

Bibliography as Network Analysis: New Approaches to Enumerative Bibliography

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Inspired by:

African-American Newspapers and Periodicals: A National Bibliography. James P. Danky, editor; Maureen E. Hady, associate editor. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998. Also see the e-database developed from Danky's bibliography, "African American Periodicals, 1825-1995," by Readex, which is available through many public and university libraries.

OVERVIEW

Total Class Time: 4 hours, in 2 parts, with a break in between.

Ideal Class Size: approx 12, or, with adaptations (and some experience) for up to 50 online, 10 breakout rooms with about 5 people per breakout room

TOPIC

The world of newspapers and periodicals is an extraordinarily rich source of information about communities, particularly minority communities. Bibliographic description gives scholars and students a way into non-book materials not only to recover these materials but also to unpack the worlds and communities that made them.

The workshop is about learning different bibliographic methods that allow us to unpack or record different bibliographic communities that made newspapers, pamphlets, and introduces bibliographic approaches to U.S. newspapers, newsletters, and pamphlets (with a focus on newspapers) to show how analysis of references to other publications, in combination with analysis of physical formats and printing technologies, can help reveal how access to the press enabled minority communities to engage in public conversations that strengthened their social presence and authority.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- undertake a holistic analysis of textual materials (newspapers, newsletters, and pamphlets)
- explore the significance of processes (esp. printing) by which these materials were created
- communicate bibliographic observations effectively, using appropriate vocabulary and consistent methodology
- discover the power of enumerative bibliography to define or redefine a field of inquiry, and how this relates to analytical/descriptive bibliography

- recognize the significance of positionality in making and interpreting print culture materials and histories
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INTRODUCTION

Preliminary Exploration (20 minutes)

Students are sent a bibliographic kit in advance, or asked to provide two different types of publication such as a newspaper, pamphlet, newsletter, or similar printed ephemeral publication that relates to their interests. We begin by comparing and contrasting as many physical aspects of these materials as possible (sight, feel, smell, size, weight, etc.). We look for clues as to the people responsible for producing these materials, and the printing technology they used. We note references to other publications that point to the broader network of people engaged in producing and consuming this type of material. As we look for clues, we begin to learn relevant bibliographic vocabulary from the instructor that helps us to refine and share our findings (for relevant glossaries see [APPENDIX A](#)). We consider how our intentions regarding these materials, and the observations we make, differ from those of the people who created them. Further, we reflect on how our intentions would vary depending on our social and/or professional position, e.g., as a researcher, bookseller, librarian, etc.

Transition to Exercises: Defining Enumerative and Descriptive Bibliography

What is enumerative bibliography?

Traditionally, enumerative bibliography is

the listing of books according to some system or reference plan, for example, by author, by subject, or by date. The implication is that the listings will be short, usually providing only the author's name, the book's title, and date and place of publication. Enumerative bibliography (sometimes called *systematic bibliography*) attempts to record and list, rather than to describe minutely. Little or no information is likely to be provided about physical aspects of the book such as paper, type, illustrations, or binding. A library's card catalog is an example of an enumerative bibliography, and so is the list at the back of a book of works consulted, or a book like the *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*, which catalogues briefly the works of English writers and the important secondary material about them.

—Terry Bellanger, “Descriptive Bibliography,” in *Book Collecting: A Modern Guide*, ed. Jean Peters (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1977), p. 99.

An illustrated, online enumerative bibliography that nevertheless conforms to this traditional description can be found [here](#).

But enumerative bibliography can do a lot more! The purpose of this workshop is to show you how to use enumerative bibliography in a far richer way—a way that will help you to discover communities and contexts from other times and places that are otherwise largely invisible.

Why newspapers?

Relatively inexpensive to produce and to purchase, targeted to more or less specific audiences, and broadly popular, newspapers provide key repositories of the perspectives and cultures of communities in specific times and places. These interconnected communities include not only readers and writers, but also those who produce the papers and advertise in them. They therefore offer underutilized windows into historical peoples and circumstances that might otherwise remain largely unrecorded.

PART 1: Newspapers as/and Enumerative Bibliography (130 Minutes -- try to shave to 2 hours -- perhaps make each 30 into 25)

In this exercise, students examine a digital newspaper to develop an enumerative bibliography that helps to define the universe of publications of interest to this newspaper’s readership. Students then analyze this bibliography to investigate the networks for publishing, selling, and distributing materials to this readership.

A. Small Groups:

1. 20 minutes: Methodology: organize the information in a clear and meaningful way.

- What is a convention for citing bibliographical works?
- How much conventional bibliographic information can be determined about the publications from the newspaper at hand? Is there other information that would be useful to convey?

How should the citations be organized? What seem to be the key categories or relationships?

2. 30 minutes: Discovery: extract information part 1.

- What books and publications are associated with this newspaper?
- Where and how are books and other publications advertised for sale or otherwise mentioned in this newspaper?
- Compile a list of publications from the newspaper

3. 30 minutes: Discovery: extract info part 2.

- What writers are associated with this newspaper?
- What illustrators, photographers?
- What addresses are mentioned?

Group 1: Reading outside the periodical: read ads and think about where they take us beyond the margins?

Group 2: Micro: Read columns of a particular person as a case study?

Group 3: Macro: Read multiple issues with an eye towards the team of printmakers behind the paper. Who's writing for the paper, how often, what kinds of things are they writing, what absences do you notice?

4. 20 minutes: Analysis: use the enumerative bibliography to reveal networks engaged in publishing, selling, and distributing materials of interest to this newspaper's readership.

- Are there key booksellers or publishers who keep appearing in this bibliography?
- What information can we gather about these publishers or booksellers, e.g., addresses, names of owners
- State the significance for what was identified, or acknowledge that more information is needed -- discussion networks for publishing, selling, and distributing books in a community that reads X newspaper

B. 30 minutes: Larger Group:

- Students report on findings and discuss.
- **Transition: We've just been doing Enumerative Bibliography. Now, we'll transition to Descriptive Bibliography. How does Enumerative Bibliography relate to Descriptive Bibliography?**

[10 minute break]

PART 2: Newspapers and Descriptive Bibliography—Definitions, Sizes, Technologies, & Culture (30 minutes)

In this exercise, students define the term “newspaper,” and consider how a newspaper’s size and format relates to printing technology and readership.

1. What defines a newspaper? Students offer observations and instructor integrates these into a discussion of formal definitions.
2. Using the format width x height, students measure the first sheet of a given newspaper, and then measure subsequent leaves to see how many are similar in size
3. Two common formats of newspapers are broadsheet (unfolded single sheet) or a folio (one sheet, folded in half). Which type is this?
4. Newspapers tend to have narrow columns of type, with as many on a page as can fit. How wide are the columns in this newspaper? How many columns per page?
 - Discuss: why print in columns? (ease of reading & handling / folding & unfolding; more headlines per page)

PART 3: Printing Technologies & Accessibility (45 minutes)

30 minutes:

- **EITHER** Instructor shares materials printed using a range of technologies from different periods, and points out identifying characteristics of each technology.
- **OR** instructor shares a video on historic printing technologies.

15 minutes: The instructor divides materials into pairs and asks students to compare and contrast.

Prompt: how might printing technologies have determined or reflected other aspects of these publications, such as who produced them, extent of distribution, or social circumstances or interests of readers?

- a. Two minutes of individual observation,
- b. two minutes discussion with a partner,
- c. then class discussion.

EPILOGUE (15 minutes)

- Optional additional Act IV: further distinctive examples of newsletters/pamphlets/ephemera/social media platforms, perhaps online or perhaps from host institution’s collections
- Reading List:

Useful Bibliographies:

James Danky, et. al., *African American Newspapers & Periodicals: A National Bibliography* (Harvard UP, 1998)

_____, *Undergrounds: A Union List of Alternative Periodicals in Libraries of the United States & Canada* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1974)

_____, *Native American Periodicals & Newspapers, 1828-1982: Bibliographies, Publishing Records, & Holdings* (Greenwood Press, 1984)

Literary/Cultural Histories of U.S. Newspapers & Periodicals (These titles focus on large-scale structural organization of periodical institutions. I don't list biographies or thematic analyses. By no means does this reflect a systematic or comprehensive review! It's absolutely idiosyncratic.).

African American Leads

- I. Garland Penn, *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors* (1891)
- Betty Lou K. Rathbun, *Rise of the Modern Negro Press, 1880-1914* (Ph.D. diss, SUNY Buffalo, 1979)
- Todd Vogel, ed., *The Black Press: New Literary and Historical Essays* (Rutgers UP, 2001)
- Eric Gardner, *Black Print Unbound: the Christian Recorder, African American Literature, and Periodical Culture* (U Mississippi Press, 2015)
- _____, *Unexpected Places: Relocating 19th Century African American Literature* (U Mississippi Press, 2011)
- Thomas Aiello, *The Grapevine of the Black South: The Scott Newspaper Syndicate in the Generation before the Civil Rights Movement* (U Georgia Press, 2018)
- Eurie Dahn, *Jim Crow Networks: African American Periodical Cultures* (U Massachusetts Press, 2021)

Ethnic Communities (even more idiosyncratic!)

- Elliott Shore, [et.al.](#), *The German American Radical Press: The Shaping of a Left Periodical Culture, 1850-1940* (U of IL Press, 1992)
- James Danky & Wayne Wiegand, eds. *Print Culture in a Diverse America* (U of IL Press, 1998)

- William B. Kelley, [et.al.](#), *Gay Press, Gay Power: the Growth of LGBT Community Newspapers in America* (Chicago: Prairie Avenue Productions, 2012).

Possible Periodical Sources

E-database "African American Periodicals, 1825-1995," based on Danky's National Bibliography. It's terrific.

ProQuest Historical Newspaper Databases:

contains major African American newspapers dating back to early 1900s (Chicago Defender, Baltimore Afro-American, New York Age, New York Amsterdam News, Pittsburgh Courier, Atlanta Daily World, Los Angeles Sentinel). Also has special "channels" that feature "alternative" US newspapers and other U.S. ethnic newspapers.

Exciting sources that teach well (focus: 20th century African American literary studies/history)

- *The Black Panther* newspaper (exciting layouts and iconic graphics; also available online)
- *Crisis Magazine* (the official monthly magazine of the NAACP; started in 1910; a key publication during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. NOT available online. Just physical copies or microfilm).
- *Jet Magazine* (ripe and luscious weekly news/culture magazine published by the venerable Johnson Publications in Chicago; started in 1951; known as the "Bible" of African American news; I believe partially available via Google Books; best appreciated in its physical, pocket-sized format)
- *Chicago Defender* (available via ProQuest Historical Newspapers; arguably the most important African American newspaper in the first half of the 20th century--arguably for its role in stoking the Great Migration).