

Benjamin Eskin Shapson

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INTRODUCTION

I am an early-career librarian specializing in rare book and special collections librarianship, with experience in reference and instruction, metadata, research services, programming and outreach, and exhibit curation.

EDUCATION

MS, Library and Information Science

University of Illinois

Champaign-Urbana, Illinois

01/2023 – 08/2024

MA, Medieval Literatures and Languages

University of York

Heslington, York

09/2020 – 01/2022

Master's Dissertation: "Questioning and Challenging Troth in *Ywain and Gawain*, *The Erle of Tolouse*, and *Athelston*"

Advisor: Dr. Nicola McDonald

Received First-Class Honors Distinction

BA, English Literature

Skidmore College

Saratoga Springs, New York

09/2014 – 05/2018

Bachelor's Thesis: "Essential Narrative Structure of Medieval Romance and Video Games."

Advisors: Dr. Kate Greenspan and Dr. Aaron Pedinotti

Minor: Environmental Studies

Received English Department Honors and Term Honors Fall 2016 and 2017



EXPERIENCE

Grainger Engineering Library Information Center Champaign, Illinois

08/2023 – 07/2024

Library Graduate Assistant

- Provided reference and circulation support to users of the Grainger Engineering Library both in-person and through online chat services.
- Supported Library through instruction and outreach programming, including information literacy sessions and research consultations for undergraduate students in mechanical engineering and business disciplines.
- Conducted research to support library bibliometric analysis and drafting of collection development plan for technical standards.
- Curated exhibition on early 20th-century engineering librarians for Women's History Month.
- Cataloged Atomic Energy Commission digitized microcards collection for Technical Report Archive and Image Library (TRAIL) using Dublin Core.
- Constructed resource guide for Hay Railroad Engineering Collection using Springshare's LibGuide.
- Created signage and selected materials for rotating library collection events.
- Provided in-person support for outreach events for library experimental technology spaces.
- Supported faculty bibliometrics research into astronomy dissertation references.
- Supervised undergraduate student workers.
- Opened and closed library.

Rare Book School Charlottesville, Virginia

06/2023 – 07/2024

Collections and Session Assistant

- Retrieved, transported, handled, identified, and organized collections materials including manuscripts, printed books, and bibliographic artifacts.
- Supported instruction activities of faculty members through arrangement and delivery of materials and inter-staff communication.
- Cataloged exhibition inventory through SILVA.
- Facilitated and supervised class visits to Special Collections Library.
- Supported class laboratory sessions, including printmaking activities.
- Supported hospitality and event activities of program including lectures and events.

**Literatures and Languages Library
Champaign, Illinois**

01/2023 – 05/2023

Library Research Assistant

- Independently organized, planned, and executed research project into history of photo-reproduction in libraries.
- Conducted supporting research through institutional archives, including University archives, and secondary scholarship.
- Arranged and analyzed research data to compile Springshare-based LibGuide and consolidate findings for presentation.
- Tracked and organized source metadata in Zotero for future usability
- Navigated finding aids and databases of European libraries in their original languages to create digital Latin manuscript catalog.
- Copy cataloged manuscript catalogs into digital format to connect entries to digital databases.
- Supported research needs of Classical and Medieval Studies librarians.

**Scoot Education/Teachers on Reserve
San Francisco, California**

09/2022 – 12/2022

Substitute Teacher

- Implemented curriculum lesson plans and managed students in absence of regular teachers.
- Maintained productive and inclusive classroom environments with multiple schools throughout the Bay Area
- Taught students in kindergarten through eleventh grade.

**BlindCoco Studios
Remote**

06/2022 – Present

Writer, Editor, and Localizer

- Wrote and edited prerelease marketing materials, character dialogue, story script, and setting.
- Executed original creative writing and text editing projects.
- Provided localization services.

**York Explore Library
Fulford, York**

07/2021-09/2021

Summer Reading Challenge Associate

- Led reading groups with children aged three to twelve.
- Provided reference and processing support to adult users.
- Cleaned, organized, and arranged library materials.

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction to Principles of Bibliographic Description

Rare Book School

Charlottesville, Virginia

08/2023

Instructor: Professor David Whitesell

Provenance: Tracing Owners and Collections

Rare Book School

Charlottesville, Virginia

06/2023

Instructor: Dr. David Pearson

CURATED EXHIBITIONS

2024 - *Women in the Early UIUC Engineering Library*, Grainger Engineering Library Information Center. Champaign, Illinois.

Redesigning the Future: A Collection Inspired by SolarPunk, Afrofuturism, and Indigenous Futurism, Grainger Engineering Library information Center. Champaign, Illinois

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

"The Photostat in Classical and Medieval Manuscript Studies: Opportunities for Access and Usage." Poster presentations to be given at RBMS 2024 Conference and SAA 2024 Conference.

"Gaming, SolarPunk, and Afrofuturism: experimenting with themed pop-up collections in Grainger Engineering Library." Supported poster presentation to given at ASEE 2024 conference.

"Questioning and Challenging Troth in *Ywain and Gawain*, *The Erle of Tolous*, and *Athelston*" in *University of York Centre for Medieval Studies*, 2021. Publication pending.

"Essential Narrative Structure of Medieval Romance and Video Games" in *Skidmore College English Honors Theses*, no. 14, 2018.
https://creativematter.skidmore.edu/eng_stu_schol/14

INSTRUCTION

ChatGPT and AI Literacy: How Can I Use ChatGPT in Engineering Research? Grainger Engineering Library Information Center, 18 April 2024.

Role: Co-Instructor. Creator of slides, script editor, and co-presenter

SCHOLARSHIPS

2024 - Rare Book and Manuscript Section (RBMS) Scholarship Recipient

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Society of American Archivists, 01/2023 – Present

American Library Association, 01/2023 – Present

Rare Book and Manuscript Section, 01/2023 – Present

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCIES

Spanish

Reading: Professional proficiency

Oral: Intermediate proficiency

Latin (Classical)

Reading: Intermediate proficiency

Oral: Intermediate proficiency

French

Reading: Intermediate proficiency

Oral: Elementary proficiency

SKILLS

Library reference and instruction
Outreach and exhibition programming
Springshare Suite (LibAnswers, LibCal, LibGuides, LibInsight, LibStaffer)
Palaeography
HTML Programming
MARC

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Material history of the book
Special collections outreach and engagement
Legal and social contexts of Medieval chivalric romance
Arthuriana
Narratology of interactive media

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Rare Book and Special Collections Librarianship; Booklab:
From Print to Programming; Print Culture and Material Book;
Preservation of Special Collections; Collection
Development; Grant Writing for Libraries; Bibliographic
Metadata

University of York

The Medieval Book; Palaeography: Later English Book
Hands; Global Middle Ages



REFERENCES

Megan Sapp-Nelson

Head, Grainger Engineering Library Information Center

Grainger Engineering Library Information Center, University of
Illinois Urbana-Champaign

mrsapp@illinois.edu

Monica Carroll

Liaison and Innovation Librarian

Grainger Engineering Library Information Center, University of
Illinois Urbana-Champaign

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Celenia Graves

Outreach and Engagement Librarian

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Illinois Urbana-Champaign

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Paula Carns

Head, Literatures and Languages Library

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Champaign

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