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L-145: Medieval Manuscript Fragments: Cataloging & Discoverability
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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 readings were a good introduction to the course and I would recommend reading them before Monday. While there are many readings throughout the week, I found them interesting and helpful.
2. The pre-course readings were very useful!
3. Yes, and there was a reasonable amount.
4. The readings fluctuated a bit as the course approached, some were a bit long, but mostly were to provide context. As someone who is not a cataloger there are a lot of technical aspects that aren't second nature to me, and those readings were a little challenging. Exposure to those ideas is helpful though.
5. Yes, they were useful.
6. The reading assignments were very good—I did have to plan carefully and start on them two weeks in advance, because there were a lot of them and they were very front-loaded. This wasn't really a problem, but I do think people new to RBS courses should probably be made aware that they'll need to start early.
7. Yes, the readings we were assigned were so useful, but I would really like to see more pre-course readings on library systems and cataloging.
8. They were all well-chosen and helpful.
9. {private response}
10. The readings were helpful to bring me up to speed and introduce me to the work LFD was conducting with fragments. The reading was extensive, but informative.
11. I benefited from the readings. Some were particularly enjoyable. I felt that readings about photography and manuscript genres in the Middle Ages would have served as a useful supplement to the course content.
12. {no response}
13. The readings were appropriate for the course and useful. The instructor also made valuable suggestions for further reading and study.

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 content was incredibly useful and I learned a lot about manuscript identification and the challenges of cataloging. This course is definitely geared towards catalogers and those working in libraries.
2. I appreciate that all the slideshows were shared on a Google Drive. I look forward to consulting them later!
3. Extremely helpful resource posted to us online that we can keep and use in the future.
4. We got some really helpful handouts to help identify manuscripts, and lots of other resources online that will be very useful for identifying texts going forward.

Getting explanations of how different platforms work and can help you as a researcher was really helpful.

5. All materials in the shared drive were appropriate and useful (PowerPoint presentations, handouts, readings, links, &c.)
6. We didn't have a workbook, but I will definitely refer to a number of the readings and handouts again.
7. The materials LFD has shared with us are invaluable! I know that I will be using her cheat sheets and tips and tricks for a long time to come.
8. They were well chosen.
9. The handouts provided, concerning liturgical forms, &c., were very helpful and will be useful after class.
10. LFD gave us a lot of links. I will look through them more extensively when I return to my institution. The class was both niche and expansive, so it was easy to get off track looking for things. Overall, the handouts, slides, links were incredibly helpful. I'm looking forward to continued research.
11. I was pleasantly surprised by the quality and interest of the literary materials. These were principally manuscript fragments from RBS. There was a point on Friday when it became clear that there was a large quantity of fragments that we might have seen that we did not have time to look at. It would have been nice to spend more time with them.
12. {no response}
13. The online materials, databases, and handouts made available are fantastic. I imagine using them probably in the future.

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. I learned about the importance of good cataloging and the issues institutions face.
2. I was admittedly more interested in the parts about in-situ and ex-situ binding fragments because my library never got into collecting cuttings or leaves. I was grateful for the opportunity to learn more (both in class and in conversation with LFD) about contributing to Fragmentarium. I came into class with a project in mind to make my library's in-situ binding fragments more discoverable, and I left with a solid path forward.
3. It was all fantastic—and a nice variety of interrelated topics so you could get a real sense of the field. The paleography and placing/dating tips were clear and presented in a way you could understand. The info on the history of the field, the cataloging aspects, and the ethics were valuable. There was enough time for discussion, independent working, and learning from the faculty expert. LFD set it up so we could all learn from each other.
4. Ways to track manuscript sales, and to reconnect leaves made a big impression on me. Learning more about all the work already done about Otto Ege's leaf dispersal was also useful since he has had an impact on my institutional collection. Definitely many new skills in paleography, and more confidence in my ability to problem solve to identify fragments and leaves.
5. I really enjoyed the hands-on experience with medieval manuscripts from RBS and UVA SC, as well as the opportunity to research examples from my institution and share my findings with the class.

6. Cataloging new manuscript acquisitions is part of my job, although new acquisitions do not arrive that often (I've been in the job for two years and this year is the first time I've had to do it). The course was extremely useful in helping me to identify one particular fragment—I feel much better equipped to catalog it now and less intimidated by the very difficult script. The discussions and readings also gave me some ideas about working with the in-situ fragments in my university's rare books department.

7. As a researcher who is a user of libraries, it was so interesting to be in a room with so many experts in library sciences. I was thrown into the deep end of conversations that I don't normally get to be a part of, and I feel like this week has broadened my understanding of the topic.

8. My primary intention for attending was to learn more about the digital humanities piece including IIF, cataloguing issues, and during fragment and manuscript databases. I benefited tremendously from the conversation about ethics, which I had never considered to that degree. I also learned much more about the uncatalogued collection I draw upon and have a much better sense of what I have been overlooking and where to whom I should share that information.

9. Just about everything offered new insights on existing work/projects and vistas for new projects. I see a fragment inventory in the future. There is information to take back to the Digital Projects team regarding initiation of an IIF server to support future efforts. There are a variety of standards initiatives to advocate for.

10. For me, the course was a fantastic overview of an area related to my work. I have a much greater appreciation for the special manuscript collection we have and came up with terrific ideas for projects when I return. I was able to understand holes in our collection and possible ways to redirect funds to enhance discoverability and content. I loved the conversations and debates we had in class. Each student and LFD brought a unique experience and point of view.

11. Yes, it helped me realize that the basics of manuscript description and identification are, with some effort, within my realm and available for my professional use. For at least my project and my professional horizon, I will be applying the skills I learned in this course as soon as I return to the office.

12. {no response}

13. The information that was imparted will be useful as I plan on cataloging for manuscript projects in the future. I feel inspired to pick up on some of the ideas in class and pursue further research.

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.

3. Yes, I feel much better equipped to work with fragments in my job, and in my own research. I'm excited about putting things into practice. She was also practical and didn't try to cover everything—she made great choices of what to include and what to point us to for the future.

4. LFD was great, always incredibly willing to help out with questions, take a second or third look at something. Since this wasn't a paleography course, we got a very quick overview of paleographic signals to look out for—and then covered a lot of ground

about the history of fragmentation and ethics &c. Very important topics, I probably would have liked more paleography time, but I understand why it needed to be short.

5. Yes, and yes.

6. I definitely learned what I wanted to learn—strategies for working with unidentified fragments with little provenance, and reconstructing part of the history of a fragment based on the material evidence. I was also able to find out specific information about an unidentified manuscript leaf, and even another leaf from the same manuscript, using the skills and resources I learned about in this course.

7. Yes, absolutely! It was fascinating to hear so many real stories about fragments that have been resequenced and about vital information that has been gleaned from fragments. I could listen to LFD tell stories all day.

8. The instructor was outstanding! We covered nearly every aspect of manuscript studies. I initially expected we would focus more specifically on the digital piece, which is my main interest, but it was clear that the other students who were not medievalists required and appreciated the broader background. The instructor was right to incorporate it.

9. I'm not sure I remember what was promised; I took it on faith by the course title that the content would be informative and relevant. This was indeed the case. I have new insights and skillsets to take back with me.

10. I learned what I hoped to learn, which was a greater comfort level with fragments and manuscripts. I knew going into the program that I was out of my depth in many specific ways, but I was welcomed, supported and encouraged. It was a terrific experience.

11. The institution did a very good job demonstrating where the easiest points of entry to the field of manuscript description lie. This above all exceeded my expectations for the course because I am convinced that I can continue to grow along the lines LFD did in class.

12. {no response}

13. Yes to both! I feel incredibly enriched from this course.

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

1. {no response}

2. I plan to create records in my library's catalog and in Fragmentarium for manuscript fragments in-situ in bindings.

3. I will use some in my work immediately. In the future, they will be very relevant for my research, but not for my work anymore unless I get back into cataloging in the future.

4. I'm assembling metadata for a fragment collection which will definitely benefit from the information I gained in the course. There are so many technical and aesthetic details to consider that being in a classroom of fellow students and experts was so helpful.

5. I plan to enhance some of my institution's existing catalog records for medieval manuscripts, as well as create new records that are more detailed and discoverable

6. In the immediate future, I am going to write a catalog entry for the fragment I chose for my class project. My university is hiring a rare books librarian soon and I also plan to reach out to them (once the person has been selected) to collaborate on a catalog of in situ manuscript fragments (at my workplace, rare printed books and manuscripts are different departments in different physical locations). In the more

distant future, I also plan to create IIF manifests for my university's manuscript collection (which consists mostly of fragments).

7. I am currently working on an edition, and some of the source manuscripts for the edition are fragments. This course has prompted me with new questions to explore with relation to my current project. This course has also inspired me to pursue fragments in my future research in a more targeted way.

8. I need to re-examine our entire collection now that I have a much better understanding of other American collections and the history of American collection. The ethics conversation will give me great pause about my roles in the book trade. But, as always, this is a question I will be able to answer better in the coming months and years. I have no doubt that much of what I encountered this week will bear fruit in ways that I don't even expect!

9. The information learned will improve the cataloging for collections of individual leaves. It will be interesting to see what a fragment survey turns up and how this class can be applied in those results.

10. Learning about shareability and ongoing research allows me to take a lot of information back to my institution.

11. I will apply them in a professional project that I am currently engaged with.

12. {no response}

13. I will apply the skills learned here to work when I return.

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

1. Librarians, catalogers, medievalists conducting research who want to learn more about how to find material.

2. Special collection librarians who work with fragments, catalogers, and medievalists who are new to working with fragments.

3. I think it benefits the whole range from cataloger to instruction librarian to Collector to Book Dealer —&c. Anyone with an interest in medieval manuscripts and early printed books could benefit.

4. Anyone who works with old books and manuscripts, cataloging, curating, working with fragments in a teaching capacity.

5. Curators, catalogers, medievalists, collectors, and dealers.

6. Librarians who have to prepare catalog entries for manuscript items but may not be trained in codicology—cataloging manuscripts is part of my job but I am not a “cataloging librarian,” exactly (since manuscript acquisitions are sporadic).

7. Librarians with special collections would certainly benefit from this course even if you are in no way a specialist in the medieval period. But any researcher who finds themselves working on early modern or medieval source material would benefit greatly as well.

8. Librarians who are non-medievalists.

9. Anyone with detached leaves or manuscript fragments in their collections.

10. This class might have requested a prerequisite, or proof of work career. I should have started with a more introductory course, but again, I was welcomed, encouraged and supported.

11. Curators, catalogers, vendors.

12. {no response}

13. Anyone who will be dealing professionally with the cataloging or identification of manuscript fragments.

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. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. Sharing information—when others in the audience saw something on an example—in person or digital—that added to what was previously known about it. This happened over and over, and it could happen because of the way the professor structured the course and made space for folks to discuss and see things. The various exercises in class and for homework that allowed us to put our newly learned skills and info to work were very effective. I feel that I will remember things much more because I was tested in this way.
4. It was great to see fragments from SC's fragment collection and see the breadth there. They are all ex-situ, at least that we looked at, which I think ideally I'd have liked to see them also in-situ. Getting to practice our identification skills together as a class and see some of the treasures of UVA was really great and a fun way to wrap up the class.
5. I was most excited about applying newly acquired knowledge to the examples from my institution—I see these fragments in a whole new light now and feel much more confident in my ability to describe them fully and accurately.
6. I'm incredibly proud that I was able to identify a really difficult fragment and have come up with a few ways to investigate it further.
7. LFD was constantly asking us all such insightful questions that really helped us rethink our work in productive ways. Otherwise, it was just such a constant inspiration to hear about the many ways LFD has revolutionized this subfield of manuscript studies. She shared so many fascinating cases of fragments uncovered and re-sequenced, and she has clearly worked so hard to make fragments a viable line of inquiry for researchers everywhere.
8. Ethics, Schoenberg database, Mirador and IIF were all completely brand new to me and highly appreciated.
9. An invaluable element was the opportunity to partake in a broad swath of expertise across the various students. There was fertile cross-pollination of knowledge.
10. Honestly all of it. I'm very new to the field, so knowing what resources are available was really helpful.
11. The best day of the course by far was the introduction to identifying varieties by medieval script.
12. {no response}
13. The instructor imported "secrets" of the profession, tips that make identification easier, most generous!

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

1. {no response}
2. {private response}
3. It is impossible to think of any—it was so well done.
4. I personally felt a little at sea with the brief overview of paleography, though many students had had the whole class at RBS last year. I understand why it was rushed

over, but I think maybe a cheat sheet, or sheet of letters to look for and common abbreviations could be helpful for those coming into this with less paleographical experience.

5. No (it's great as is!)

6. {no response}

7. I, personally, could have benefitted from more basic explanations on topics concerning library sciences, but I found I was still totally able to follow the discussion, and now I have many new colleagues to whom I may send my questions :)

8. I would reduce the number of fragments we were looking at during those sessions with original materials in order to increase time for discussion. I would reduce the manuscripts studies piece, especially paleography, also to allow more time for discussion.

9. {no response}

10. {no response}

11. I think that a more focused comparison of subvarieties of medieval writing styles could have been helpful to sharpen our skills before engaging in hands-on labs. But this is a quibble. I'm only asking for more of a good thing that the instructor did provide.

12. {no response}

13. I think the course was prepared intelligently by someone who loves to teach, impart what she knows, and by someone who is a kind, people-centered person

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. 8

2. 10

3. 10

4. 10

5. 10

6. 10

7. 10

8. {no response}

9. 10

10. 8

11. 10

12. {no response}

13. 10

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. {no response}

2. {no response}

3. We had guest material from UVA SC and that was valuable.

4. {no response}

5. n/a

6. {no response}
7. We spent a session looking at fragments from UVA's SC, and that was such a blast. None of us wanted to go to break!
8. {no response}
9. NA
10. Did not have
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. Didn't make any field trips. Viewing UVA's Rosenthal Collection was a good experience.

11) *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. Don't worry about background knowledge—it is taught in such a way that novices and experienced folks benefitted and there were not times when some folks were lost or others bored—everyone was appreciated and had a chance to contribute. The professor was skillful in limiting or re-directing when needed without anyone ever feeling corrected. It felt like it was allowed to progress naturally—but in actuality it was enhanced by her direction and thus much more effective.
4. This course was so much fun—probably useful to take paleography first, but you can keep up decently without it!
5. If your institution/collection includes medieval manuscript fragments, and you want to be able to identify and describe them properly, this is definitely a course you should take.
6. Definitely start the readings early, but if you are going to work with manuscript fragments in any capacity, you should absolutely take the course.
7. Take this course!
8. Rudimentary knowledge of Latin and some paleography is helpful to have beforehand.
9. {no response}
10. RBS could spend a little more on welcoming us.
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. Try to do all suggested readings and viewings. This will enhance the class-time experience.

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

1. {no response}
2. Always a good time, always educational.
3. I want to come again and again.
4. {no response}
5. A totally awesome experience, and LFD is a rockstar!
6. LFD is the best instructor ever!

7. Enlightening.
8. {no response}
9. Gloria gloriosam!
10. I was happy to be in the room, because I didn't know what I didn't know.
11. This class was a pleasure but also very useful. Don't miss it.
12. {no response}
13. A group of sympathetic people, guided by someone who has an amazing grasp of the field and tremendous people skills.