Collections Management in Bryn Mawr Special Collections

Museum Studies Fieldwork Seminar
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**What is Collections Management?**

Collections management consists of administrative tasks and preventative care for items to keep our collection in top shape, and reduces the need for more intensive or invasive conservation work on objects in the collection. Bryn Mawr’s collections manager, Marianne Weldon, is pictured above.

**Our Collection**

Bryn Mawr Special Collections focuses on antiquities and women’s rights and education, and includes a large collections of rare books and manuscripts. There are more than 50,000 objects in the collection. Unlike many other colleges, Bryn Mawr employs a highly qualified full time conservator, Marianne Weldon.

**My Role**

As Marianne’s intern, I learned the ins and outs of the collection with several specific areas of focus, such as making storage mounts, accessioning objects, pulling objects for exhibition, and assisting graduate students with whatever task they are working on during the conservation lab’s open office hours.

A large part of my role was to accession objects into the collection. This task consists primarily of adding labels to the objects with acrylic, clear base and sharpie, and then adding the object to the database which has all the information about the collection, called EMBARK. Part of this work includes adding metadata concerning the object to the database, including the title, artists, and subject matter.

Mount making was a central part of my role in collections. I made lots of custom made storage mounts, which are carved pieces of foam meant for the safe storage of objects. Mounts are an important part of the preventative care of objects, because an object stored in an unsafe way is much more likely to be broken or damaged.

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