SYLLABUS: MIAS 230 (Moving Image Cataloging)

Winter Quarter 2011
Thursdays, 5:30-9:00 pm
GSEIS 121

<u>Instructor:</u>
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Office hours:
Thursdays, 2:00-5:00 pm or by appointment

Catalog description

Seminar, four hours. Introduction to methodologies and standards specific to moving image cataloging. Discussion and debate of continued application of Library of Congress subject headings and genres to cataloged moving image materials. Exposure to variety of indexing languages used today within online environments and practical training in application of cataloging principles to motion pictures and television programs. Survey of general theories and alternate documentation practices at work within field as well as specific cataloging rules established by FIAF for local and national moving image archives. Discussion of important issues of public access, exploring various methods and protocols for making collection-related information available through secondary and nonsystematic channels such as study guides, collection profiles, Websites, stand-alone databases, and exhibition catalogs. Letter grading.

Course description and objectives

Introduction to methodologies, standards, and theoretical foundations of descriptive practice relating to moving image collections. Exposure to a variety of established and emerging metadata schemas, content standards, and information architectures in use with large and small repositories of audiovisual media, including those not traditionally defined as "archives." Examination of the role of the end user in descriptive standards, and the impact of digitization and description on access to moving images.

Upon completing this course, students will:
- Become familiar with the major principles and objectives of descriptive practice for archival moving images
- Be able to differentiate between various metadata types used in moving image description and catalog records in general
- Understand and be able to apply controlled vocabularies, name authorities, and cataloging rules to moving image materials
- Gain skills needed to critically evaluate cataloging systems and effectively resolve ambiguities in cataloging practice at an institutional level
- Be able to relate cataloging to the processes of access, collection management, digitization, preservation, and other functions of the moving image archive

Required readings

There is no required textbook for this class; instead, we will be reading a broad selection of literature from across the disciplines of information science, archivology, museology, cultural and media studies, communications, computer science, and so on. See the Bibliography on the course web site for a partial

list of articles that may be of interest for further reading, as well as several recommended books (which will be held on the MIAS 230 course reserves shelf in the IS lab). Take time to browse among these resources during the term in addition to the required weekly readings; you will find them helpful.

Assigned readings will be made available in hard-copy form on the reserve shelf in the IS library and/or as e-copies (PDF, DOC, etc.) in the Moodle site for this course. *It is your responsibility to read all assigned texts before class every week and demonstrate your familiarity with the readings during class discussions.* Additional or alternate readings may be assigned during the quarter. The course web site will be updated to reflect the most current readings and assignments, so be sure to check the site regularly in order to be properly prepared for class.

Grading and assignments

Your grade for this class will be based on a major paper (50%), class presentation based on your paper (15%), homework (5 assignments at 5% each, total 25%), attendance and participation (10%).

Late submissions of assignments will receive a letter-increment deduction for each day they are late. That means an A paper submitted one day late would receive an A-; two days late would bring it to a B+, and so on. No assignment will be accepted more than four days late without prior arrangement for an extension. If you anticipate difficulty with a deadline, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss your options. *All assignments must be completed and submitted in order to receive a passing grade in this class.*

With the exception of your final paper and presentation, you may revise and resubmit assignments as many times as you like before the end of the quarter to improve your grade; therefore, I encourage you to turn in *something* on the due date for the assignments, even if you are not completely satisfied with it, and avoid penalties for lateness (which will still apply to the final grade for a resubmitted paper).

The practice of cataloging is especially reliant on attention to detail and minutiae of punctuation and syntax, so I will expect perfect spelling, grammar, and punctuation—not to mention a reflection of your graduate-level abilities—in your written work for this class. Note that perfection does vary; for instance, I do not personally care whether you choose to spell it "catalog" and "cataloging," or "catalogue" and "cataloguing," as long as you do it consistently throughout a given paper.

Other criteria that will positively impact your grade include but are not limited to: solid understanding and critical application of the major theories and standards discussed in class; evidence of original thinking and willingness to explore areas not directly addressed by assigned texts; indications of initiative and thoroughness in your research; and overall quality of writing and expression.

To receive an A in this class:
Attend and participate every week. Demonstrate not just a thorough familiarity with the assigned readings, cataloging concepts and systems discussed in this course, but an understanding of their importance in accessing, preserving, and managing moving image collections of all kinds. Submit well-written assignments that reflect above-average effort and original insights, synthesis, and extension of previous scholarship and our class discussions.

To pass this class:
Attend and participate every week. Complete the readings before class and be prepared to discuss them. Complete and submit all written assignments. Produce writing of acceptable graduate-level quality, or revise and resubmit assignments that do not initially meet this standard.

Classroom policies

Individual conduct
Presence in the classroom is not merely physical; it comprises your awareness and attention as well. Using laptops for note-taking or following along with online or digital reserve readings is acceptable, and I am sympathetic to everyone's need to be available by phone in the event of emergency. Nevertheless, texting, chatting, trolling eBay, browsing on Facebook, etc. are distracting to others and are all things to be done on your own time. I will be disappointed if I notice this behavior during my own lectures, displeased if I see it during presentations by your classmates, and mortified if it goes on during guest speakers' visits. If you have better things to do during this time, or people you'd rather be with, I would prefer you don't come to class at all (see *Class participation and attendance*).

Differences of opinion
While often dryly technical, the theories and practice of cataloging do have aspects that are controversial, political, or affecting on a personal level. Alertness to and respect for the nuances of cataloging practice, as well as the feelings and professional opinions of your colleagues, is expected at all times in the classroom, just as it will be in your professional practice. On the other hand, thoughtful disagreements with the assigned readings or course topics will likely drive some of the most productive, enlightening discussions we have in this class. Take time to formulate your objections clearly and please bear in mind that intelligent people may disagree.

Accommodations for students with disabilities
I will gladly make appropriate accommodations for students with documented needs. The OSD student handbook, http://www.osd.ucla.edu/docs/Handbooks/OSDStudent.htm, outlines UCLA's procedures and responsibilities for equal access to education. Please find time in the first week of classes to let me know what you will need and how I can help.

Academic dishonesty
Section 102.01 of the UCLA Code identifies various forms of academic misconduct; it is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism, collusion, and other violations and to ensure that the work of others is properly used and cited in your own writing. Note that tracking the source of information is especially important in cataloging, where we may often rely on verbatim transcription, or records created and data collected by others. Plagiarism is thus not only ethically dubious; unattributed copying or careless transcription can easily perpetuate serious errors in the catalog, which may be permanently associated with you as the cataloger!

Office hours and consultation
My office hours and location are listed on the first page of this syllabus. Students with questions about assignments, grading, or other course-related matters are encouraged to make an appointment or come by during office hours. The sooner you come to me with a problem, the more likely it is that I can help.

Email will generally be the best way to contact me outside of office hours. I do my best to respond to all student communications within 24 hours; however, please note that I typically will not have constant

access to email from Wednesday afternoons through Thursday mornings, and on Friday afternoons and evenings. Call or text me during those intervals if you need to reach me urgently and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Course Schedule

Week 1: January 6
Introduction and overview
What is cataloging and why do we do it? What makes it different from other ways of describing things? Specific challenges of cataloging audiovisual media – Archive vs. library vs. museum descriptive practices

Lecture: Overview of the course objectives and requirements; introductions and expectations for the term. Brief discussion of cataloging and arrangement in audiovisual collections; introduction to key resources that will be used and consulted throughout the course, including assigned texts; guide to concepts and terminology students will need to be familiar with as we proceed.

Class activity: Cataloging from scratch

Week 2: January 13
Catalog vs. Bibliography vs. Database
What differentiates a catalog, a bibliography, and a database? Which features of each of these forms of data are of particular interest to those who work with collections of moving images? How does the structure of a database affect the form, content, and use of a moving image catalog? How big is the gap between catalogers and catalog users?

Readings: Look over the following cataloging resources. Read the Introduction and General Rules section (if there is one) thoroughly, and at least skim the rest. You need not read every page or memorize these rules and their application, but you should start becoming familiar with their major components and the similarities/differences between them as soon as possible.

IFLA Study Group on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records. (1998, updated 2008). *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records: Final Report*.
Online: http://www.ifla.org/en/publications/functional-requirements-for-bibliographic-records

A brief pamphlet summarizing FRBR ("What is FRBR? A Conceptual Model for the Bibliographic Universe") is also available online at http://www.loc.gov/cds/downloads/FRBR.PDF

Archival Moving Image Materials: A Cataloging Manual
Online: http://www.itsmarc.com/crs/arch0332.htm

FIAF Cataloguing Rules for Film Archives
Online: http://www.fiafnet.org/uk/publications/fep_cataloguingRules.cfm

Understanding MARC Authority Records: Machine-Readable Cataloging
Online: http://www.loc.gov/marc/uma

Naun, C. C., & Elhard, K. C. (2005). Cataloguing, Lies, and Videotape: Comparing the IMDb and the Library Catalogue. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, *41*(1), 23-43.

<u>Assignment 1</u> (due at beginning of class): In their introductions and background information, the authors of these guides repeatedly touch on similar topics, including the cost (in time and money) of professional cataloging, the skills and knowledge required for effective cataloging, the problems of developing standards for moving image media, and the importance of standardization and interoperability for description and access. Identify a topic that is discussed in *two or more* of the above readings for this week, briefly describe how the issue is addressed in each instance, and provide your own assessment of the relevance of that topic to end users of moving image catalogs. For instance, are things like standardized subject headings visible to, or relied upon by, catalog users? Do users understand or care about how much it costs or how much time it takes to catalog films? What might be the benefits or drawbacks of departing from standards created for books and text-based media when describing moving images?

Week 3: January 20
Cataloging as a collaborative process
Which communities are involved in, and affected by, the creation and revision of cataloging standards? How does one community's adoption of a specific standard contribute to, or confound, interactions with and discovery of cataloged collections?

Readings:

AMIA Cataloging & Documentation Committee. (1999). *Archival moving image materials: a cataloging manual. Comments on Library of Congress draft revision and AMIA proposals for new and alternative chapters.* Online: http://www.amianet.org/resources/reports/AMIM_recs_1999.pdf and in reserves.

MIC: About the Union Catalog. (Updated October 12, 2006).
Online: http://mic.loc.gov/unicatlg_1.htm

MPEG-7 Overview
Online: http://mpeg.chiariglione.org/standards/mpeg-7/mpeg-7.htm

Guest speaker: Thelma Ross, Cataloger, Academy Film Archive. Ms. Ross will discuss her work on revisions to the FIAF cataloging rules, so revisit the rules before class and be prepared to discuss them in greater detail while she is here: http://www.fiafnet.org/uk/publications/fep_cataloguingRules.cfm

Reminder: By this time you should have your paper topic selected and approved by the instructor.

Week 4: January 27
Cataloging (and access) as a political act
Thesauri, controlled vocabularies, subject headings, and other catalog features as works of authorship – Ownership and attribution – Naming and reclaiming – Access and its dependency on language, technology, and collaboration

Lomax, Alan. (1971). Toward an ethnographic film archive. *Filmmakers Newsletter 4*(4). Online:
http://users.design.ucla.edu/~jbishop/articles/lomax1.pdf

Visit and explore the NAA/HSFA site: http://www.nmnh.si.edu/naa/. Using the links under "Guides to the Collections," search for moving image records from the Human Studies Film Archive collection and the larger SIRIS database. Compare the format of entries in both locations and consider their impact on browse/search access to the ethnographic film collection.

Furner, J. (2007). Dewey deracialized: A critical race-theoretic perspective. *Knowledge Organization*, *34*(3), 144–168.

Black Films in the Library of Congress, compiled by Cooper Graham, 1987.
http://www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/findaid/blckfilm.html

Assignment 2: To what extent is cataloging and description implicitly reliant upon users' literacy, language proficiency, personal/political orientation, access to technology, or level of ability? If cataloging's main purpose, per Cutter and others, is to provide *access* to holdings and help users of the resources to identify materials of interest and use to them, how might the improvement of *accessibility*, or the reduction (or mere acknowledgement) of problematic features like racial bias, be accomplished by the cataloger? Discuss, at least in passing, how these issues might apply to the system or collection you've chosen for your paper.

Week 5: February 3
Subject access and content description - Of-ness and about-ness – Genre, subject, and discipline – Shot lists, indexes, subject headings, and other maps that may become bigger than the territory - Making moving images discoverable in the ways users seek them (is this even possible?)

Readings:

Yee, M. M. (2007). *Moving Image Cataloging: How to Create and How to Use a Moving Image Catalog*. Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited. Read Chapters 6 and 7, "Introduction to Subject Analysis" and "More on Subject Analysis."

Moving Image Genre-Form Guide
http://www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/migintro.html

Jaffré, G., Joly, P., & others. (2004). Costume: A new feature for automatic video content indexing. In *Proceedings of RIAO* (pp. 314–325). [PDF]

Boreczky, J., Girgensohn, A., Golovchinsky, G., & Uchihashi, S. (2000). An interactive comic book presentation for exploring video. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems - CHI '00* (pp. 185-192). Presented at the the SIGCHI conference, The Hague, The Netherlands. [PDF]

Week 6: February 10
Describing television and other serial works - Mixed collections: approaches to describing moving images as non-book materials and relating them to non-moving image materials within and outside of the collection - Non-commercial moving images and orphan works

Readings:

Prelinger, R. (2006). *The Field Guide to Sponsored Films*. San Francisco, CA: National Film Preservation Foundation. PDF download available online: http://www.filmpreservation.org/dvds-and-books/the-field-guide-to-sponsored-film

Center for Home Movies. (2011). *Proceedings of the 2010 CHM Home Movie Summit: Report of the Working Group on Cataloging and Description*. Culpeper, VA, September 23-25, 2010. PDF download available online.

Other readings TBD

Assignment 3:

Week 7: February 17
Connections within the catalog: reflecting kinship among and between moving images – See/see also references and syndetic structures - Versions, manifestations, editions, and derivatives - Authority files and authority control – Union catalogs and cooperative cataloging

Readings:

MIC: About the Union Catalog. Online: http://mic.loc.gov/unicatlg_1.htm (Be sure to view all of the data mapping diagrams; note that this page was last updated October 12, 2006.)

Other readings TBD

Week 8: February 24
The future of (moving image) cataloging

Digitization and its effects on the catalog – Crowdsourcing, collaborative indexing, tagging, automation and the push to de-specialize cataloging processes – A universal catalog for moving images?

Readings:

Jorgensen, C. (2007). Image access, the semantic gap, and social tagging as a paradigm shift. *Image*.

Other readings TBD

Assignment 4:

Week 9: March 3
Student presentations

Week 10: March 10
Student presentations

Assignment 5: Peer review **Due via email (PDF, DOC, or DOCX format) by midnight on Monday, 3/14****
Provide input on each of your classmates' papers, based on the presentations from the last two weeks of class (as well as any further conversations you may have had during the quarter with the presenters

about their topics, drafts of the paper they may have shared, and/or your own personal experience with the system they are reporting on). Write at least a brief paragraph for each topic/presenter—an example is provided below.

This should *not* be a critique of presentation style or public speaking skills; rather, you should offer your thoughts on what relation the topic has to moving image cataloging as a whole, what aspects of the system or collection might be of particular interest, what you found confusing, surprising, useful or innovative about the system as it was presented, etc. Try to give pointers or suggestions that will strengthen the author's final product, as your review will be anonymized and shared with the students, just as the reviewers' comments on a journal submission would be.

Exam week: March 17
Final papers are due to me via email (PDF, DOC, or DOCX format) by midnight, Pacific time on **Friday, 3/18.**

ASSIGNMENTS

Major paper
50% of final grade
Due by midnight, PST, on Friday, March 18

Your major paper for this course will be a field report on a system of description that is in use by some actual entity or organization that collects or manages moving image materials. Exercise your imagination in selecting a system to explore—you will find that moving images are used and accessed in very different ways by a local archive, video rental store, Hulu or Netflix, police department, horse racetrack, television news station, surveillance or security company, documentary film production company, independent filmmaker, video game producer, high school media library, dance or theater company, et cetera. Your report should be evaluative and critical, not just descriptive, addressing these and other questions:

- What kind of system is this? (Union catalog, OPAC, database, portal, etc.) Is it truly a *catalog*, by Cutter's standard, or any other definition?
- What, if any, standards (including internal standards and local vocabularies, metadata schema, thesauri, genre/form terms) are used?
- Who are the primary, and if applicable, secondary user communities?
- How visible is the cataloging structure and *all* metadata to users?
- When, where, and how does cataloging take place, and by whom is it done?
- How are catalog entries accessed/searchable by users?
- What metadata is captured or generated automatically?
- How often—if at all—are the system's rules revised, and what is the process for these revisions?
- What are strengths and weaknesses of the system; what is it good (or not so good) for?
- Is it scalable or extensible? What needs does it/might it serve less well if this system were adopted or applied elsewhere?

You may, if you wish, choose to devise a descriptive system for a collection that is currently uncataloged; however, if you do this, you should be sure it is a collection that is a) at least potentially accessible to an external audience, b) large and diverse enough to require a robust and flexible set of rules, and c) accessible to you to the extent necessary to gather the information needed for a thorough treatment of the catalog and its contents in your paper (ideally, it should be accessible enough to me that I can adequately evaluate your work, as well!). You should be sure to assess weaknesses or unresolved issues in any scheme you devise—this may mean creating a batch of test records with actual collection items, or asking the owners/users of the collection to evaluate your system for themselves and give you feedback. Be careful—designing a usable system may be more complicated than you imagine!

Please submit your chosen topic for approval no later than the third week of class. Some weekly assignments will require you to apply topics and theories from the readings to your paper subject, so it is important to begin your work on this project early in order to complete those assignments effectively.

The length and format of this paper will to some extent be determined by the subject matter. A paper that is constructed as a manual for use with a currently undocumented system, for example, may have several dozen pages of introductory text and instruction in addition to appendices of genre terms, subject categories already in use, name authority examples, and so on. A paper of 5,000 words (20

double-spaced pages, plus bibliography and any appendices) is a typical length for publication and will generally be considered appropriate for this assignment. Feel free to discuss your ideas, directions, and any difficulties with me at any time during the term—the sooner you alert me to problems you are having, the more helpful I can be to you in resolving them.

Presentation based on major paper
15% of final grade
Last 2 class meetings

All students will present a short summary of their final papers to the class as a whole. This is an opportunity for you to share what you have discovered about cataloging in a specific real-world context with your fellow students, respond to questions, and receive feedback that you may use to improve your last draft before submission. Powerpoint or other multimedia is not required for your presentation; however, handouts, screenshots, or showing selected pages from bookmarked sites can all be helpful in conveying the essentials in your presentation.

Depending on the number of students enrolled in the class and the time available at the end of the term, you may have 10-15 minutes to speak, plus a few additional minutes for questions and discussion. The extreme brevity of this time is part of the assignment—the familiarity you have gained with a unique and complex information system over the course of the quarter should enable you to concisely describe its salient features and highlight one or more of its particularly interesting or unusual aspects for the class.

Written homework assignments
25% of final grade (5 assignments, 5% each)
Due at beginning of class on dates as assigned

Every other week or so, you will be turning in a short paper (1,000 words maximum; 3-4 double-spaced pages) that responds to readings or topics we have covered to date. Some of these assignments will, or may, relate directly to your major paper subject. They are designed to help you connect the course content with your work outside of the classroom, as well as stay on track with researching and writing your paper. <u>You will not be penalized for including part or all of a homework assignment in your final paper.</u>

Class participation and attendance
10% of final grade
Your presence and active participation in class discussions—which includes the contribution of additional readings and items of interest to the course website, as well as speaking up in class—is expected every week. You are also responsible for completing all assigned readings and homework prior to class. Unexcused absence from three or more class meetings is grounds for failure.