A New Look at Objects as Cultural Artifacts
Wednesdays 10:15-11:30
Nancy Norling, Stuart Siegell

In this course, faculty and advanced graduate students from the University of Delaware will investigate the stories, the science, and the broad culture implications of a wide range of evocative objects. Illustrated talks will touch on domestic objects (scrapbooks, pressed flowers, the decorative arts and garbage of colonial Delaware families, the Colonial as a style in the Gilded Age); on science and technology in dyes, daguerreotypes, maps, and panoramas; on public things, like murals, shopping malls, and the material culture of treason. Class participation is encouraged.

10 February. Matt Kinservik, Department of English. “The material culture of treason in the first age of terror.”


24 February. *Alison Klaum, Department of English, “Pressing flowers: Floral representations in Nineteenth Century print ephemera.”

3 March. *Nenette Luarca-Shoaf, Department of Art, “How the Mississippi River Came to Philadelphia: Science and spectacle in a 19th Century panorama.”

10 March. *Amanda Norbutus, Department of Art Conservation, “Understanding and saving public murals”


31 March. No class; spring break

7 April. Lance Winn, Department of Art, “Frankenstein revisited: Technology and monsters.”

14 April. Martin Brueckner, Department of English, “Map, wars, and object lessons: The cult of cartifacts in 19th century America.”


28 April. Will Scott, Department of History. “The retail revolution: From Main Street to mall, 1900-1960.”

5 May. Lu Ann DeCunzo, Department of Anthropology, “What their garbage tells us about people in the past.”

12 May. Anne Krulikowski, Department of History, “Through the Colonial (Revival) doorway: Fact and fancy in the Gilded Age.”

*Indicates a graduate student