Engagement, enthusiasm, and empowerment: participatory learning in Special Collections instruction Susan Graham and Lindsey Loeper, Special Collections, Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery, University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)

Interactive one-shot instruction sessions that foster a welcoming environment and allow students to practice visual and archival literacy. Flexible for use with the specific subject, format, and collection type that best fits the needs of the class.

FYS102 First Year Seminar

Class summary

"The Information Diet" explores "the information cycle and [the students'] own information seeking and consumption behaviors." Five freshman students attended.

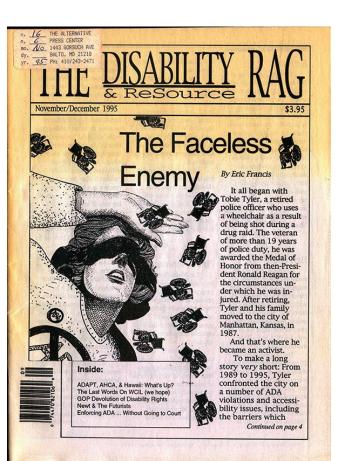
We discuss what a Special Collections department is, how our collections are formed and acquired, and we complete a document analysis of a historical publication. In this case, the instructors requested that we share publications by marginalized groups, so we chose several examples from the Alternative Press Center Collection.



Activities

Two engagement activities that address different participation and learning styles.

- Adapted exercise created by Laura Cleary at the University of Maryland, College Park. After discussing how collections are developed by archival repositories, and Gracen Brilmyer's "Identifying & Dismantling White Supremacy in Archives," each student used an iPad to answer a set of questions using Poll Everywhere (.com) about ways items end up in Special Collections and Archives; minority groups that may be underrepresented in Special Collections; and ideas for how librarians can remedy underrepresentation.
- We discussed the Alternative Press Center and the marginalized, non-corporate communities and creators represented. Each student was empowered to choose the issue that they wanted to work with. We talked as a group as they completed the worksheet, some students working independently and some in pairs. Each group shared their item to the class.



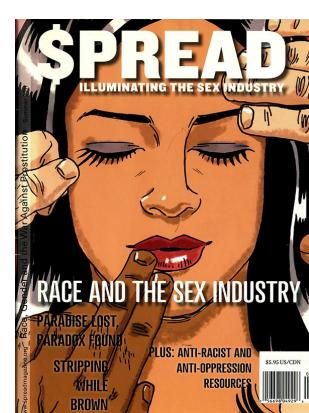
Outcomes

Social justice components:

- Emphasized different perspectives, marginalized voices, non-corporate media Discussed white supremacy in archives and strategies to be proactive about Inclusive learning:
- Provided different ways to participate for different temperaments or learning
- Poll Everywhere (written communication)
- Think-pair-share (a group of two students chose to work together) Played videos about primary sources

Critical engagement:

- Choice students got to choose which resource to focus on
- rchival literacy:
- Document analysis
- Close looking and physical attributes
- Historical perspective and cultural context of the items
- Creator and Audience
- Publications as primary sources



List some ways librarians can remedy under representation of minorities in archives

When poll is active, respond at PollEv.com/susang168 Answers to this poll are anonymous

'Reach out to antique stores, they tend to have objects that show a lot of minority culture and tradition.

"Diversity in collections

Reach out to diverse communities directly and recruit and hire a diverse staff'

Try and reach out to minority groups"

"Have an area focusing just on minority works/archives."

Special Collections introduction group exercise roup member roles (please fill in your names)

1. What do you know about the item in your group? Cansider: a. What format is the item? News Source How are they related to the event that is documented or described? they provide news 3 into on women's

b. Who was the intended audience when the item was created? How would they have used this item (in what context)? Women, to have a w to relate with other women 3 have support to continue fighting for equality. 5. What factual information, subjects or topics can you learn about from these items?

6. Please formulate a research question for which this item could be used as a How have womens lives 3 rights changed since the early 200053 7. What other information would you like to know about this publication or the ideas expressed in it?
History, how it etasted, how people's ideas have history, how it etasted, much change

8. If you wanted to learn more about either the items or in your group or the topics they describe, what would your next steps look like? Where would you start? online research of this publication

Reflection

One thing that we both liked about this class structure was that it gave the students opportunities to participate in different ways. Some students talked a lot during the discussion portion, but we saw that they all submitted thoughtful replies to the survey. This might be a good method for shy or quiet classes. The course instructors reported back that two of the students said in the class evaluations that their visit to "the archives" was their top activity during the semester.

HIST201 Introduction to the Study of History

Class summary

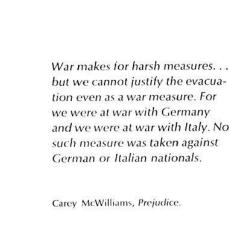
This is a research methods course that is required for all undergraduate History majors. There are typically 2-4 sections of the course each semester and all sections spend two full class periods in the Library: one with the History reference librarian and one with the Special Collections librarians. In addition to the learning outcomes identified by the professor and librarians, we also want to give the students a chance to actually work with the materials, practice their handling skills, and in general demystify the archival research process.

Activities

We have developed an exercise where small groups of students cycle through several stations and complete a worksheet. Once they have visited each station, then the class comes back together and shares with each other, using the worksheet questions as prompts. The full exercise can be completed in 30-45 minutes and can be adapted based on the course topic. The topic of the example exercise was the internment of Japanese Americans in the United States during WWII; three groups looked at the work of Ansel Adams and three groups looked at the work of Dorothea Lange.

Station 1, archival collection of original photographs: The students looked at a digital images in the online repositories of the Library of Congress (Adams) or the National Archives (Lange).

Station 2, photography publication: The items at this station show how the photographs were presented in a published work. Station 3, secondary source: One journal article and a NARA blog post reflecting on the work by Ansel and Lange, respectively. The blog post about Lange's work discusses the misunderstanding that her work was restricted for use.





Outcomes

Social justice components

 Culturally sensitive documents -- record of marginalized and incarcerated people Include items from multiple institutions -- what one

repository has isn't the end of the story Inclusive learning:

- Provided different ways to participate for different
 - temperaments or learning styles
 - Worksheet (written communication)
 - Discussion
 - Think-pair-share (a group of two students chose to work together)
 - Get up and move about stations, physical handling of items

Archival literacy

- Different formats
 - Original print, digital item, printed out blog post, books (primary source and secondary source)
 - Some included reflective perspectives/criticism One male creator, one female creator
 - One fine art photographer, one government-employed documentary
 - photographer Visual Literacy
 - Style, composition, cultural/historical context, what was included/what was left out

AMST345 Indigenous Heritage: Issues of Representation and Ownership

Class summary

This course focuses on the theories and methods of representing Indigenous cultures and peoples within the heritage and museum enterprise, and examines the concept and negotiations of Indigenous cultural ownership of heritage and museum processes.

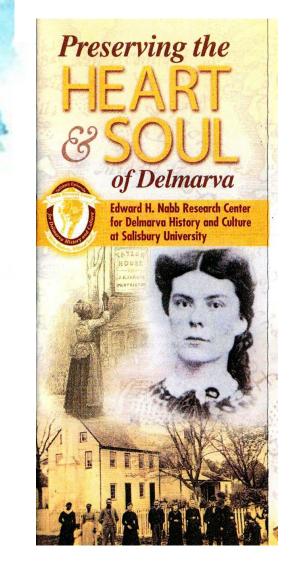
We adapted our class to make it a traveling exercise, making copies of materials to bring to the classroom. We gave a general overview of Special Collections; discussed different notions of archival concepts; introduced students to projects addressing cultural differences; and broke out into groups for an exercise involving different formats from two different repositories.



Interview Transcript

The recording was made with a Tascam HD-P2 flash recorder and a Beyer MCE 58 microphone





Activities

- Discussed how Western ideas of ownership, access, and preservation may be different from Indigenous groups/communities
- Discussed the role of archivists and librarians and collections
- Split into small groups to examine materials and fill out worksheets, later reporting back to the class
 - Materials included items from UMBC and Salisbury University
- Listened to an oral history and compared to the written transcript

Outcomes

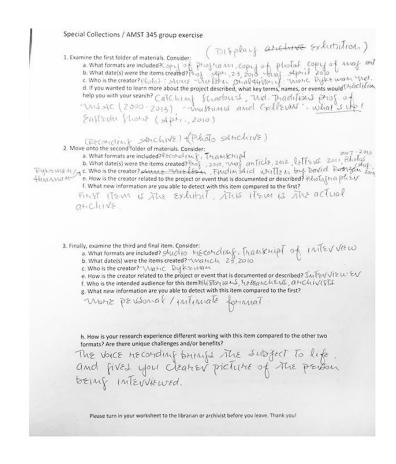
- Viewed and discussed the Protocols for Native American Archiva Materials, NAGPRA, and Mukurtu content management system (empowers communities to manage, share, narrate, and exchange their digital heritage in culturally relevant and ethically-minded
- Culturally sensitive materials and issues of representation were
- Included materials created by Indigenous people
- Inclusive learning:
- Different formats for different learning styles: images, documents and audio of oral history
- Think-pair-share with written component
- Discussion

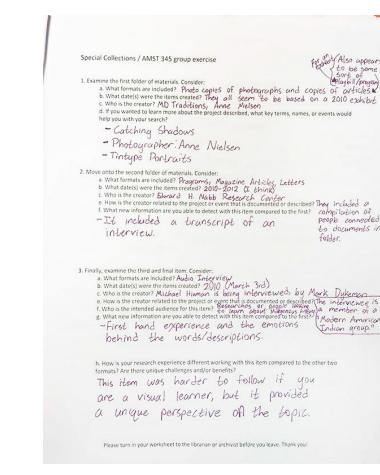
 Short lecture Critical Engagement:

 Compared oral history recording to edited written transcript **Archival Literacy**

Document analysis

 Understanding that related collections can be geographically dispersed





Reflection

Although we developed this exercise for this specific class location and topic, it can be used for other classes with similar learning outcomes. It could even be made into an online class. This exercise inspired great discussion, particularly comparing the oral history vs. transcript.

Thank you to...

The students at UMBC, Laura Cleary (UMD), Katy Sullivan and Joanna Gadsby (UMBC), Ashley Minner (MSAC/UMBC), and our colleagues in the Department of History (UMBC) for inspiring us and helping us work out this process. A resource list is available upon request.

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Reflection

What date was the item created? 2/6

d if you wanted to learn more about the event/project described, what key terms, names, or events would help you with your search? Lot of help Lorge, Japanes Internment

large had direct interaction w/members of the War Relocation Authority, which informed her opinion on

Gives perspectives of Japanese Citizens

b. What date was the item created? \9.43

1992 colline catalog/Nat. Archive

enetics? It's curated in a book

ould help you with your search? Photograph by Ansel Adeums, farm workers

the creator related to the event title? Students of Awarican Asian studies American in is the intended audience for this item? Students of Awarican Asian studies American

he is more interested in the land than the plight of the people

are there unique challenges and/or benefits? The secondary commentary on Adoms interchors

Please turn in your worksheet to the librarian or archivist before you leave. Thank you

What new information are you able to detect with this item compared to the first

It is the same photo as #1 but you can make out smaller

Given the frequency of this class, we are continually evaluating and tweaking this class experience. It is flexible and adaptable and can accommodate changing learning outcomes, different professors, different class topics, different formats and collections. It also gives us a chance to learn more about our collections and build sets of materials that compliment each other in a class environment.