LIS 805
Great libraries and Their Collections

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Objectives of the Course

To acquaint students with the nature, extent and distribution of great libraries
To show needs and solutions of great libraries to questions of space and finance
To discuss methods of surveying, evaluating, and describing collections
To provide an opportunity for students to study and describe partial holdings of a great library
To show how cooperation has aided in building collections
To suggest what is the present role and future potential for digital collections
SOME UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

1. To what extent can the collecting policy statement substitute for the guide to collections

2. Does the guide to collections validate the collecting policy statement?

3. Do American research libraries need a new Farmington Plan?

4. Are the buildings for the British Library and the BNF the dinosaurs of very large facilities?

5. Is the OPAC as useful as the card catalog in the compilation of guides?

6. Do we need to develop new ways to provide financial support to great libraries?

7. Are there new dimensions to security for collections and users in the post 9/11 world?

8. Does the new technology offer ways to make the preparation of guides and surveys easier, faster, and less expensive?

9. How does off-site storage change the development of and access to collections?

10. What can Yale, Illinois, Cambridge and others learn from the five mega libraries?

11. How do we cope with collections consisting of print, a/v, and electronic materials?
READING ASSIGNMENTS

One of the objectives of this seminar is to allow students to do additional reading in background, features, problems, etc. of great libraries. This provides an opportunity, for example, to learn more about additional libraries (beyond the 3 you are looking up), to read biographies of persons who have directed such institutions, to pursue further one or more of the "Unanswered Questions" (see sheet distributed at first class). A few concrete suggestions follow:

--take home Celebrating Research and browse/read in it
--skim/read some of the studies done by R. B. Downs
--examine 5-10 studies & guides to enhance your knowledge on techniques (i.e., the how-to-do-it approach)
--broaden your knowledge of the history of one or more of the great libraries
--as this seminar uses the 5 mega libraries of the western world as the peer group, read the articles on each one in the ALA World Encyclopedia)

--find web sites for additional libraries and make an assessment of how good they really are

--seek articles pro or con (or both) on the question of the research library as place

Your reading may take the form of serious reading, once over lightly, scanning and stopping only when you find something you want to read. It should include some reading of entire articles or chapters of books. Expect to spend an average of two hours per week.

As you are working, make note of points you found interesting, challenging, controversial, etc. We will have two discussion periods (13 March and 24 April) for a sharing of the learning experience: what you wanted to learn, how you went about seeking information, and what would be of interest to others in the seminar (make one page on your work and your recommendations to others). Hand in to the instructor on these two dates a full bibliography, separating actual reading from skimming).

N.B. Avoid doing a series of "random choices" (i.e. items that happened to be at hand). Any item on the bibliographical lists handed out is OK as a choice, and the instructor would be delighted to help you make some choices.
BOOK REPORT

1. Choose one monograph from the attached list. To avoid duplication, you must clear your choice with the instructor.

2. Give the work a thoughtful and critical reading (take some notes as you read).

3. Write a book report, including elements from both a review & from a critical essay.

Comment on contents (and/or summarize the most important features), style, special features, strengths and weaknesses, relevance to the book/library/cultural world.

Do you recommend the book? If so, why? If not, why not?

4. Prepare an oral report (not a reading aloud of the full report). Bear in mind that others in the course will not be reading this work, so please try to make your comments useful to those listeners.

Write a 1-2 page summary to hand out when you give your oral report.

5. Submit both the summary and the full report to the instructor.

ORAL REPORTS are to be given, one or two per session, beginning 31 January.
Baker, Nicholson.
Z 695.655 B35

Battelle, John.
HD 9696.8 U64 G663

Committee on An Information Technology Strategy for the Library of Congress.
Z 733.U62 L35

Brough, Kenneth J. S.
Z 675. U5 B85

Hamlin, Arthur.

Dain, Phyllis.
The New York Public Library, a Universe of Knowledge/ [NY] NYPL in assoc. with Scala [2000]
Z 733 D35

Axtell, James
The Making of Princeton University, from Woodrow Wilson to the Present. Princeton, PUPress [c2006]
LD 4610 A96

Bentinck-Smith, William.
Z 733 H34 B4

Morgan Library and Museum
The Morgan Library [and Museum]: An American Masterpiece. NY, Morgan Lib. in assoc. with Scala [2000]
Z 733 P588 P53

[Overleaf]
BERGMAN, Jed I.

SMITH, Curt.
CD 3029.82 S55

WAGNER, Ralph D.
Z 687.15 W34 2002
REPORT ON THREE LIBRARIES

1. Choose three great libraries (2 from the ARL membership and 1 from a foreign country).

2. See what obvious sources tell about their collections, including the following:
   - extent and nature
   - type of materials
   - a few historical facts (founding date, etc.)
   - special collections and subject strengths

   The following (as a minimum) should be checked:
   - Celebrating Research
   - World of Learning
   - International Dictionary of Library Histories
   - American Library Directory

3. Look for the library's web site and study it to see what additional facts it contains.

   Note especially if the web site contains the collection policy.

4. Prepare a 5-10 minute oral report on each of your three libraries.

   Prepare a 1-page summary of interesting facts and figures relating to collections and copy it for distribution when you give your reports.

   N.B. There is NO additional written work to hand in.
MAJOR PROJECT

The major project/report/term paper in this course consists of a study of resources in one or more great libraries. The paper will have a specific focus, which, insofar as possible, relates to the student's background, interest, and personal selection. The three types of projects described below are appropriate for the time available (3 months), the holdings of Crown Library and other sources upon which the student may draw.

Each project will result in a written paper (including a statement of methodology); a summary oral report will be given in class on either April 17 or 24. (Attendance at these last two classes is REQUIRED.)

**TYPE I.** A guide to a great library's holdings in one subject. Although print and online resources will prove useful, this kind of study usually requires on site work. For this reason Northwestern, University of Chicago are obvious choices, but University of Wisconsin, Indiana, Notre Dame may be convenient in some cases. Smaller collections (e.g., those at college or special libraries) do not generally lend themselves to this type of study.

**TYPE II.** A study of the holdings in a specific study as found in 6-8 libraries with important resources in the area selected. Availability of print and online (e.g., guides, catalogs, newspaper articles, statements in institutional publications) will influence the choice of topics and institutions being covered. (A questionnaire alone is not a satisfactory basis for this kind of report; note that time limits preclude much use of interlibrary loan.)

**TYPE III.** A study of the extent and nature of library resources in a geographical area (country, state province, major city). This requires intensive analysis
of directories and guides (published and possibly online) leading in part to assessment of quality of holdings. A paper of this type could include historical data (available for U.S. states) or even a comparison of holdings in two jurisdictions of the same types (e.g., cities).

A word of caution: due to time limits and lack of specific information it is difficult to study resources of foreign libraries.

Examples of guides and surveys, see sample pages distributed and discussed in class, as well as published studies on reserve.

Consultation with the instructor is REQUIRED, after which you must give him a brief written statement of your plans. A progress report about mid-term must also be submitted. Further consultation with the instructor is encouraged.

Do not be discouraged by the fact that you have probably undertaken a study of this kind!
MAJOR PROJECT: QUESTIONS TO ASK MYSELF

Have I a folder in which to drop points for my statement of methodology?

Have I looked at other guides and studies to get what types of information my report should contain?

Do I have a sense of where I am going in collecting data?

Am I remembering to use both print and online sources?

Does the preliminary search confirm my choice of topic, or do I need to rethink my ideas?

Am I planning both introduction and conclusion, between which comes the body of the report?

Am I prepared to indicate the limitations of my study?

Am I taking adequate notes of readings, online information, examination of the shelves, etc.?

Am I thinking about the oral presentation I'll give on 17 or 24 of April?

Are there points I need to discuss with DR. Jackson?