

**Teaching with the Good Stuff:
Educational Strategies for Archives, Libraries, and Museums
November 20, 2014**

GROUP NOTES DOCUMENT for live note-taking
(Anyone and everyone can edit and contribute here)

Basic slides to present speakers and sections of day - [link](#)

1st Session, Full Group of Attendees

Beth Twiss Houting, Senior Director of Programs and Services at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania will share ideas for how to teach with documents with the K12 audience. She will review characteristics of the audience and then present examples of programs that have worked to excite students about the past and build their research and critical thinking skills. A model for working with National History Day students will be included.

[Presentation Slides - LINK](#)

NOTES

Beth asks for examples of problems folks have had when trying to work with K-12 audience. Responses include: working it into structured curriculum; getting response from teachers; knowing what students are capable of...

Teaching teachers to be info literate.

What we have (primary sources) dovetails very well with what K-12 needs in Common Core standards -- literacy standards and social studies standards.

Complicating the idea everything worth knowing is online.

New generation -- Gen Z, born after mid-1990s -- has never known a world without the internet. Challenge to connect with a generation that believes: "Anything worth knowing is on the internet"

Before Beth arrived, HSP's work with National History Day students relied on the teacher to initiate contact. Frustrating experience for students - took too long to find relevant materials, sometimes they found nothing -- they **weren't getting to the good stuff**.

Students who wanted to come to HSP were (1) intimidated and (2) had to pay to do research. ...changing things to address these student-challenges.

Now no admissions fee for anyone with a student ID.

Education portal on website; mentor programs; teacher workshops; etc

Beth addressing 3 things

1 - Intimidation factor

- "you don't have to be a student to be intimidated by the Historical Society of PA" -- it intimidates everyone
- students (and *any* novice user) need orientation to the place and the stuff
- students won't let their peers know that archives might be "cool" -- "we should not ourselves be intimidated by" teens' perceived lack of interest. We might be reaching them even if they aren't showing a positive response.
- fragile, younger users think that our problem is with them because we don't trust them (not because materials are fragile)
- HSP has a walk-through video from train to front desk and beyond to start research
- big benefit to go out to schools -- challenging for teachers' time

"Only you can prevent crimes against history" -- phrase used to explain reading room rules (such as only pencils, wear gloves with photos) to students
Many students have limited or no experience with libraries. Even if they do have library experience, they need to learn distinction between special collections library and public or school library.

2 & 3 - Research habits & Literacy Issues

Student mentor program, offered every Wednesday, pair each K-12 student researcher with a student mentor. Mentors in the fall come from Temple pre-service social studies teachers (college students who will be secondary ed social studies teachers), as well as students from other schools, retirees.

Students who come have to come to terms with the fact that at HSP, you can't do research without talking to staff. The mentors model these staff interactions so students can see how they do it themselves.

When classes visit, they spend no time in learning how to find stuff. They pre-pull based on topics provided by teachers. Starting in new year, if teachers haven't provided topics by date-x, the teachers and classes can't come. For each topic, three things (item or maybe folder) are pre-pulled for student visit--don't overwhelm students with too many materials. Assigned seats based on topic. Have one staffer per every 6-10 students. Students learn to cite -- very important. Students don't always arrive with a way to take notes -- they teach students how to take notes, keep track of their new questions (which is a big part of research), ...

They don't do show and tell -- close reading instead, or at least a in-document hunt for info.
See [Beth's slide](#) "A Process" -- working with students to understand and learn how to use, read, understand a document:

Reading handwriting in documents:

- HSP will be doing a series on reading handwriting in Jan/Feb 2015.
- This works well in a groups and also if they make it into a game or puzzle or even competition -- works well in pairs
- Aim of the activity is to understand what the document *means* as well as what it says. Work slowly, encourage students to write down meaning, not just transcription.

"How does it connect to me?" not only works well but is really necessary with K-12 students

HSP and some area teachers have been doing a study to see how students react to originals, printed transcription, reproduction

- "real things" of documents -- has a significant effect
- originals are easier to read than on screen, but students also say that they like that they can't "hurt" the documents on screen
- "real life" -- individuals in history expressing their feelings connect with students who had similar life experiences...for example, a letter dealing with a death works with students who have experienced beath
- "real people" - students who see how they fit in history is valuable

Q&A

Q: Have you worked with distance learners?

A: HSP has not but question-asker from Delaware Historical Society described experience sending transcription of a Caesar Rodney letter to distant students

Q: Challenges of really working tightly with teachers rather than hit-and-run interactions little prep and no follow up

A: Beth commented on value of phone calls (after setting up call via email)

Q: Mentoring program: how do you ensure that your mentors are doing a good job?

A: Beth is not onsite all the time, but other HSP staff are. Beth checks in via email with student mentors after their shifts.

A few-hour training with mentors before they're on duty. They also have to go through the process with one topic.

Q: Importance of students doing secondary research first -- how does that work!?

A: Relies on good prep work with and by teachers. Also, some of this done through website section on unit plans and section on proposed NHD topics

Q: Do students have trouble with secondary sources as much as primary?

A: Students who have trouble doing research have trouble regardless of primary or secondary

2nd Session, Full Group of Attendees

This presentation will explore the various approaches that can be taken when using special collections with undergraduates and graduate students. It will also examine ways to integrate the history of material texts into these encounters. Session lead by **Lynne Farrington** (Curator of Printed Books) and **John Pollack** (Library Specialist, Public Services), University of Pennsylvania Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

NO SLIDES

[*HANDOUT distributed to the group - link*](#)

NOTES

Penn has 200-300 class sessions every year which use special collections in some way

Try to build a toolbox to draw from so not every class is totally fresh. But in the end, each class is unique -- it has to be tightly connected to be of value and pertinent.

Have to be very flexible.

Focus of talk is on working with college students, although there are overlaps with Beth's presentation -- also have had vegan students who had issues with vellum.

A series of things found useful in working with students:

Outreach

To faculty, both from Penn and from other schools -- outreach is about getting to know people with targeted, one-on-one conversations rather than one-to-many presentations to departments. Sometimes you plant a seed that will bear fruit much later, other times there's an immediate result.

--have a weekly material text get-together that has the result that you're always visible to certain people

--sometimes you just fit something into an already-planned course, but sometimes you get in on the ground floor before the syllabus is ready so can be more involved and more tightly involved

--instrumental outreach, where you tag along with what someone else is already doing -- such as accompanying a liaison librarian making a class presentation, using the last ten minutes to talk about special collections. Get students to come upstairs when they've come to the library for a different reason -- to overcome the intimidation factor.

--often connect with local conferences to provide a repository visit -- good on its own, but also works well to make local faculty aware of you

History of chemistry course is taught by an organic chem. prof. (in collaboration with a Spec. Coll. librarian) and he has been learning humanities techniques to make the course more like a history rather than a science course

John has had success building on individual student visits to the reading room by asking students who their professor is and then contacting that professor. Lynn recommends other collecting institutions to students and researchers

Ask your faculty friends to mention you to their colleagues. Catch faculty at any point in time

Like Beth/HSP, Penn has moved away from the one-size-fits-all presentation. "Highlights of the rare book collection" doesn't work well if it isn't tailored to the visitors' specific interests.

A one-shot class visit is a lot of work to prepare for, but the benefits are worth it. They are often easier for faculty to incorporate into their courses. A few students in the class may find a topic for a research paper. It reaches people outside of traditional history and literature departments. **Is the starting point for the more involved**, long-term projects that will be discussed next.

A more advanced version of show and tell

-- can be single or multiple-session -- involves planning an assignment that is done during the session. Present materials from collection and then the students do something with the books -- such as working in pairs to look more closely at a few items then answering questions about them

--multiple meetings builds rapport so students might end up being comfortable enough to develop better understanding and better questions

--example of this on handouts is the *East & West: A Hitchhiker's Guide....* -- uses cookbooks students take a picture of a recipe, etc. and write a paper about it

Large classes/groups

-to handle logistics of large groups, sometimes break down into timed groups or stations

-often has to be a one-shot visit, simply because you can't do in-depth work with more than several dozen students

-Often rely on TAs for larger classes -- staff educates TAs to educate students

Some faculty complement the physical with the digital - See handout: Prof. Cathy Turner

Example (see Handout: Prof Barnes) that connects students with primary sources by using Renaissance Humoral Med books to diagnose themselves (after recording their own symptoms for mult weeks)

Cool suggestion -- encourage **faculty member to hold their office hours in your reading room** around the time that a collections-based assignment is due

Having a spiel on Book History is often a pre-requisite since the questions almost always arise -- and much more valuable to do this by asking students questions about the printed or manuscript material

Q: How do you keep track of all the classes, what you've developed, and lists of resources?

A: Do it the best you can. Used to use a database at Penn now can use Aeon.

Q: What are some of the things Penn students fail at like other students.

A: Penn students are just as unprepared as others. Students can commit the time it takes. Some students simply don't care. They're teaching basic research skills not high-level stuff.

3rd Session, Full Group of Attendees

CASE STUDIES

Case Study 1 - Rachel Buurma (Swarthmore) & **Jon Shaw** (Penn Libraries) – Case study: We will discuss using special collections materials in research production pedagogy. Specifically, we will talk about involving undergraduates in creating and using very rich metadata for eighteenth-century novels, stretching from low-investment assignments in conventional courses to intensive summer work on the Early Novels Database (earlynovels.org).

LINKS: <http://earlynovels.org>

NOTES

- creating 21st century metadata from 18th century text
- centerpiece exercise ... {I missed it}
- Ask students "what is missing from the descriptive bibliography?" after they do the descriptive bibliography work
- during the summer, some students work for whole summer cataloging these books then comparing different copies, and other digging to do more digital humanities types of work (like mapping, extracting metadata, creative way.
- and from all this, the result is a database with very rich access points

Case Study 2 - Sarah M. Horowitz, *Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts & Head of Special Collections*, [Haverford College](#). My case study will focus on assessment of student learning in the Special Collections classroom at both Haverford and Augustana College (Illinois).

LINKS:

NOTES

- Talking about assessment...but it doesn't have to be fun
- It's an important part of understanding how students use our stuff and how to improve it
- You can rely on research and instruction people at your institution
- at Haverford, they're using similar assessment as the instruction librarians are using
- are sessions useful, are they engaging, what can be done to understand the research process as a whole
- they store (at Haverford) a library-wide google doc so staff can see what assessment results have been collected
- they use student comments to change the way they teach and what is done in classes
- a lot of what they do is more about library instruction assessment and less so on assessing student learning
- at previous job, Sarah did more on assessing student learning
- we as SC librarians add value to the stuff -- we teach visual learning, material culture, etc -- we're an import

Case Study 3 - Melissa Mandell, *Program Manager for Education and Interpretation, Legacy Center Archives*, [Drexel College of Medicine](#). Case study: Developing a website ([DoctLibrary or Doctress?](#)) to connect high school students and teachers with primary sources. When students "do history" by coming up with evidence-based interpretations of history, what can a website provide that a classroom setting can't? What gets missed doing it this way?

LINKS:

<http://doctordoctress.org/>

http://xdl.drexelmed.edu/item.php?object_id=1272&t=womanmd

<http://doctordoctress.org/islandora/object/islandora:971/story/islandora:429#page/1/mode/1up>

<http://doctordoctress.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A971>

NOTES

- A project to reach students online
- looked at existing collections database
- compare to Doctor or Doctress -- designed for high school students
- "why it matters" metadata

- thumbnail of a document creator to personalize it
- transcript, original, and audio transcript
- students use all three
- encourage students to get evidence from the document
- uses a story-based approach, with background, video, and access to supporting documents, higher-level questions to consider
- done user testing all along

Note from Melissa: If anyone is interested in the technology behind Doctor or Doctress, check out this great blog post from our rock-star library applications developer, Chris Clement:

<http://archives.drexelmed.edu/blog/?p=1855>

Case Study 4 - JC Cloutier & Holly Mengel – Case study: A semester-long University of Pennsylvania English course designed to de-mystify the archives for future researchers. Students researched both processed and unprocessed papers created by literary figures and were exposed to the hands-on work of an archivist, with a focus on deciding how collections should be assessed, arranged, and described.

LINKS:

NOTES

- Include archival processing in a literature class
- Tried different approaches to add nuts and bolts archives work into course
- relied on a lot of conversation with Special Collections staff
- included a close read of a finding aid, with some direction
- students had to work with the Dreiser papers -- he imposed an entry point into the collection (students randomly selected a Dreiser short story)
- required students to look at several series
- focused a lot on the steps of the archival mission
- surprising results: each student ended up with something that JC thought could lead to something publishable (but none did)
- the students had to assign a research value rating -- mixed scoring led to good discussions
- talked about tackling the backlog -- a different collection than Dreiser
- students had to read MPLP
- students learned a lot about the concerns about the archival endeavor
- Holly talking about benefit to processing archivists -- only ever usually work with
- able to listen to future scholars and hear about how other people would do and how they wanted
- learned better how to work with other students
- if letting students processing, pick a small enough collection to do the whole thing...

Case Study 5 - Adrienne Whaley, *Curator of Education & Public Programming*, [African American Museum in Philadelphia](#). Case study: Using objects from our Trailblazers to Freedom Traveling Trunks, which are traveling extensions of our core exhibit, Audacious Freedom: African Americans in Philadelphia 1776 – 1876, I will talk about how we imagined K-12 teachers would use them in the classroom and some of the ways they have actually been used, both in classroom and in the museum itself.

[SLIDES from presentation - link](#)

NOTES

- The trunks are actual trunks
- travelling version of core exhibit (which connects at AAMP to other sites in immediate vicinity)
- core exhibit is interactive
- trunks have several goals (see slide)
- interactive, clothes, knot-tying, keys, spyglass (lots of tactile stuff)
- trunks have touch-screen computers (with stuff f
- send out free to public schools
- keep trunk for 2 weeks
- expected that students will then come into museum
- one teacher had her own students create a mini-trunk on a theme
- see "Overall" slide
-

Case Study 6 - Jessica Baumert, *Executive Director*, [The Woodlands Cemetery](#). Case study: A yearly project where 11th graders at Philadelphia School District's Masterman School do authentic historical research on individuals buried at this historic cemetery.

LINK: <http://woodlandsphila.org/blog/?tag=JR+Masterman+School>

NOTES

- Woodlands is the beneficiary of research done by Masterman school students
- "permanent residents"!!!
- students come to Woodlands in Oct
- pick 3 headstones (with certain parameters)
- before 1910
- nobody who has a wikipedia page
- HSP has Woodlands collection -- students don't do much research at the cemetery...more at HSP, City Archives, church records, descendents -- people don't mind students contacting them,
- Students have always created large binders
- more recently is that the students create a blog post
- get huge results and great resources
- every year, about 10 new biographies
- In May, students do a public presentation
- students excited and terrified the first day -- a rite of passage at Masterman
- staff tries to help the students understand that their research is truly, authentically valuable

DISCUSSION GROUPS (4:00-5:00pm)

Pool of ideas for Discussion Groups -- To be re-assessed on the fly Nov 20

(Note that at the end of the day, these bullet topics had not been selected for discussion)

- Connecting with faculty / with K-12 educators - 4 hands
- Reaching beyond the “low-hanging fruit” of history classes - 4 hands
- Mentoring programs (K-12; but also undergrad?) - 4 hands
- Active hands-on with large groups/classes - 2 hands
- More on *assessing* student use - 6 hands
- How to build travelling "kits" of collection materials (and other logistics) - 7 hands
-

Discussions on topics driven by attendees. Th

- Discussion #1 (Room 625) – How could we develop a cross-city/region Special Collections Open House? How much would it have to rely on connecting with a specific (narrow) group of attendees?

[NOTES BELOW](#)

- Discussion #2 (Room 626) – Primary sources online or electronic

[NOTES BELOW](#)

- Discussion #3 (Room 627) – Engaging students with school history

[NOTES BELOW](#)

- Discussion #4 (Pavilion) – Doing more than just show & tell when you have only one meeting with a class AND Building a toolbox of approaches for classes (to make work more efficient)

[NOTES BELOW](#)

Discussion #1 (**Pavilion**) - Topic to be determined day-of

TOPIC: Doing more than just show & tell when you have only one meeting with a class AND Building a toolbox of approaches for classes (to make work more efficient)

NOTES

- Discussion of kits/ beyond show and tell for one-shot session
- issue of efficiency -- not reinventing the wheel every time -- what can you do with this module that you have created? can we do something with the concept or the research created in the class
- hard to duplicate across institutions -- because collections are so unique -- but the scaffolding and surrounding materials can certainly be shared
- Using Primary Sources book and teacharchives.org as potential examples
- Jay Satterfield at a symposium last month recommended rethinking the history of the book show in terms of a them -- he used the example of smallpox -- Lois adapted this to show students Euclid through the ages -- instead of having random works, things stick with the students better if there is some connection among the texts -- potentially use different versions of the same texts -- showing the progression through time and perhaps see them more clearly -- students responded well
- talking about language as part of the history of the book
- importance of the cohesive story
- for many people, library itself can be a special collection because it's so unfamiliar
- importance of educating teachers/faculty about where they can start beyond google -- come up with a set of questions for students to ask librarians -- e.g., ask music librarian to help them determine what the top songs were during a certain period of the person's life -- and do this in all the departments of the central library
- challenge of getting students and teachers to make connections among what we have and what they are doing -- need to teach students that there is a model and that librarians are part of the conversation

- sometimes getting students to be comfortable enough to ask a question of the experts is the biggest hurdle
- sometimes prepared questions are more successful when they get student straight into the content of the material rather than the standard who wrote this and when (from teacharchives.org)
- reverse show and tell -- come in and explore first and then students present and librarian can fill in -- sometime give question sheets as part of the exploration
- what happens when you are in a position of having to go to other people, or don't have open hours? when go out to classes, have to bring everything with -- bring an archive box to allow people to talk about what archives are -- but this often then just becomes a show and tell
- having a story really makes a difference
- ask students to take a single item and then figure out what else they would want to know and what type of documents they would need in order to tell a story about it -- that way if you have gaps it becomes an opportunity rather than a problem
- NARA brings an archive box of fascimilies to take around and show how archivists use them
- various places are using LibGuides to keep track of materials for classes -- and also combine with research advice from other librarians
- can catalogers help with this? can we add a MARC field that would let us search for materials used in a class
- but also a way to keep track of "cool" things that could be relevant to some future class
- having students create their own folksonomies as part of the catalog records
- sometimes pulling a lot of stuff for a class or exhibition can create a document that might have further life
- other types of assignments -- Wagner and Temple collaboration, in which students "curate authenticity" by thinking about how to present historic site, how archival materials relate to the site; Haverford class in which weekly visit to archive and selecting documents to bring to class is part of the their "assigned reading" for the week

- if teachers haven't had library experience, does this make it more difficult for them to teach it? -- also the time factor for teachers -- they have milestones which they have to meet and not a lot of flexibility -- make sure what you want to do fits into their curriculum
- need to be well-versed in curriculum in order to get to the point of helping teachers think outside the box
- important to be able to see syllabus, talk with the teacher beforehand
- having a teacher advisory group (especially for K-12) -- they can talk about colleagues, what is happening on the ground in the classroom and how to talk about what we can do for them
- program to teach teachers how to do some library stuff -- so that they might feel comfortable teaching skills if they don't have a librarian in the building
- archives roundtable in NY does a teacher training every year

Leisure Reading Assignment [PPL focused]

https://docs.google.com/document/d/15s1g2DcStv2LmrpR1tJbeEoNY61Pq6F2_h0xOKLQDX0/edit?usp=sharing

Data Visualization Assignment [multiple departments based on student interest]

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_AoqLFz3bzYe5IN5Yhc-aFvdswlus5zRNbqNtbQnywQ/edit?usp=sharing

Social Science Assignment [possibly every subject department, not CCD]

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HPliLH1cRKuVkdVxR8QRnS83cfaWVHA9SMYCzuSDr3Y/edit?usp=sharing>

Science Assignment [BSI and possibly CCD for science fair books]

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1q_5LLu2NXI7Nr2PSIKUgU2KqeiQrVW34YkoMgEzV8V4/edit?usp=sharing

Discussion #2 (Room **625**) - Topic to be determined day-of

TOPIC: How could we develop a cross-city/region Special Collections Open House? How much would it have to rely on connecting with a specific (narrow) group of attendees?

NOTES

Attendance: Leslie Simon, NARA; Emily Parker, Rosenbach; Nicole Scalessa, Library Company; Laura Blanchard, PACSCL staff

First question: who would come to this?

After discussion, recommend a late summer open house/fair -- say 4:00-8:00 p.m., one location, many stations for presenting institutions. Individual organizations can choose how they would present their educational offerings or what those might be: field trips, trunks, online resources, partnerships are some possibilities. The event might also include a couple overarching presentations or workshops on, e.g., palaeography, close reading, etc. etc. Audience would be K12 educators (including homeschoolers), junior faculty. Also open to staff at PACSCL member institutions who would like to network with their colleagues and/or learn about collections in their region

To prepare for the open house or sanity-check other ideas: Connect with one or more of our institution's Teacher Advisory Groups (e.g., Doctor/Doctress/ the new Libco exhibit's group -- or connect with an education department of one of our universities.

Another possibility: piggyback on something the School District is doing at 440 N. Broad.

This group notes that with only four participants, there is ample room for copious suggestions by the readers of this document. If you'd like to be part of a planning group for such an event, please leave a note here.

Discussion #3 (Room **626**) - Topic to be determined day-of

TOPIC: Primary sources online or electronic

NOTES

- Creating a website necessitated face to face interaction with students.
- Small physical space, online is beneficial. Paper prototypes to figure out what works for researchers.
- How to get the teachers on board: High school teachers are super busy. Success by going into classes, helping with after school programs,
- Transcript- Students read transcripts more easily. Teachers and students like to copy and paste text from transcripts as well.
- Hard to predict who wants to look at rare materials at Penn dental library-- how to know what people are interested in, how to decide what things can be accessed digitally and what things need to be touched and seen in person.
 - Instruction or education stuff-- people respond much better to the physical stuff.
- Tumblr as a gateway to see what people are interested in... based on feedback institutions are able to decide what to digitize. Gauge interest.
- Objects-- how to get people to come look at them or get them interested.
- Keep track of the questions that researchers ask you to see to also gauge interest.
- Stats from research requests and other stats-- submit them to Oberland group
- Public researcher blog-- outside reference requests they log on the site to help future researchers.
- Access to born online/digital materials?? Issues with ethics-- those people are still alive, but the stuff is usually already online anyway? Usually don't digitize papers until they died//have permission from them or the family. Tweets. Contemporary capturing.
- SAA- subgroup that's just starting to do work on providing (reference room?) access to born digital sources. Contact- Greg Kocken.
- Drexel digitized year books-- sent them out to alumni-- got \$\$
- Website crawling- archiveit, tagsexplorer
- Documentation strategy for preserving student org materials; social media
- Bryn Mawr- actively collecting and harvesting sources from current events
- Bryn Mawr- Digitize mostly visual materials. Some of it was digitized for WWI- topical because it was the 100 year anniversary. Mostly just trying to let people know that they have photos.
- Drexel Med-- The cool stuff is digitized, the stuff that gets the most research use has not been digitized.

Discussion #4 (Room 627) - Topic to be determined day-of

TOPIC: Engaging students with school history

NOTES

Participants

Meagan Pollinger - Grad Temple

Krista Oldham - Haverford

David McAllister

Cassandra Keith: High school, Philadelphia

Temple grad

Kim Read: High School, Delaware

Ilhan Citak: School's 150th anniversary

Iren Snavelly

Haverford: Dig into the Archives -

Arkansas Delta oral history projects: How to create primary source material

Haverford students' economical history class - investigation of the surrounding neighborhoods in Ardmore, low income housing creation, etc. "how does the institution interact with the surrounding neighborhoods"

Lehigh public history course on a "lost neighborhood" archival resources were used to survey and discover lost neighborhood and identify residents who are still alive and conduct oral history to document memory

Video projects: use of technology

Digital scholarship, digital humanities:

<http://library.haverford.edu/services/digital-scholarship/projects/>

Discussion #5 (if interest) -- People can use couches/windows area outside Pavilion

TOPIC:

NOTES

Discussion #6 (if interest) -- People can use couches/windows area outside Pavilion

TOPIC:

NOTES