

History 692: Seminar in Historical Documentary Editing  
George Mason University-Fall 2011  
Mondays: 6:40-9:20 pm  
Professor: Mary Jo Binker ([mbinker2@gmu.edu](mailto:mbinker2@gmu.edu))  
Phone: (202) 994-3078; Office Hours: 5:30-6:30 pm, Mondays or by appointment

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, CLASSES WILL BE HELD IN: Offices of the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, 1922 F St, N.W. Suite 406, Washington DC near Foggy Bottom or Farragut West Stations on the Blue/Orange Line or Farragut North on the Red Line. Street parking is available in the vicinity, but you need to arrive at 6:25 before the rush hour restrictions go off at 6:30.

**Purpose of Course:** To expose graduate students interested in applied history to the tenets and practices of modern historical documentary editing. You will be given a full overview of the creation of an historical edition from the search for relevant documents to the production of an index for the book, microform, or electronic edition. In addition, you will learn about Eleanor Roosevelt and the project to publish her post-White House papers. The assignments for this course will give you experience in editing letters and other documents and working as part of an editorial team. Special emphasis will be put on editing in the electronic age.

### Course Texts

Glendon, Mary Ann. *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, (Random House, New York, 2002)

Kline, Mary-Jo and Perdue, Sue. *A Guide to Documentary Editing*, Third Edition (University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville, 2008)

Roosevelt, Eleanor. *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Da Capo Press, New York, 1992)

### Other Resources

Beasley, Maurine et al. *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia* (1 copy in instructor's office)

Black, Allida, ed. *Courage in a Dangerous World* (available in ERP office)

Black, Allida et al, eds. *The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt*, volume 1 (available in ERP office)

Eleanor Roosevelt Papers website (<http://www.gwu.edu/~papers/>)

Stevens, Michael E. and Steven B. Burg, *Editing Historical Documents: A Handbook of Practice*

*The Chicago Manual of Style* 15<sup>th</sup> edition (available in ERP office)

Volumes of other documentary editions (available in ERP office)

### Requirements

**General:** Attendance and active participation in classes and project are essential to successful completion of the course. Besides the course texts, you will also be expected to read selected portions of *The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt*, volume 1 as assigned. You will also have access to the ERP office

library and its files. These materials, **none of which may leave the office**, should be your primary resources for annotating your final project. The *Guide to Documentary Editing* will supplement the lectures and provide you with additional examples of the many aspects of documentary editing and choices facing editors. It is also hoped that you will take advantage of the other documentary editions in the ERP offices. The assignments below will make up the majority of your grade but 15 percent will be based on your attendance and active participation in class. Please note that unless students make arrangements in advance, all work is due on the date listed on the syllabus. Late work will be penalized. For every day missed, the paper or project will have one letter grade deducted. Points will be deducted for poor grammar and misspellings. Points will also be deducted if the transcriptions listed below are not turned in. Students with a disability, who need academic accommodations, should see the instructor and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS

All written work should be submitted in an 8 1/2 x 11 format with a one-inch margin top and bottom and left and right on each page. Use 12-point type and a readable typeface such as Times Roman.

**Editorial Project:** team selection, transcription, proofreading, annotation, photo selection and indexing of a group of documents selected from two weeks of documents from the ERP collection. Groups will be formed by the third class meeting. Any issues relating to your group working together should be discussed with Prof. Binker early so that they can be resolved. **One fully edited letter to be submitted by October 17.** The entire project is due no later than December 12 (40 percent of grade)

**Individual Report:** Each student will pick two editorial projects' web pages (list to come from instructor) and write a report analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of each. A brief written report (approx. 4 pages) will be **due October 3.** Each student will also be asked to report verbally to the class on his/her project on one of three dates: October, 3, 10, 17. (20 percent of grade)

**Book Review:** a critical book review (1000 words) focused upon the editorial elements of a recent volume of edited historical documents that has been annotated. You must have your choice of book approved before doing the report. **Due November 7** (25 percent of grade)

**Transcription exercises:** These will be assigned as homework. They will not be graded but failure to turn them in on the due date will affect your final grade in the class.

### **Session Topics (weekly meetings)**

**August 29** Get acquainted; introduction to Eleanor Roosevelt; the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers and: historical editing, tour the ERP offices: Assignment for Sept. 12 Read: *Guide* Introduction and chapter 4; *Autobiography*, chapters: 17-27, My Day (available on ER Papers website) columns dated April 12-Dec. 31, 1945

### **September 5 No Class**

**September 12** History of historical documentary editing, research tools in the ERP office; explanation of and organization of for group projects transcription; individual report topics to be chosen by this date

Transcription 1 assigned. Assignment for Sept. 19: Read *Guide* chapter 5; *World*, chapters 1 and 2, *Autobiography*, chapters 28-29; My Day columns dated Jan. 1-June 30, 1946.

**September 19** Transcription theories and practices, proofreading and copyediting; transcription and proofreading lab—Transcription 1 due/bring to class; Transcription 2 assigned; group project work period. Assignment for Sept. 26: Read *Guide* chapter 1; *World*, chapters 3 and 4; *Autobiography*, chapters 30-31, My Day July 1-Dec. 31, 1946

**September 26** Designing a project—making the product fit both the needs of the expected users and adapting to the realities of what is fundable Transcription 2 due/bring to class; Transcription 3 assigned. Assignment for Oct. 3: Read *Guide* chapter 2, *World*, chapters 5 and 6, *Autobiography*, chapters 32 and 33, Appendix from *Guide* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (to come from instructor), My Day Jan.1 –June 30, 1947

**October 3** Organization and control of documents: Guest lecturer: Chris Alhambra (tentative); class oral reports. Assignment for Oct. 11: Read: *Guide*, chapters 2 and 3, *World*, chapters 7 and 8, *Autobiography*, chapters 34 and 35, *World*, 7 and 8, My Day July 1-Dec. 31, 1947

**October 11** (Tuesday) Searching for and obtaining copies of documents; search tools and standards; relations with repositories, copyright questions, locating documents through private collectors and the manuscript market. Class oral reports. Transcription 3 due/bring to class. Assignment for Oct. 17: Read *Guide* chapter 7, *World*, chapters 9 and 10, *Autobiography*, chapters 36 and 37, My Day columns dated Jan. 1-June 30, 1948 and editorial apparatus from ER Papers v. 1 (to come from instructor)

**October 17** Annotation and editorial aids, front matter (what helps the reader?) illustrating the volume, Class oral reports **ONE LETTER FROM FINAL PROJECT DUE** . Assignment for Oct. 24: Read *Guide* chapter 7, *World*, chapters 11 and 12, *Autobiography*, chapters 38 and 39. My Day columns dated July 1-Dec. 31, 1948

**October 24** Indexing procedures and pitfalls; group project work session. Assignment for October 31 Read *Autobiography*, chapters 40 and 41

**October 31** Full session devoted to work on group projects. Assignment for Nov. 7 *Guide* chapter 8, *Autobiography*, chapters 42 and 43

**November 7** Finding a publisher, preparing for publication, production of volume, design, page proof, publicity, distribution, etc. sharing session group projects and problems, group project work session.

**Book Review Due.** Assignment for November 14 Review web site for the War Department Papers

**November 14** Guest lecture by Christopher Hamner, Editor of the War Department Papers at GMU; discussion will focus on recreating an archive, online publication of documents and providing intellectual access to that online resource

**November 21** Funding, institutional relationships, professional groups, advocacy; group project work session

**November 28** Introducing documents into the classroom at all levels; resource (bibliography) session, solo editing; summary and evaluation session group project work session.

**December 5** Group Project Work Session

**December 12** Class Project due by class time (6:40 pm). If the project is emailed, it must be sent by 5 pm to ensure receipt by 6:40 pm. Students who wish to email their project should consider their project turned in once they receive a confirming email from the instructor. Students are also free to call in to be sure the project has arrived in a timely way. Students who want their projects returned should make arrangements with the instructor for email or snail mail return.