2 and the work-in-progress scholarly research presentation on Day 3.
9. Yes.
10. Yes! The guest speakers either explained their work on an online resource that is useful for people researching African American print cultures or described their own research on the topic. As a result, the talks were useful for thinking about the history on its own and how we might guide others as they investigate the history themselves.

11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. The guest speakers were well-prepared and engaging. I especially enjoyed hearing Brigitte Fielder's latest work.
15. Yes, we had two guest speakers from different disciplines, which I feel made the course more well-rounded and informative (considering that the RBS participants come from different backgrounds).
16. {no response}
17. They were lovely!

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

1. {no response}
2. Get a head start on the reading! I ended up skipping and coming back to things because I got a little overwhelmed trying to read everything completely, but I could have been more efficient with my reading techniques.
3. Enjoy yourself, and don't get too overwhelmed if you can't finish all the reading. I still got a LOT out of this course simply from the discussions and lectures, even though I couldn't always complete all the reading assignments to the level of detail and depth that I had wanted to. At the very least, I've come away with a nice reading list of sources, both primary and secondary, in which to further explore for future projects!
4. I think the course is worth it—just give yourself plenty of time to do the readings!
5. {no response}
6. {no response}
7. {no response}
8. Couldn't recommend more highly. I haven't gotten this much out of 12 hours of class-time for literally decades.
9. {no response}
10. You are not going to have time to read everything on the syllabus, so get started early and bookmark anything that you think you might want to dive further into so you can come back to it later.
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Make time for the readings (especially the primary sources) before class. They are really worth the time.
15. {no response}
16. {no response}
17. {no response}

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

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. Riveting.
4. This was a great course. It would work well in-person as well as online.
5. {no response}
6. Very useful and I hope to do an in-person course next year.
7. Save more primary sources (like planting a tree, the best time to start was years ago, or barring that, today), describe accurately, provide wide access, and practice re-describing to center marginalized voices and stories.
8. Electric.
9. {no response}
10. At the end of the week, I felt like I had absorbed so much knowledge that I was going to burst—in the best possible way.
11. Wonderful!
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. I came away with a much better grasp of nineteenth-century print culture, equal parts culture and print, as advertised. But also, the Badu, Kaytranada, Miles, Stevie, Withers, &c. during breaks were a welcome addition to set the tone at an RBS course!
15. {no response}
16. Informative and useful.
17. {no response}