The nature, care and handling of historical materials:  
a course for students in librarianship, history, archives and museology  
by Glen P. Jenkins

For the past three years Dr. Genevieve Miller and I have offered a graduate level course through the School of Library and Information Sciences at Case Western Reserve University entitled "The Nature, Care and Handling of Historical Materials." It is taken primarily by students from the medical librarianship program with a special interest in history, but it is also open to students in the graduate history program, and to those in archives and museology. The enrollment is limited.

The purpose of the course is three-fold: 1) to familiarize the students with the tools and sources which scholars must turn to for historical research; 2) to introduce the students to rare book librarianship; and 3) to acquaint the students with the related fields of archives and museology. While the course is undeniably an overview, a low student-teacher ratio, a generous use of our historical collections, class opportunities to apply knowledge, and a term paper which requires some original research provide the opportunity for a significant education.

The course begins with the study of the earliest sources known to scholars — the clay tablets, the papyri, the inscriptions on steles and architecture and the discipline of epigraphy. This is followed by a look at medieval sources and the philological approach. The development of script is described and the peculiarities of medieval manuscripts are examined. Readings for these lectures include: Edward Chiera, They Wrote on Clay; the Babylonian Tablets Speak Today (Chicago, 1938); Henry E. Sigerist, "The Medical Literature of the Early Middle Ages. A Program and a Report of a Summer of Research in Italy," Bulletin of the History of Medicine, 1934, 2: 26-50, 559-610; and E.A. Lowe, "Handwriting," in C.G. Crump & E.F. Jacob, The Legacy of the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1948). Next, paleography and the nature of the critical text are explored, and the student is introduced to the incunabula period. A reading of Dorothy Schullian's critical text of "Nicolaus Pol de cura morbi Gallici per lignum guaycanum libellus" which relates directly to our own Nicolaus Pol Collection of Incunabula is required. From this point on, our historical collections become an integral part of the course.

Several lectures are then devoted to the history of printing, the colophon and the development of the title-page, the history of medical illustration, the herbal and medical bibliography. All of these lectures are accompanied by examples from our own collection. The history of medical illustration, for instance, is brought to life for the students as they examine Ketham, Etienne, Vesalius, Paré, Hunter, Gautier d'Agoty, Albimus, Biddulph, Camper, Gray, and finally Donne and the introduction of photography.

With this background the students are introduced to rare book librarianship. Included in this section of the course are lectures on analytical bibliography, library cataloging of rare books, acquisitions, evaluation, collectors and collecting, the physical book and the principles of conservation. Written assignments during this time include title-page transcriptions using the Hunt cataloging rules or Dunkin's How to Catalog a Rare Book, the determination of the state of one of our herbals, Hortus Floridus by Crispijn Vande Pas, the Younger (1614-1617), and the evaluation of several books (rare and otherwise). The students are also asked to examine various journals pertaining to book collecting and bibliography, and to read various current articles on collecting, bookselling.
The lectures conclude with an introduction to archives and manuscripts and museology, the latter taught by Dr. P. A. Gerstner. The principles of archive and museum management are discussed, together with the more practical aspects of arrangement and description, appraisal, exhibit techniques and conservation. The final lecture is a laboratory session in which the students are given some experience in VPD and other types of deacidification, encapsulation, the use of archival pens and the like.

In addition to the lectures and laboratory, several field trips to other rare book libraries and archives are made. We believe it is useful for the students to have exposure to other rare book librarians, their problems and how they are met, given another set of circumstances and different rules. The students are also taken to the Library's fine bindery for a binding demonstration by our conservator. They are shown how the book is put together and the different options open to the binder in sewing, backing, decoration, etc. This field trip is part of our discussion on fine binding which includes history, how and what to rebind, restore, box, and classroom experience in cleaning, deacidifying and oiling old leathers.

The term projects for the course are expected to be serious efforts of original investigation. They may draw on the resources of our library and museum, or use any of the other historical collections in our immediate area. Broad topics are discouraged, for the students generally lack the historical background to pursue great questions in history. Rather they are asked to take an object or a book (or collection of books) and research these thoroughly.

Some of the projects have included a study of our various copies of Bigelow's American Medical Botany to determine their state and history, a translation of Hebrew manuscript remnants exposed in the binding of our incunables, an evaluation of our 16th and 17th century books by English physicians, an investigation of our ophthalmoscope collection, and a catalog of medical journals published in Ohio to the present day.

The students would like to have a textbook for this course. We have been unable to find one that is appropriate. We have tried several with varying degrees of success, and this year we relied solely on the reserve shelf. W. Chappell's A Short History of the Printed Word was clearly inadequate, McKerrow's Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students was never delivered, and various pamphlets from AASLH arrived as the course ended. Any suggestions would be welcome. Perhaps we should put together a book of readings.

This then is our effort to educate the medical librarian to meet the inevitable problem of outdated volumes becoming historical and rare, and to introduce the librarian or student of history to the profession of rare book librarianship. I hope it will also serve to launch a discussion of the education of the librarian in the history of the health sciences.

Note: The Editor heartily concurs. Articles on other such courses, whether for librarians, graduate students in history, collectors and amateur historians, or others, are hereby solicited.

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This research bibliography lists the materials available over most of the extensive field of medical sociology up through 1971. The editor states that he has been forced to leave out coverage of drug addiction, family problems, social gerontology, sexual deviancy, and mental health because of space considerations. Within this restricted framework Litman has done a thorough job of compiling the journal, book, government, and pamphlet literature included in the broad scope of medical sociology. This book is divided into thirteen broad categories, with up to sixty subsections providing easy access to desired materials. The addition of author and subject indexes makes this volume an easily used reference tool. Litman's work is a valuable addition to the reference collections in medical, university and large public libraries.

Jonathon Erlen
Once over lightly...

ALHHS doings...

KANSAS CITY MEETING

At the gracious invitation of Mrs. Bernice Dean Jackson, some 15 members and guests of this Association met on May 10, 1978, in the Jager Collection of the Logan Clendening Library, University of Kansas Medical Library, Kansas City. After enjoying Mrs. Jackson’s elegant box lunch, the visitors fell comfortably to professional concerns.

As always, burst pipes, leaky air-conditioners, and other natural and unnatural enemies of books and their keepers, were talked over. This time the discussion led to a suggestion for a future issue of this newsletter: a core-bibliography on library disasters and their prevention and treatment. Varying techniques for re-appraising rare-book collections from year to year for insurance purposes will also be collected into a small symposium for publication. And new uses of oral history by librarians were mentioned, such as taping commentaries on exhibits by their creators, and audio- or video-taping donors’ remarks and reminiscences of their collecting experiences.

The projected Directory of libraries in the history of the health sciences, which has been appearing in installments in these columns lately, was discussed and its history reviewed. While the project itself met with general approval, reaction to "serializing" individual entries drew some demurrers on the justified grounds that circulation is small and no index can be provided. Book-publication remains our objective — with index, of course — and plans are underway to achieve this as promptly as possible.

Afterwards, Mrs. Jackson showed us some of the treasures of the Jager Collection, including its Virchow letters, and gave us a conducted tour of the rare book stacks and the handsome reading-room. On Thursday evening, the AAHM was invited to the Clendening for a buffet supper, and members of ALHHS had an opportunity to hear excerpts from Estelle Brodman’s taped interviews with senior medical librarians.

The Editor divided Thursday between the Spencer Research Library, a handsome building on the lovely green hill-campus of the University of Kansas at Lawrence, and the Kansas State Historical Society collection at Topeka, which has much of medical interest, well-indexed and accessible. At both these institutions, as at the Clendening, we met with an exception-
MLA doings

HISTORY OF MEDICINE GROUP, CHICAGO

On Monday, June 12, at the Palmer House, the History of Medicine Group met, to overflowing, to hear a panel presentation under the chairmanship of Judith Overmier, as follows: William K. Beatty, "What Will They Do With It?"; Walter Necker, "Acquisitions"; and Richard D. Smith, "Deacidification: Past, Present and Future." Several new rare-book librarians were present, and a gratifying and growing interest in historical librarianship seems to have been exhibited all round.

New History of Medicine Group Steering Committee members are: Lucretia McClure, Chairperson; William K. Beatty, Chairperson-elect; Jon Erlen and Wilhelm Moll.

Jeanne Lynne Barnard's paper, "On Being a Bibliographical Bloodhound," demonstrated the need for "old-fashioned bibliographical expertise and perseverance," and was presented in open meeting. From all accounts, it was thoroughly enjoyable.

Also presented in open meeting was the sample tape previously mentioned from MLA's Oral History Project. The persons interviewed were: Janet Doe, on the Army Medical Library, and her recollections of MLA in the 1920's and 1930's; Mary Louise Marshall, on early education for librarianship; William D. Postell, on his work in southern medical history; Gertrude L. Annan, on the third edition of Handbook of Medical Library Practice, and what to put into medical history collections; Harold Bloomquist on the merger of the Boston Medical Library with Harvard Medical Library, to form the Countway; and Thomas E. Keys on courses and teachers in library school, and how he became Librarian of the Mayo Clinic.

MURRAY GOTTLIEB PRIZE

Nancy Zinn is Chairperson of the Murray Gottlieb Essay Prize Subcommittee. Once again, librarians are reminded of this opportunity for historical competition and publication.

Directory of libraries in the history of the health sciences...

Selected entries

MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
201 W. Monument Street, Baltimore, Md., 21201. 301-685-3750 Founded 1844
Hours: 9-4:30 Tues.-Sat.
Manuscripts Curator: Cynthia H. Requardt.
Librarian: Hester Rich.
Services to the general public: Reference ($2 day admission to non-members); photocopying and microfilming (cost varies); publication of reproductions permitted at the Society's discretion, on payment of fee.
General collection: State and city history — 50,000 volumes.
Materials in the history of the health sciences:

Photographs, etc. Some pictures of physi­cians and buildings. Catalogues, etc. The Manuscript Collections of the Maryland Historical Society, comp. by A. J. M. Pedley, Baltimore, 1966. $15. (An up­date of this guide in progress; should be com­pleted by 1979.) Holdings reported to NUCMC.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY. SCHOOL OF MEDICINE. LIBRARY. Founded 1835
4580 Scott Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63110
314-454-3711 TWX 910-761-2160
Archives & Rare Book Annex, 615 S. Taylor Ave., St. Louis, Mo., 63110. 314-534-0643.
Hours: Winter 8:30-12 M Mon.-Fri. 8:30-6 Sat. Summer 8:30-10 Mon.-Fri. 8:30-5 Sat. 2-6 Sun. Archives & Rare Book Annex, 8:30-5 & by special appointment.
Librarian: Estelle Brodman, Ph.D. Archivist: Darryl Podoll. Rare Book Librarian: Chris­topher Hoolihan.

Services to the general public: Reference; photo­copy (10c page); microfilming (cost varies); interlibrary loan (early material sometimes available). No borrowing.
General collection: 160,000 volumes; 2,300 cur­rent journal titles.

Materials in the history of the health sciences:
Pagel Collection in the History of Medicine (purchased before 1930), 2,500 titles; general historical collection of about 2,000 volumes; currently being added to. 6 incunabula. Becker Collection in Ophthalmology. 300 rare and ca. 350 secondary works in ophthalmology and op­tics. Catalog to be published late 1978. Collect­ion still growing. C. L. D. - Max A. Goldstein Collection in Speech and Hearing. 600 rare and ca. 1,000 old works in deafness and education of deaf. Collection still growing. Secondary works: about 1,500 publ. since 1950.
Manuscripts and archives: Six record groups containing historical records of the School of Medicine and Medical Center. Twenty-two faculty collections of papers and correspondence of 20th century faculty members: Joseph Erlanger, Leo Loeb, Evarts A. Graham, Sherwood Moore, Philip A. Shaffer, Robert J. Terry, Edmund V. Cowdry, Martin Silberberg Memorial Fund Collection on Art and Medicine, Aaron Steele, David E. Kennell Collection on St. Louis Doctors for Peace in Vietnam, Helen Tredway, Graham, Margaret G. Smith, Borden S. Veeder, Wendell G. Scott, Carl V. Moore, Bert Y. Glassberg, Alfred Goldman, Franklin E. Walton, Valentina Suntzef, James L. O'Leary, Hallowell Davis, and Jacques Bronfenbrenner.


Catalogues, etc.: Page Collection described in Jour. Missouri State Medical Association, May, 1913. Special Collections in the Library of the Washington University School of Medicine, (St. Louis, Mo., May 1978, 10 pp.) briefly describes the holdings; ten archival collections have been reported to NUCMC; microfilm of the Beaumont Collection may be purchased; microfilm of the Erlanger, E. A. Graham, Ettman, Glassberg, Goldman, H. T. Graham, Scott, Smith, and Terry Collections may be borrowed on interlibrary loan.

WISCONSIN, UNIVERSITY — MADISON. WILLIAM S. MIDDLETON LIBRARY. Founded 1924
1305 Linden Drive, Madison, Wisconsin 53706
608-262-2371 TWX 910-286-2778
Hours (of Historical Collection): 8-4:30 Mon.-Fri. and by appointment.
Historical Librarian: Ms. Dorothy Whitcomb.
Services to the general public: Reference; borrowing; photocopy (10¢ exposure); interlibrary loan (early materials at discretion of the Historical Librarian. Pre-1850 material does not circulate.)
General collection: 75,000 books and monographs; 90,000 periodical volumes. Other libraries on the Madison campus hold approx. 2,650,000 volumes.
Materials in the history of the health sciences: 8,000 monographs printed before 1850 (600 uncataloged but accessible); 1,000 pamphlets prior to 1850; 7,000 secondary works. Collection cataloged separately.
Manuscripts, archives, etc. LaCrosse Medical Society, minutes, 1864. William Snow Miller Medical History Seminar, papers, 1913-. Archives of Wisconsin Surgical Society. (Manuscripts and artifacts in general collected by the State Historical Society on campus.)


Collections on major medical figures: Vesalius, His, Muller, Virchow.

Journals, reference materials, and special secondary collections: About 10% of American pre-1850 journals listed by Ebert. Microfilm collection of Austin holdings (library owns about 25% of originals); 60% of Garrison-Morton listings in some edition. G. Miller Checklist II, 29/30. Women and in health on microfilm from Women's History Research Center, Berkeley, Calif., 14 reels. Major history of medicine journals; most history of science journals available elsewhere on campus.

Pictorial materials: A few miscellaneous items.