

Arthur Mitchell Fraas  
University of Pennsylvania  
Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center  
3420 Walnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6206  
215-898-0605  
FRAAS@UPENN.EDU

## EDUCATION

Ph.D., Department of History, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, 2011  
Dissertation Title: “*They have travailed into a wrong latitude:*” *The Laws of England, Indian Settlements, and the British Imperial Constitution 1726-1773.*  
Fields: Legal History (Britain and its colonies), Indian Ocean and Comparative Colonialism, and the British Empire  
Committee: Edward Balleisen (chair), Jan Ewald, Phil Stern, David Gilmartin (NC-State), Holly Brewer (University of Maryland)  
M.A. in history Duke University, 2006  
B.A. in history Boston College (Chestnut Hill, MA) *cum laude*, 2004  
Undergraduate member, Mansfield College, Oxford University: 2002-3

## EMPLOYMENT

Senior Curator, Special Collections, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania Libraries, February 2019-Present

Curator, Special Collections, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania Libraries, July 2015-February 2019

Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Pennsylvania, July 2017-Present

Curator, Digital Research Services, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania Libraries, June 2014 – June 2015

Interim Director/Co-director University of Pennsylvania Digital Humanities Forum, July 2013-to July 2014

Scholar in Residence, Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania Libraries. July 2013-May 2014

Bollinger Fellow for Library Innovation, University of Pennsylvania Libraries, July 2011-July 2013 (Concurrently a Council on Library and Information Resources postdoctoral fellow).

Associate and Teaching Assistant at the Duke University Haiti Humanities Lab. August-December 2010.

Editorial and 'World Reader' Intern, Duke University Press. May-December 2010.

Reference Intern, Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library. September 2009 - August 2010.

Graduate Student Assistant, Duke University Press copyright and operations division. Spring 2008.

Graduate Employee, Duke University Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Summer 2006.

Research Assistant, Triangle Legal History Seminar and Teagle Foundation "Rule of Law" grant. 2006-2010

Library Technician, History and Literature Cataloging Division, Library of Congress 2002

#### **RECENT TEACHING**

Instructor (with Zachary Lesser), Hist574 "Introduction to Bibliography" University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2015 and Spring 2017

This seminar offered an introduction to the principles of descriptive and analytic bibliography and textual editing. The twelve Ph.D. students in the class learned how to identify printing techniques, bibliographic features, and other types of evidence over the course of the semester. They also learned how to deploy these new skills on a range of scholarly questions in their various fields which ranged from the dawn of European printing to the mass-market era of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Instructor, Hist680 "Introduction to Digital Humanities," University of Pennsylvania, Spring 2014.

This seminar introduced graduate students in the humanities to the field of digital humanities as both methodology and budding discipline in its own right. Students learned about the digital humanities through critical readings about the use of digital tools and techniques as well as concrete hands-on instruction in these tools themselves. Prominent skills and topics covered included text mining, mapping and network analysis, primary sources and digitization, as well as managing humanities research data. The seminar was aimed at graduate students in research humanities programs and involved collaboration between students from different fields and disciplinary backgrounds. All participants in the class produced an argument-based project based on the use of digital tools and techniques by the end of the semester.

Instructor, WS20 “Legal Documents Yesterday & Today,” Duke University, Spring 2011.

Using primary sources from special collections as well as contemporary digital documents students examined the changing nature of how people wrote to authority (courts, governments, etc.) in the past and today.

## **PUBLISHED PAPERS**

“A New Manuscript of More’s English Works” (with Tony Edwards), *The Library*, vol. 20, issue 1 (March 2019), pp. 89-93.

“Mapping the State of the Union” (with Ben Schmidt) *Atlantic* (18 January 2015),  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2015/01/mapping-the-state-of-the-union/384576/>

“Traces of Previous Readers” *Fine Books and Collections* (Autumn 2014).

“Making Claims: Indian litigants and the expansion of the English legal world in the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 15.1 (Spring 2014).

“Linking Archival Sources in the 2013 American Historical Review” *Archive Journal* 3 (Summer 2014).  
<http://www.archivejournal.net/issue/3/uncategorized/linking-archival-sources-in-the-2013-american-historical-review/>

“The Reinvented Sutro Library” *Fine Books and Collections* (Winter 2013), pp. 14-16.

“Primary Sources at a Distance: Researching Indian Colonial Law,” FOCUS 32.1 (Fall 2012)  
<http://www.crl.edu/focus/article/8566>

"The Royal College of Physicians Survey of Savannah, 1829" *Georgia Historical Quarterly* XCVI.1 (2012): 56-65.

“Legal Databases: A Comparative Analysis” Center for Research Libraries (2012)  
<http://www.crl.edu/collections/topics/legal-databases-comparative-analysis>

“Review of HeinOnline” (2012) <http://www.crl.edu/review/heinonline>

“Review of LLMC-Digital” (2012) <http://www.crl.edu/review/llmc-digital>

“Local History from 8,000 Miles Away: Early Colac Court Records in the United States,”  
*Provenance* 10 (2011).

## PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

Invited speaker at the “Versatile Careers/Activist Pedagogies” Roundtable, John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute, Duke University, 26 March 2019.

“Forming Subjects: Documentation and Paperwork from the Early Modern to Modern Worlds” American Historical Association Annual Meeting. 5 January 2019.

“Boilerplate: Legal Documents, Printing, and the Persistence of Form in English Law” Penn Workshop in the History of Material Texts, 3 December 2018.

"Mapping Manuscript Migrations," presentation at Digital Humanities 2018 in Mexico City, 25 June 2018.

"Digital Humanities and the library" half-day workshop at Montgomery County Community College (11 May 2018).

Presenter at the inaugural workshop “The Social Life of Commercial Trust: Comparative Historical Perspectives from Asia, Africa and Europe, 1600-1950” Nantes Institute for Advanced Study, 20-22 February 2018.

“Documents, Forms, and the Global Problem of the “Book”” – presentation at Bibliography Among the Disciplines, Rare Books School, 12-15 October 2017.

“Indian Archives Online” – presentation at “South Asia Archives” Conference at South Asia Studies Department, University of Pennsylvania, February 23-24, 2017.

“The Making of an Archive” – presentation at “Rediscovering Words & Worlds” conference at Columbia University. 17 February 2017.

“Facsimile” – presentation at “Book, Archive, Museum: A Bibliographical Symposium.” Penn State University, Abington. 28 October 2016.

"Anglicization beyond British North America: The Rise and Fall of British Law in Eighteenth-Century India” Newberry Library Symposium on Comparative Early Modern Legal History April, 2016

"Folger Digital Agendas II: Roundtable: Scholarly Conversations and Collaborations" The Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference. March, 2016

American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, Mid-Atlantic,

- "Expanding the Literary World: British India, Book Circulation, and the Transmission of Knowledge in the Eighteenth Century." November, 2015
- "Research Using Online Historical Legal Sources on South Asia, Both Feast and Famine"  
Madison Annual Conference on South Asia. Legal Studies Workshop. October 22, 2015
- "Expanding the Literary World: British India, Book Circulation, and the Transmission of Knowledge in the Eighteenth Century" Library History Seminar XIII, 31 July 2015.
- "Beyond the Atlantic: British India, Book Circulation, and the Transmission of Knowledge in the Eighteenth Century" Rare Book School invited lecture, Philadelphia, 7 July 2015.
- Presentation at the University of Pennsylvania History Department's workshop on alternative careers for Ph.D. students, 22 April 2015.
- "The Language of Law: Interpreting Nineteenth-Century Legal Documents" Early Washington DC Law & Family Project (University of Nebraska Virtual Conference), 19 March 2015.
- "Mining and Visualizing Manuscript Provenance Data at a Large Scale" 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Lawrence J. Schoenberg Symposium on Manuscripts in the Digital Age, 7 November 2014.
- "Introduction to the Digital Humanities for Italian Studies and Beyond" Symposium on Italian Authors and Readers in the Digital Era, 22 October 2014.
- "Looking at India through an Atlantic lens: Forging British imperial law in the Eighteenth Century" Interdisciplinary Seminar in Atlantic Studies University of Pennsylvania, 7 October 2014.
- "Introduction to the Digital Humanities" Villanova University, 6 September 2014.
- "New Tools to Document Old Thefts: Mapping the Offenbach Archival Depot"  
RBMS 2014, 24-27 June 2014.
- "Transferring Allegiance: Prize Courts and Claims of Belonging in the mid-Eighteenth Century" Twentieth Annual Omohundro Institute Conference, 12-14 June 2014
- "Mapping the Indian Republic of Letters" Digital Approaches to Library History, Chicago Illinois, 30 May-1 June 2014
- "Currents of Law: Legal Borrowing and Information Circulation in the Anglophone World" Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference, 27-30 March 2014.
- "Expanding the Republic of Letters: India and the Circulation of Ideas in the Late Eighteenth

Century” [Digital Projects Showcase] Conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading & Publishing, 20 July 2013.

“Digitization Crossroads” [Pre-Conference Workshop] Invited presenter, Conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading & Publishing, 18 July 2013.

“Taffeta Gowns and Men of Credit: English Local Government in Eighteenth-Century India” Invited presenter, “Cities, Companies, and Corporations in the Making of Global Britain 1600-1800” University of California Berkeley, 31 May -1 June 2013.

“History in the Digital Age” Invited Presenter, James A. Barnes Graduate Student Conference, Temple University, 23 March 2013

“Printing for Emphasis: the legal brief in the Anglo-American world 1600-present” Invited presenter, History of Material Texts Seminar, University of Pennsylvania, 11 March 2013.

“Making claims: India and the creation of an eighteenth-century imperial legal order” Funded presenter. “*Spaces of law: territories, boundaries, corridors and beyond*” Kolkata, India, 11–13 December 2012.

“Readers, Scribes, and Collectors: The dissemination of legal knowledge in eighteenth-century British South Asia” Middle East Studies Association, 20 November 2012

“Caste Heads, Indo-Portuguese Landlords, and Justices of the Peace: English Local Government in Eighteenth-Century India” North American Conference on British Studies, 10 November 2012.

“An Introduction to the Digital Humanities for Jewish Studies,” *Judaism and...* Jewish Studies Interdisciplinary Graduate Symposium, University of Pennsylvania, 22 April 2012.

“Muslim Jurors, Hindu "Matrons," and German Aldermen: Local Government and Legal Culture in Eighteenth-Century Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta” Mid-Atlantic Conference on British Studies, 21 April 2012.

“Muslim Jurors, Hindu "Matrons," and German Aldermen: Local Government and Legal Culture in Eighteenth-Century Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta” Princeton University Colonial and Imperial Workshop, 29 March 2012.

“Understanding Careers in Digital Humanities” presentation at the University of Pennsylvania Career Center, 22 February 2012.

“From India to the Atlantic world: "Indian grants" and the Imperial Jurisprudence of the Eighteenth Century” Works-in-Progress Seminar of the McNeil Center for Early American Studies, 1 February 2012

“Beyond the Hype: Digital Humanities and Historical Research” Invited lecture, University of Pennsylvania History Department, 19 October 2011.

“Like practice in the Plantations:” The East India Company, Indian subjects, and the Imperial Constitution.” The English East India Company and Political Thought Workshop, 23 April 2011.

“The Haiti Digital Humanities Laboratory at Duke: Challenges and Opportunities for Researchers and Libraries” Roundtable paper presented at the mid-winter American Library Association Conference, January 2011.

“Long-Distance Litigants, the Imperial Constitution, and Indian Settlements.” Triangle Legal History Seminar, December 2009.

“They have travailed into a wrong latitude,” the Laws of England, India Merchants, and the Imperial Constitution 1726-1753.” Mid-Atlantic Conference on British Studies, April 2009.

“British Colonial Law.” Duke-Durham (UK) History Department Conference, July 2008.

“British Colonial Law: Local Difference and Pluralism in the British Empire From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century.” Triangle Legal History Seminar, February 2007.

“What is Early Modern Empire? The case of Manuel de Lima, the Problem of “Colonial” Law and the Seventeenth-Century English East India Company.” History Department Graduate Colloquium, November 2005.

## **DIGITAL WRITING**

“Mapping Books” (2013-2015): <http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com>  
Contains essays on book history and digital mapping. The post on the dispersal of British medieval libraries received over 1,000 readers within a day of publication.

6 November 2014: “Mapping pre-1600 European manuscripts in the U.S. and Canada” [Interactive mapping of date from the Conway/Fagin-Davis census of manuscripts]  
<http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2014/11/mapping-pre-1600-european-manuscripts.html>

28 June 2014: “Tracking the Rare Book and Manuscript market” [Discussion and analysis of the top 500 sales of rare books and manuscripts over the previous year]  
<http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2014/06/tracking-rare-book-and-manuscript-market.html>

24 January 2014: “Charting Former Owners of Penn’s Codex Manuscripts” [Network diagrams of the collective provenance of the University of Pennsylvania Libraries’ codex manuscripts]

<http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2014/01/charting-former-owners-of-penns-codex.html>

12 November 2013: “The Dispersal of the Medieval Libraries of Great Britain” [Mapping the present and previous location of all known manuscripts from medieval British libraries]

<http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2013/11/the-dispersal-of-medieval-libraries-of.html>

10 October 2013: “Library Markings from Looted Books” [Mapping and commentary on bookstamps found in books looted during WWII and recovered by U.S. forces]

[http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2013\\_10\\_01\\_archive.html](http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2013_10_01_archive.html)

29 July 2013: “Mapping pre-1500 Printed Books Today” [Mapping the locations of all libraries and collections holding incunabula in 2013]

<http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2013/07/mapping-pre-1500-printed-books-today.html>

20 July 2013: “Expanding the Republic of Letters: India and the Circulation of Ideas in the Late Eighteenth Century” [Mapping the circulation of printed and manuscript texts between India and Europe in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century]

<http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2013/07/expanding-republic-of-letters-india-and.html>

14 June 2013: “Don’t believe that imprint” [Mapping European false imprints claiming American origin]

<http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2013/06/dont-believe-that-imprint.html>

21 May 2013: “The Penn 100: Unique Early English Printed Material in a Research Library Collection”

<http://mappingbooks.blogspot.com/2013/05/the-penn-100-unique-early-english.html>

Founder and Editor, “Unique at Penn” (2012-present) <http://uniqueatpenn.wordpress.com>

To date the site has featured more than 20 pieces, written by graduate students, librarians, and myself and received attention in media and the special collections world at large, as well as more than 17,000 pageviews. My contributions include among others:

5 July 2016: “July 5, 1776” [On the relationship of printed and manuscript decrees issued by the Portuguese government during the American Revolution]

2 June 2015: “David Rittenhouse’s teenage almanac? [On an 18<sup>th</sup> century Philadelphia manuscript almanac page]

28 January 2015: “An Occult and Alchemical Library” [On Penn’s acquisition of a major collection of 18<sup>th</sup> century scientific and occult manuscripts]



4 July 2014: “An Independence Day Selection”

15 May 2014: “Pittsburgh (i.e. Milan)” [On the acquisition of the “first” Pittsburgh imprint, actually printed in Milan]

7 April 2014: “A Founder’s Book” [On a 16<sup>th</sup>-century book formerly owned by James Wilson (1742-1798)]

9 January 2014: “Always Check the Endpapers” [On a series of unrecorded ephemeral print in the pastedowns of Penn manuscripts]

21 November 2013: “Lincolniana and the Electoral College” [On the Gordon Block Collection of Lincolniana]

24 September 2013: “Printing News at the Front” [On a mimeographed newsheet produced on the beaches of Normandy, June 1944]

3 July 2013: “July 4, 1788. Come for the beer, stay for the bibliography.” [An account of July 4<sup>th</sup> proceedings in Philadelphia and their publication history]

9 May 2013: “Ezra Pound and Overdue Poetry” [On a library book checked out by Pound from the Penn Library in 1907]

5 February 2013: “A Rocket Cat? Early Modern Explosives Treatises at Penn” [On a series of 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> c. illustrations of animal explosive devices – picked up by The Atlantic’s blog, American Libraries Direct, etc.]

24 October 2012: “More than Formulaic” [On an 18<sup>th</sup> c. American legal formulary]

28 September 2012: “Mason’s Journey (Continued)” [On Charles Mason’s transit of Venus voyage to St. Helena and the Cape]

5 September 2012: “Preparing for a Treaty at the Early War Department” [On the 1793 negotiations between the United States and American Indian groups near Toledo]

11 August 2012: “A Special List” [On a fragmentary 16<sup>th</sup> c. Latin list of books compiled by a Spanish humanist]

4 July 2012: “Signer’s Day” [On the birth of autograph-mania and the signers of the Declaration of Independence]

28 June 2012: “Surprise Sketches” [On a 19<sup>th</sup> c. German travel account of America, altered by a contemporary reader]

14 June 2012: “The Calve’s Head and Early Printing in Jamaica” [On one of the earliest known printed texts from Jamaica]

24 May 2012: “Mussolini’s Downfall” [On the history of a copy of Mussolini’s speeches, annotated by an Italian reader]

1-14 May 2012: Parts I-IV of “The Records of the Asylum for Orphan Girls” [A series of essays and accompanying material on the history of an 18<sup>th</sup> c. Orphanage]

“Anglo-Indian Legal History” (2011-12): <http://angloindianlaw.blogspot.com/>

“Durham Maps” [inactive]: <http://durhammaps.blogspot.com/>

“My Five: Top digital humanities tools,” *Apps On Tap*, 18 October 2012:  
<http://appsontap.wordpress.com/2012/10/18/digital-humanities-mitch-fraas/>

“Digital Humanities” Library Guide (September 2012)  
<http://guides.library.upenn.edu/content.php?pid=345491&sid=2826284>

Fine Books and Collections Magazine [Blog]. Recurring series analyzing major sales of books and manuscripts on eBay:

September-December 2012:

[http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/fine\\_books\\_blog/2013/01/recent-top-ebay-book-sales-september-december-2012.phtml](http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/fine_books_blog/2013/01/recent-top-ebay-book-sales-september-december-2012.phtml)

June-August 2012: [http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/fine\\_books\\_blog/2012/09/recent-top-ebay-book-sales-june-august-2012.phtml](http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/fine_books_blog/2012/09/recent-top-ebay-book-sales-june-august-2012.phtml)

March-May 2012: [http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/fine\\_books\\_blog/2012/05/recent-top-ebay-book-sales-march-may-2012.phtml](http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/fine_books_blog/2012/05/recent-top-ebay-book-sales-march-may-2012.phtml)

January-February 2013:

[http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/fine\\_books\\_blog/2012/03/recent-top-ebay-book-sales.phtml](http://www.finebooksmagazine.com/fine_books_blog/2012/03/recent-top-ebay-book-sales.phtml)

## **CONFERENCES, EXHIBITIONS, AND GRANTS**

Co-Principal Investigator, “Manuscripts of the Muslim World” CLIR Digitizing Hidden Collections grant, \$500,000 for April 2018-April 2021.

Organizer and Convener, “American and Muslim Worlds, circa 1500-1900” McNeil Center for Early American Studies and the University of Pennsylvania Library, March 30-April 1, 2017.

Organizer and Convener, “To the Ends of the Earth” an interdisciplinary conference at the University of Pennsylvania, March 2-4, 2017.

Curator, “Expanding Earth: Travel, Encounter, and Exchange” Exhibition at the Goldstein Gallery, University of Pennsylvania Libraries, February-May 2017.

Curator, “The Great Emancipator and the Great Central Fair” Exhibition at the Goldstein Gallery, University of Pennsylvania Libraries, January-April, 2015.

#### **FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS 2004-PRESENT**

First Prize, American Antiquarian Booksellers’ Association of America National Collegiate Book Collecting Contest, 2011: “Anglo-American Legal Printing 1702 to the Present.”

Fellow, Hurst Institute in Legal History, University of Wisconsin (Summer 2011).

Duke Endowment Assistantship (Haiti Lab), 2010.

Duke University History Department Fellowship 2004-2008.

Special Collections Library Internship, Duke University, 2009-10

Duke University Graduate School International Fellowship academic year 2008-09; used for archival research at the National Archives (UK), Oriental and India Office Collections at the British Library, London Metropolitan Archives, National Archives of Portugal (ANTT), etc.

North American Conference on British Studies Dissertation Travel Award, 2008.

Duke University Graduate School Summer Research Grant, summer 2007; used for archival research in India at the Maharashtra State Archives, Goa State Archives, and Tamil Nadu State Archives.

History Department Summer Research Grant, summer 2005; used for archival research at the Oriental and India Office Collections at the British Library.

#### **ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

American Society for Legal History, Archivist, 2019-Present

Co-Editor, *Manuscript Studies* (University of Pennsylvania Press), 2016-present

National Endowment for the Humanities grant review panelist, 2014

University of Pennsylvania Libraries, Digital Content Review Council, 2011-present.

Chair, History Graduate Students Association, Duke University, 2007