

History 692: Seminar in Historical Documentary Editing
George Mason University-Spring 2022
Mondays: 4:30-7:10 pm
Professor: Mary Jo Binker (she/her/hers) (mbinker2@gmu.edu)*
Phone: 571-241-8608; Office Hours: By appointment

**UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, CLASSES WILL BE HELD IN: Van Meter 322 (Arlington Campus).
Classes will be held in person.**

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 several documentary editing projects including the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers and the Foreign Relations of the United States Series published by the Historian's Office of the U.S. Department of State. The assignments for this course will give you experience in selecting, transcribing, and 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

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* (Harper Perennial, 2014)

Additional handouts to come from Instructor

Selected websites (see dates below)

Other Readings

Eleanor Roosevelt Papers website with ER's daily column, "My Day" and ER's monthly column "If You Ask Me" (<http://www.gwu.edu/~papers/>) located under the Online Documents tab

Requirements

General: Attendance and active participation in classes and the final project are essential to successful completion of the course. Besides the course texts, you will also be expected to read selected portions of Eleanor Roosevelt's columns, "My Day" and "If You Ask Me." These materials along with a **short list of approved websites (to come from instructor)**-and a basic bibliography on postwar Japan should be your primary resources for annotating your final project. *The Guide to Documentary Editing* will supplement the lectures and provide you with

more examples of the many aspects of documentary editing and the choices facing editors. *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt* will be used to demonstrate choices for a specific project. The websites of several different documentary editing projects will provide an overview of contemporary trends in digital publishing. 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 with particular emphasis on your critical evaluation of the websites discussed in class.

Final Editorial Project:* team selection, transcription, proofreading, annotation, photo selection and indexing of 10-12 documents from a pool of documents from 1953. Groups will be formed by the third class meeting. Any issues relating to your group working together should be discussed with the instructor early so they can be resolved. One fully edited letter to be submitted by April 4. **The entire project is due no later than May 9. (35 percent of grade)**

Book Review:* a critical book review (1,000 words) focused upon the editorial elements of a recent volume of edited historical documents. You must have your choice of book approved in advance of doing the report. Due **April 11 (25 percent of grade)**

Transcription exercises: These will be assigned as homework and reviewed in class. **(12.5 percent of grade)** Due dates: February 7, 14, 21 and 28; March 7, March 21 and March 28.

Annotation exercises: These will be assigned as homework and reviewed in class. Students will review documents and indicate what items should be annotated and what kind of information/sources should be included. **(12.5 percent of grade)** Due Dates: Feb. 21, Feb. 28 and March 7.

*Late assignments will be reduced in grade unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

Session Topics (weekly meetings)

1 Class Date: January 24 Get acquainted; introduction to Eleanor Roosevelt; the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project and historical editing

Assignments: for January 31 *Guide* Introduction; "My Day" columns Jan. 1-Feb. 28, 1953; *Autobiography*, chapters 1-5." If You Ask Me" columns dated January-March 1953

2 Class Date: January 31 History of documentary editing; available research tools; explanation of and organization of group projects; transcription.

Assignments: for February 7 *Guide* chapters 4 and 5; "My Day" columns Mar. 1 April 30, 1953; "If You Ask Me" columns dated April-June 1953; *Autobiography*, chapters 6-10; Crafting a Transcription Directive (to come from instructor). Transcription 1

3 Class Date:-February 7 Transcription theories and practices; proofreading and copyediting part 1; group project work period

Due in Class: Transcription 1

Assignments for February 14: *Guide* chapters 6 and 7; “My Day,” May 1-June 30, 1953; “If You Ask Me,” July-September 1953; *Autobiography*, chapters 11-15; Adams Papers Directive (to come from instructor). Transcription 2

4. Class Date: February 14 Annotation and editorial aids; front matter (what helps the reader?) Illustrating the volume

Due in Class: Transcription 2

Assignments for February 21 *Guide*, chapter 1; “My Day” July 1-Aug. 31, 1953; “If You Ask Me” October-December 1953 *Autobiography*, chapters 16-20. Transcription 3; Annotation document 1

5. Class Date: February 21 Designing a project—making the product fit both the needs of the expected users and adapting to the realities of what is fundable

Due in Class: Transcription 3; Annotation exercise 1

Assignments for February 28: *Guide* chapter 2; Appendix from *Guide* 2nd edition (to come from instructor); “My Day” Sept. 1-Oct. 31, 1953; *Autobiography*, chapters 21-24. Transcription 4; Annotation document 2

6. Class Date-February 28 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;

Due in Class: Transcription 4; Annotation exercise 2

Assignments for Reading for March 7 *Guide*, chapter 8 pp. 268-273 (start at Electronic Editions); “My Day” Nov.1-Dec. 31, 1953; *Autobiography*, chapters 25-28; “history.state.gov: A Case Study of Digital Humanities in the U.S. Government” (to come from Instructor) Transcription 5; Annotation document 3

7. March 7 Publication Part 1: Digital publishing: Tom Faith, historian, Office of the Historian, U. S. Department of State

Due in Class: Transcription 5; Annotation exercise 3

Assignments for March 21 *Guide*, chapter 3; *Autobiography*, chapters 29-32; Review of Founders Online (founders.archives.gov) **This Is My Story** Book and Magazine Versions to come from Instructor Transcription 6 (**Due March 28**)

Spring Break March 14-March 18, 2022 University Closed

8. Class Date: March 21 Case Study: Working with multiple versions of the same document: This Is My Story—Book and Magazine Versions. Class Discussion/Founders Online

Assignments for March 28 *Autobiography*, chapters 33-36; Review of Thomas Edison Papers; Transcription Exercise 6

9. Class Date:-March 28 Organization and control of documents with emphasis on the use of electronic databases; Class Discussion Thomas Edison Papers

Due in Class: Transcription Exercise 6

Assignments for April 4 *Autobiography*, chapters 37-40; 1 Letter from Final Project transcribed and annotated

10. Class Date:-April 4 Full session primarily devoted to work on group projects ONE LETTER FROM FINAL PROJECT DUE;

Assignment for April 11: *Autobiography*, chapters 41-43; Review of the Thomas A. Edison Papers (edison.rutgers.edu) book review

11. Class Date:-April 11 BOOK REVIEW DUE Indexing procedures and pitfalls; group project work session. Class Discussion: Thomas A. Edison Papers

Assignment April 18; Review of the Freedmen and Southern Society Project (freedmen.umd.edu/)

12. Class Date April 18 Guest Lecturer: Christopher Brick, Project Director, The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project; Funding; institutional relationships; professional groups; advocacy; Class Discussion: Review of Freedmen and Southern Society Project; group project work session

Assignment for April 25 Reading: *Guide* chapter 8 pp. 263-268, 273-290; Review of Jane Addams Papers Project (janeaddams.ramapo.edu)

13. Class Date-April 25 Publication Part 2: Finding a print publisher, preparing for publication, production of volume; design; page proofs; publicity; distribution, etc.; sharing session group projects and problems; group project work session Class Discussion: Jane Addams Papers Project

14. Class Date: May 2 Group Project Work Session

15.-May 9 Class Project Due

Additional University Information

Privacy*

Students must use their Mason email accounts to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address.

COVID Information

Spring 2022 plans specific to handling COVID related issues can be found here:

<https://core.sitemasonry.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus/mason-covid-updates>

Mason is still requiring testing. Everyone should have received email instructions for mandatory testing. Please check this website for information on Covid testing. The site included information on exemptions (for example, for fully remote employees and instructors): <https://www.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus/personal-and-public-health/covid-19-testing>

Masking

To date (1/19/21) the university's masking requirement has not changed. Mason continues to require everyone to wear a mask when in a building or university vehicle. You should also wear one when you're around other people outside on campus. <https://core.sitemasonry.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus/faqs-safe-return/faqs-face-coverings> Compliance is handled like any other university policy, standard, or guideline. A person refusing or failing to comply with the face covering policy might be asked to leave and be subject to disciplinary action. This means that you can, for example, 1) ask a student who is noncompliant with the face-covering requirement to leave your classroom, and 2) make a report to Student Conduct/Dean of Students. The university is providing, free of charge, N95 masks at multiple locations around campus beginning this week, including testing sites. Masks will also be distributed to departments through mail stops. Mason encourages members of our community to wear these masks, although any face covering that meets the minimum specifications of covering the mouth and nose is acceptable.

Safe Return to Campus Statement

All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to follow the university's public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the University Safe Return to Campus webpage (<https://www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus>). Similarly, all students in face-to-face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check prior to coming to campus. The COVID

Health Check system uses a color code system **and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, Red or Blue email response**. Only students who receive a “green” notification are permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. **If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty are allowed to ask you to show that that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.**

Students are required to follow Mason’s current policy about facemask-wearing. As of August 11, 2021, all community members are required to wear a facemask in all indoor settings, including classrooms. An appropriate facemask must cover your nose and mouth at all times in our classroom. If this policy changes, you will be informed; however, students who prefer to wear masks will always be welcome in the classroom.

Honor Code

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: 1) all work submitted be your own; 2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and 3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using the appropriate format for this class. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

As in many classes, the final project in this class is designed to be completed within your study group. With collaborative work, names of all the participants should appear on the work. Collaborative projects may be divided up so that individual group members complete portions of the whole, provided that group members take sufficient steps to ensure that the pieces conceptually fit together in the end product. Other projects are designed to be undertaken independently. In the latter case, you may discuss your ideas with others and conference with peers on drafts of the work; however, it is not appropriate to give your paper to someone else to revise. You are responsible for make certain that there is no question that the work you hand in is your own. If only your name appears on the assignment, your professor has the right to expect that you have done the work yourself, fully and independently.

Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

Disability Services

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/for> detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in the Student Union Building (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu; phone (703) 993-2474.

Non- Discrimination Policy

<https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/non-discrimination-policy/>

Policy Regarding Sexual Harassment

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students and employees who believe that they have been sexually harassed, sexually assaulted or subjected to sexual or interpersonal misconduct to seek assistance and support. University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct speaks to the specifics of Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students and employees.