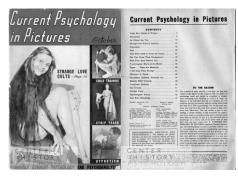
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Archival literacy in action: Exploring information literacy capabilities in the Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr. Popular Psychology Magazine collection.

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## **About the collection:**

- Dr. Benjamin began collecting popular psychology magazines "accidentally" in the 1970s, when he discovered the magazines while searching for psychology books at second-hand stores.
- By the 1980s, he had accumulated magazines from about 10 or 12 different titles and, after checking Library of Congress catalogs for more, believed that these represented the possible limits of the genre. However, when eBay launched he soon realized there were many more titles available.
- Working with other collectors he found through eBay (and sometimes against them by outbidding them when possible), his collection grew to almost 1,600 magazines from around 70 titles, with more coming as he continues to collect these magazines from around the world.
- Although most of the magazines in the collection were published in the United States, there are publishing houses from Canada and England represented in the collection as well.
- Three centuries are represented in this collection Some items in the collection date as far back as the late 1890s, and some were published as recently as last year.
- Over the years, Benjamin has worked with graduate students to compile a subject guide for the collection, which identifies more than 200 different subjects represented within.



Current Psychology in Pictures, October issue, 1937



Adult, Volume 1, Issues 1 and 5, 1953

## Archival literacy in action

- Archival literacy here is defined as a combination of the basic "find, use, incorporate" model of information literacy, and the navigation and specialized instruction typically experienced in an archive or special collection (Fansler & Yun, 2011; Harris & Weller, 2012; Krause, 2010; Makala & Gettys, 2006; Manning & Silva, 2012; Nimer & Daines, 2012; .O'Toole, 1995; Rekrut, 2003; Reynolds, 2012; Tomberlin & Turi, 2012; Yakel, 2004).
- Information literacy becomes archival literacy when special focus is drawn on two areas: 1) the importance of primary source documents to the narrative of information literacy, and 2) extending the potential usefulness of the archive or special collection beyond the physical (e.g. the digital realm) for other user needs.
- An example of how archival literacy could be incorporated into a lesson plan is on the reverse of this handout. Other tools such as information resource guides (an example of which is represented on the poster for this collection) can help broaden understandings of archival literacy for users.



Psychologist, Vol. 20, no. 6, 2007

References available upon request from the author, Shelley Blundell, at <a href="mailto:sblundel@kent.edu">sblundel@kent.edu</a>.

# **Archival literacy lesson plan:**

# The Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr. Popular Psychology Magazine collection

#### **Title of Lesson:**

Psychology's social history: What popular psychology magazines from the era tell us about the "Roaring 20s" in the United States

## **Expected Learning Outcomes:**

After this lesson, the student will:

- Deepen his or her understanding of how archives operate in general,
- Understand the difference between "an archive" and "a special collection,"
- Formulate a research question that can be explored further in the archives and/or within a special collection based on the topic at hand, and begin seeking answers to this question,
- Identify appropriate ways to incorporate primary source documents into a research project, and
- Understand how to use any information found in the archives and/or within a special collection ethically, legally, and responsibly (particularly as it relates to physical use of rare materials).

#### **Instructional Materials:**

- Presentation of the Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr. Popular Psychology Magazine collection, including how it was developed and collection highlights,
- Magazines from within the collection that exhibit all three centuries represented,
- Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr. Popular Psychology Magazine collection subject guide,
- Information resource guide on the "Roaring 20s" (created from the collection's subject guide),
- Center for the History of Psychology (CHP) collections website, and
- Archival handling materials where appropriate (e.g. white gloves, pencils, etc.).

### **Activities/Tasks following the presentation:**

- Students will be split into groups and asked to work together to formulate individual research questions that may be answered by searching the Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr. Popular Psychology Magazine collection. Students may use the information resource guide created specifically for this module as well as the subject guide for further exploration.
- Once students in each group have identified their questions, they will select a group leader who shall be in charge of retrieving physical materials as needed, and will use appropriate archival standards (with CHP staff guidance) to handle these materials. A second in command from the group shall use the CHP collections website (with CHP staff guidance) to search for more information on the Roaring 20s from within other collections at the CHP.
- Once these activities are completed, the class will reconvene and an appointed speaker from each group shall share what the group has learned from this experience with the class.

## **Testing Assessment/Evaluation:**

After the class, all students shall receive a survey based on their experience with the collection and the CHP, and will be asked to complete the survey before leaving. The survey will cover a number of elements related to both information literacy and archival literacy, and will give the presenter feedback on how similar interactions may be improved for user benefit in the future.