

Syllabus (Summer 2013)

LIS 901-003 – Managing Ephemera in Libraries, Archives, and Museums Palmer School of Library and Information Science Long Island University

Instructor: Henry Raine

Time and Place:

Bobst Library, NYU, Avery Fisher West, 2nd Floor
70 Washington Square South, New York, NY 10012
Fridays, July 12-August 16, 2013, 10:00-4:00

Contact Information:

Email: henry.raine@gmail.com

Phone: 917-287-2157

Prerequisites: LIS 713 – Rare Books and Special Collections Librarianship

Summary:

The course will provide an overview of ephemera collections and their management in libraries and archives. It will consist of half-day lectures, exercises, and discussions, and half-day tours of ephemera collections at institutions around New York City. In-class topics will include understanding and identifying different types of ephemera, the history of ephemera in relation to print culture and the history of printing and publishing practices, the relationship of ephemera to other materials in library and archival collections, the collecting and acquisition of contemporary and historical ephemera, the cataloging, processing, and housing of ephemera collections, how to provide access to ephemera in a library or archives reading room, security issues, the potential uses and research value of ephemera collections, and the ephemera of the future. Field trips will include visits to the Grolier Club, the New York Public Library, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the Tamiment Library, the New York Academy of Medicine, and the New-York Historical Society. The course will be supplemented by readings from archivists and librarians, historians of printing, and other scholars who use ephemera in their research.

At the end of the semester, students will be familiar with:

- The types of ephemera found in the collections of libraries, archives, and museums
- The history of printing and publishing, especially as it applies to ephemera
- The way libraries, archives and museums traditionally manage ephemera collections
- Prominent collectors of ephemera through history
- How libraries and archives acquire ephemera and ephemera collections
- The role of the antiquarian book trade and the paper trade in building ephemera collections
- Different methods of organizing and cataloging ephemera
- Issues in providing access to ephemera in libraries and archives
- The research potential of ephemera and ephemera collections

- Teaching and outreach using ephemera and ephemera collections
- The role of digitization in making ephemera more accessible
- Issues concerning the collecting and management of born-digital ephemera

Palmer School Learning Objectives:

This course, which focuses on managing a particular type of material in rare book and special collections libraries known as ephemera, addresses part of Goal I (“Reflect the principles, ethics and philosophy of the profession while serving their patrons, institutions and communities”) and part of Goal II (“Utilize a broad range of systems and technologies to manage and deliver information”). From Goal I, this course particularly addresses part c (“Explain, compare and contrast different types of collections, libraries and information centers”). From Goal II, the class addresses parts a and b (“Use professional standards to organize, manage, preserve, evaluate, and deliver information resources in a variety of formats” and “Explain and apply systems for organizing and structuring information and knowledge, such as cataloging, classification and other metadata formation standards”).

Assignments and Final Grade:

You will be assigned a final project and paper that you will be working on throughout the six weeks of the course and that will be due a week after the final class meeting. You will also be assigned a short in-class presentation most weeks that will be related to the topic of the day’s class and that will also help you prepare for your final project, as well as a final presentation based on your final project and paper. Presentations will require you to do preparatory reading, and the final project and paper will require you to become familiar with issues, vocabulary, and resources relating to ephemera. Your final project and paper will be graded on grammar and syntax as well as content, and must be presented in a professionally appropriate form. For full credit you must submit your final project and paper by the August 23 deadline. Grading will be as follows:

Final project and paper, due August 23	50 points
Final presentation, August 16	20 points
Attendance and class participation	30 points
Total	100 points

Class Participation:

This course meets only six times, over six consecutive Fridays. Attendance is required for all six class sessions in order to receive full credit for the course. You will receive a lower grade if you miss any class or tour, unless there are extenuating circumstances that keep you from attending a session. If you plan on missing any classes or field trips, you will need to let me know well ahead of time.

The course will include six tours to various institutions around the city. Your attendance is required, and you will not get full credit for the course if you miss any tours. Our hosts at other institutions are putting considerable time and effort into showing us their collections, and we need to show them the courtesy of being there, and being there on time. I expect you to show up a few minutes before the scheduled start of each tour, to make sure that the entire group is there when the tour starts. Keep in mind that the tours will take place at various locations around the

city, and you will need to take travel time into consideration so that you are sure to be on time. If you are late, depending on the institution, you may not be able to join the group once the tour has started, and you will therefore be counted as absent, which will affect your grade.

Because this class includes a fairly small group of students, you will have ample opportunity to participate actively in classroom discussions. There will also be group exercises to be done in class. You must participate fully in these discussions and exercises in order to receive full credit. You will also be required to make brief oral presentations at most class meetings

Grading:

Assignments in this class will be graded according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	GPA	Definition
A	4.0	Outstanding achievement. Student performance demonstrates full command of the course materials and shows a high level of originality and/or creativity that far surpasses course expectations; grammatical errors, misspellings, and typos are minimal or non-existent.
A-	3.7	Very good work. Student performance demonstrates thorough knowledge of the course materials and exceeds course expectations by completing all requirements in a superior manner; grammatical errors, misspellings, and typos are minimal (average one-two per page) or non-existent.
B+	3.3	Good work. Student performance demonstrates above-average comprehension of the course materials and exceeds course expectations on all tasks as defined in the course syllabus; grammatical errors, misspellings, and typos are present (average two-three per page).
B	3.0	Adequate work. Student performance meets designated course expectations, demonstrates understanding of the course materials, and is at an acceptable level; grammatical errors, misspellings, and typos are present (average four-five per page).
B-	2.7	Marginal work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete understanding of course materials; grammatical errors, misspellings, and typos are frequent (average six-ten per page).
C+	2.3	Unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete and inadequate understanding of course materials; grammatical errors, misspellings, and typos are very frequent (average 11-14 per page) and adversely affect the structure and flow of the narrative.
C	2.0	Unacceptable work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete and inadequate understanding of course materials; grammatical errors, misspellings, and typos are ubiquitous (average 15 or more per page) and adversely affect the structure and flow of the narrative.
F	0.0	Failing. Student failed to turn in an assignment or plagiarized.

Planning Your Time:

The State of New York specifies that a three-credit, for-credit course should require a minimum of about 150 hours. This is a rigorous, professional, graduate course. You should prepare to spend more than 150 hours to get full benefit from the course. You should begin working on your final project and paper from the first week of class. Adequate preparation for class discussions, exercises, and presentations requires that you do a substantial amount of reading and research on your own. Thorough preparation for class discussions, exercises, and presentations will also help you do a better job on your final projects. For planning purposes, the following estimates of time commitment below may be helpful. Keep in mind that this is an indication of minimum time necessary to complete the required work in a satisfactory manner.

Final Project and Paper	50 hours
Readings (6 weeks x 10 hours)	60 hours
In-class presentations	20 hours
Class meetings and tours (6 sessions x 6 hours)	36 hours
Total	166 hours (average 28 hours/week)

Textbook and Readings:

There is no textbook relating to the field of ephemera. However, you may want to acquire Rickard's *Encyclopedia of Ephemera* (see below for full citation), which is the best reference source available on the topic. Some of the other class readings are accessible freely online or will be available in full text through the Library Science and Information Science databases accessible to Palmer School students through the LIU library web page. Other course materials listed in this syllabus are available in NYU Bobst Library's reference area on the ground level (all non-circulating); a few items will be on reserve in the reserve sections of Bobst Library (level A). Some online sources may be available on site at NYU (and on site at other libraries), but may not be available to Palmer students at home.

Chaison, Joanne D. "‘Everything Old is New Again’: Research Collections at the American Antiquarian Society," *Library Trends* 52, no. 1 (Summer 2003): 14-29.

On reserve

Copeland, Ann, Susan Hamburger, John Hamilton, and Kenneth J. Robinson. "Cataloging and Digitizing Ephemera: One Team's Experience with Pennsylvania German Broadsides and Fraktur," *Library Resources & Technical Services* 50, no. 3 (July 2006): 186-198.

On reserve

Harris, Robert Dalton, Diane DeBlois, David Margolis, and Jean Moss. "The Contribution of Ephemera Dealers." *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 9:1 (Spring 2008): 100-117. <http://rbm.acrl.org/content/9/1/100.full.pdf>

Henkin, David M. *City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York*. New York: Columbia University Press, c1998.

Bobst BRES F128.44 .H46 1996 On reserve

(Read relevant portions of Chapter 4, "Word on the Street: Bills, Boards, Banners")

RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage 9:1 (Spring 2008)
Special issue on ephemera (read especially articles by Twyman, Solomon, Barlow, and Barnhill).
<http://rbm.acrl.org/content/9/1.toc>

Rickards, Maurice. *Collecting Printed Ephemera*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1988.
On reserve

Rickards, Maurice. *The Encyclopedia of Ephemera: A Guide to the Fragmentary Documents of Everyday Life for the Collector, Curator, and Historian*. Ed. and completed by Michael Twyman. New York: Routledge, 2000.
Bobst REF1 NC1280 .R52 2000; also on reserve

Young, Timothy G. "Evidence: Toward a Library Definition of Ephemera," *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 11-26.
<http://rbm.acrl.org/content/4/1/11.full.pdf>

Other Suggested Resources

Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America web site. www.abaa.org
(search for booksellers specializing in ephemera)

eBay. www.ebay.com

Ephemera Society of America. www.ephemerasociety.org

Ephemera Society of America. *Directory of Members*, 2013.
On Reserve

Ephemera Society of America. *The Ephemera Journal* 1 (1987)-15:3 (May 2013)
Vols. 11-15 (2005-2013) on Reserve

Harvard University Library. *A Selection of Web-Accessible Collections*.
<http://digitalcollections.harvard.edu/>

Library and Archives Exhibitions on the Web. <http://www.sil.si.edu/SILPublications/Online-Exhibitions/>
(search under subject term "ephemera")

Library of Congress. Rare Book and Special Collections Division. *An American Time Capsule: Three Centuries of Broadsides and Other Printed Ephemera*.
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/rbpehtml/pehome.html>

Library of Congress. Rare Book and Special Collections Division. *America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets*.
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amsshtml/amsshhome.html>

New York Public Library. *Digital Gallery*. <http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/explore/>

Online Archive of California. <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>

Readex. *American Broadsides and Ephemera. Series I*.
NYU NewYorkU Internet E169.1 .A469 Electronic access
<http://infoweb.newsbank.com/?db=ABEA>

University of Oxford. Bodleian Library. *The John Johnson Collection of Ephemera*.
<http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/johnson/johnson.htm>

Citation Formats:

Use current Modern Language Association (MLA) formats consistently for your written assignment. Examples of the MLA format can be found online, most conveniently at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>. Examples of MLA formatting can be found at <http://www2.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/workshop/citmla.htm>. Regarding plagiarism, see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>. If you have questions about plagiarism, ask the instructor for help before turning in questionable material. LIU's policies on plagiarism can be found at <http://www2.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/exhibits/plagstudent.htm>.

Style Manual:

If you have questions about grammar or want to ensure that your style is clear, effective, and readable, see William Strunk, Jr.'s *The Elements of Style*, online through <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>. This succinct work is available cheaply in used copies at many used book stores or online.

Day 1—July 12, 2013

10:00-12:00: Introduction to Ephemera

Defining ephemera

Printing history as it relates to ephemera

Overview of the different types of ephemera

Discussion of class assignments

2:00-4:00: Tour of ephemera collections at the Grolier Club

Meghan Constantinou, Librarian and Eric Holzenberg, Director

Meet in lobby at 47 East 60th Street at 1:45

Day 2—July 19, 2013

10:00-12:00: Tour of ephemera collections at New York Public Library

Jessica Pigza, Assistant Curator

Meet in main lobby at 5th Avenue and 42nd Street at 10:00 (building opens at 10:00; we will proceed to Room 215 once everyone is there, so please be on time)

2:00-4:00: Ephemera in Libraries and Archives

Ephemera in the context of library special collections and archives

How libraries and archives have traditionally managed ephemera in their collections

Where ephemera can be found in library and archival collections

Special issues in management of ephemera collections

Two assignments for July 19:

1. Select the topic for your final project (see below) and do a brief class presentation on why you selected your topic.
2. Select a type of ephemera and do a 5-10 minute in-class presentation discussing what it is, what is its significance, and what challenges it might present in terms of management within a library or archives context.

Day 3—July 26, 2013

10:00-12:00: Acquiring and Collecting Ephemera

Collectors of ephemera and historical collections of ephemera

Ephemera and the antiquarian book trade and paper trade

Building a personal collection of ephemera

How libraries and archives develop collections of ephemera

Assignment for July 26: do a 5-10 minute class presentation on how you plan to acquire or build the collection of ephemera for your final project

2:00-4:00: Tour of ephemera collections at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Miranda Mims, Archivist, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Meet in the lobby at 515 Malcolm X Blvd (135th Street) at 1:45

Day 4—August 2, 2013

10:00-12:00: Cataloging, Processing, and Housing of Ephemera

Issues concerning cataloging, processing and housing of ephemera

In-class cataloging exercises

Assignment due August 2: do a 5-10 minute class presentation on how you plan to catalog, process, and house the collection of ephemera you are developing for your final project

2:00-4:00: Tour of ephemera collections at the Tamiment Library & Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives

Chela Scott Weber, Acting Head / Associate Head for Archival Collections

Meet outside of Tamiment on 10th Floor of Bobst Library at 1:45

Day 5—August 9, 2013

10:00-12:00: Tour of ephemera collections at the New York Academy of Medicine

Arlene Shaner, Acting Curator and Reference Librarian for Historical Collections

Meet in lobby at 1216 Fifth Avenue (lobby is on 103rd Street) at 9:45

2:00-4:00: Making Ephemera Accessible

Issues concerning access to ephemera in libraries and archives

Exhibitions featuring ephemera

Teaching using ephemera collections

Digitization of ephemera

Issues concerning born-digital ephemera

Assignment due August 9: do a 5-10 minute class presentation on one online exhibition, digital project, or website featuring ephemera

Day 6—August 16, 2013

10:00-12:00: Tour of ephemera collections at the New-York Historical Society

Henry Raine, Director of Digital Programs and Library Technical Services, and Susan Kriete, Archivist

Meet in the lobby at 170 Central Park West (77th Street) at 9:45

2:00-4:00: The Value of Ephemera

Ephemera as primary source material

Organizations promoting ephemera

Conferences relating to ephemera

Assignment due August 16: do a 15-minute class presentation on your final project

Final project and paper due August 23: Your final project is to develop a collection of ephemera for a library or archive. The collection can be on a subject matter that is illustrated through ephemera of one or more types, or it can be of a specific type of ephemera. You will write a 10-page paper describing the type of institution you are developing this collection for, how you plan to assemble your collection, what it will cost, how you will house it, how you will provide intellectual control for it, how you will make it physically accessible to your users, what specific problems or issues the collection might present, how it may relate to other collections in the library or archive, and its intellectual significance and research value. You should also describe your plans for continuing to develop the collection in the future. As appendices to your papers, you should provide examples of items or groups of items you'll be acquiring for the collection, and a budget outlining the cost of acquiring, housing, and cataloging the materials.