

Proposal to Host Library History Seminar XII

Committee Chairs: Louise Robbins, Professor and Director, SLIS, Christine Pawley, Associate Professor, SLIS, co-chairs

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Committee Members:

Louise Robbins, Professor and Director, SLIS, Christine Pawley, Associate Professor, SLIS, co-chairs
Jane Pearlmuter, Associate Director, SLIS
Rima Apple, Professor, School of Human Ecology, and Chair of the Center for the History of Print Culture Board
Phyllis Holman Weisbard, Women's Studies Librarian, UW-Madison
Greg Downey, Associate Professor Schools of Journalism and LIS, Center for the History of Print Culture Affiliate

Institutional Sponsor:

School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS), and the Center for the History of Print Culture in Modern America (CHPC), University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Wisconsin Historical Society. The University of Wisconsin-Madison also has vibrant English, history, history of science, geography, mass communication, communications arts, and visual culture programs, all of which would be likely to support the conference and provide important faculty and graduate student critical mass for conference participation and cross-fertilization.

Potential Co-sponsors:

Highsmith Inc., Fort Atkinson, WI
Demco, 4810 Forest Run Road, Madison, WI. Mike Snapper, Vice-President for Marketing. MikeS@demco.com
General Library System, University of Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin Lectures Committee

Planned number of days:

Initial (Thurs.) evening session followed by two full days (Fri. & Sat.)

Proposed dates:

September 16-19, 2010 (This will be finalized once the 2010 football schedule is available.)

Conference Location:

The School of Library and Information Studies is housed in one of the most choice campus locations on the shores of Lake Mendota. The quarters were especially planned to accommodate the School and to support its program, and the SLIS community agrees that it is favored with perhaps the most beautiful and efficient location of any library school. SLIS is also only one block from the Memorial Library, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library, the student union and the University Bookstore. Some of the special campus libraries (Law, Art, Business, Geography, Institute for Environmental Studies and the Map and Air Photo Library) are within a three-block radius, as are many inexpensive places for lunch. Participants in LHSXII will have the support of SLIS/Continuing Education Services, which serves as the primary outreach effort of SLIS, offering numerous programs each year on a wide range of topics, from basic library science courses to issues and applications of new technology.

The UW-Madison campus has several conference centers located within a few blocks of SLIS. Within a three-block area, the Pyle Center, the Fluno Center, and Memorial Union have meeting rooms to accommodate groups of all sizes in general sessions, panel and roundtable discussions, poster sessions, committee meetings, displays, and banquets. These conference sites may be viewed at:

<http://conferencing.uwex.edu/pyle.cfm>

<http://conferencing.uwex.edu/lowell.cfm>

<http://uwexeced.com/fluno/>

<http://www.union.wisc.edu/conferenceservices/services/>

The Pyle Center and Memorial Union do not charge for the use of the meeting rooms. At the Pyle Center, several of their lounges require a set-up fee for functions such as receptions, dinners, exhibit/display, breakfasts, and poster sessions. Current set-up charges are (depending on the room) \$150-\$250 per function or \$200-\$400 all day.

Travel to Madison

Madison Dane County Regional Airport (MSN), on Madison's northeast side, provides regional and national air service to and from Madison. Commercial air carriers that offer service from the Dane County Regional Airport include Northwest, United Express, Midwest Connect, Continental Express, American/American Eagle, Delta/Comair. Along with service through Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis and Detroit, direct nonstop service is available to the New York, Denver, Dallas, and Washington, D.C., areas.

Chicago O'Hare Airport and Milwaukee Mitchell Airport are easily accessible via buses that go to and from the UW-Madison campus.

Accommodations:

The Lowell, Friedrich, and Fluno Centers offer guest rooms. UW-Madison's Lowell Center's current rates for overnight guest rooms are \$77.00 per night for a single room, \$87.00 per night for a double room. Campus area hotels are available at similar rates on non-football weekends.

Financial and Institutional Support

SLIS and In-kind support

The School in conjunction with the Center for the History of Print Culture will contribute the time of the co-chairs as needed for organizing the seminar – managing the call and refereeing process for papers, contacting plenary speakers, drawing up publicity and the program, contacting potential funders and so on.

Support for PhD student participation

The Co-chairs will also attempt to secure funding to support PhD students and junior faculty to attend the seminar. Possible avenues for such support include the Mellon Foundation (through the Council of Library and Information Resources) and NEH.

At current prices, a per-person fee of approximately \$60 will also be charged for basic meeting planning and registration services. This fee is reduced to \$45 per person after the first 100 registrants. These services will include:

- Secure blocks of guest rooms in a range of prices
- Reserve and assign meeting spaces with appropriate equipment
- Arrange food service
- Develop and maintain content for web site (program information, registration form, link to online registration)
- Receive registrations via phone, mail, fax, or online registration site; provide information, answer questions
- Provide data entry of program information and enrollments
- Mail confirmations, inserting parking and other information as needed
- Process credit card payments with MasterCard, VISA, or American Express
- Deposit all conference fee payments into the appropriate University account
- Process cancellations and refunds
- Staff on-site registration services to check-in registrants, verify registration information, and distribute materials at the conference site
- Update roster data (substitutions, corrections, etc.)
- Provide name tags and badge holders
- Provide rosters of attendees
- Generate invoices for any attendees with a balance due

Proposed Conference Theme and Proposed Keynote Speaker(s)

Libraries in the History of Print Culture (working title)

The interdisciplinary area that has come to be known as the history of the book and of print culture, draws on the theories and methodologies of history, literary criticism, cultural studies, geography, sociology, mass communication, and the history of science. In its broadest sense, the term “print culture” encompasses all types of print communication, from the xylogram to the computer. Historians of print culture ask such basic questions as: What are the meanings and uses of recorded information? What is the relationship of reading and information practices to their wider societal contexts? Focusing on issues of authorship, publishing and reading, scholars in this field can be

found in departments of American Studies, Education, Journalism and Communication Studies, and Library and Information Studies, as well as history and English. Scholarly communication takes place in a great variety of venues, but some that are especially active include the international Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP), the American Antiquarian Society (the scope of whose collections ends in 1876) and the Center for the History of Print Culture in Modern America (concentrating on the period after 1876).

Primary sources of key importance include individual records, such as diaries and correspondence, as well as institutional records such as census reports, bookstore records, estate inventories and library catalogs. Library records provide a particularly fruitful avenue into the history of print culture. For millions of Americans from mid-nineteenth century on, institutional libraries have constituted a major path of access to texts, and in recent years, print culture scholars have begun to exploit libraries as a rich--and widely available--source of data. In addition to providing the all-important link between individual readers and the texts that they read, libraries can help occupy the middle ground between specific texts and readers and the macro or meta-theories that have come to dominate literary criticism. Indeed, libraries provide print culture scholars with an arena in which to exercise the historical and sociological imagination, linking micro analysis of the study of this text, these readers, here and now with the dimensions of macro analysis—such as class, race and gender, that they recognize need to be included. Libraries are both a site and a source of regulating processes. The interactions of multitudes of authors and readers are shaped in part by the meta-texts of the library's operations: its classification and cataloging practices, its shelving system and the principles on which it bases reader access to those shelves; its circulation rules, its spatial and temporal arrangements for in-house reading; its provision of printed signs and guides to the collection, its use of web pages and personnel to steer readers along pre-defined and recognizable paths. Yet just as individual readers engage in ruses which allow them to appropriate individual texts, so those who read *in* the library read *the library itself*—becoming in the process, potentially resistant readers *of* the library.

We especially encourage the submission of proposals that make use of library records as primary sources, that focus on libraries as sites of textual encounter, or that locate libraries in the broader print culture of specific places and at specific times. Proposals may consist of individual papers or panels of three speakers, with the option of an additional commentator.

Possible plenary speaker(s):

Ronald J. Zboray, Professor of Communication, University of Pittsburgh

Abigail Van Slyck, Dayton Associate Professor of Art History, Connecticut College

Jonathan E. Rose, Professor of History, Drew University.

Suggested Number of Potential Concurrent Programs

This will depend on the level of response to the call for papers. However, assuming an opening session on Thursday, and a plenary session of an hour to an hour and a half plus three concurrent sessions on each of Friday and Saturday, it would be possible to have 36 papers in twelve one and a half hour sessions in two parallel strands, or 54 in eighteen one and a half hour sessions in three parallel strands.

Publication Plans

We propose that selected conference papers be published in two formats: as articles in the scholarly journal *Libraries and the Cultural Record*, and as an edited volume in the series *Print Culture History in Modern America* (University of Wisconsin Press).

Proposed Timeline:

Date to Finalize LHS dates	July 1 2009
Proposed date to issue Call for Papers	September 1, 2009
Proposed due-date for call for Papers	January 1, 2010
Proposed deadline for Decision on Selected Papers	March 1 2010
Proposed registration Deadline	July 1 2010