

Appendix 1: Provenance: The Digital Piece

The idea of incorporating provenance research into Niederstadt's FYS grew from an external inquiry sent to Niederstadt about *Audrey, The Shepherd Lass*, a painting in Wheaton's Permanent Collection. Created by the American artist Julius Garibaldi (Gari) Melchers in 1886, the work depicts a young Dutch woman knitting while tending a flock of goats (see Fig. 1). In October 2012, Dr. Kirsten M. Jensen, then Leon Levy Fellow at the Frick Collection in New York City, emailed Niederstadt asking her to review an image to confirm if one of the paintings depicted was *Audrey, The Shepherd Lass*. The black-and-white photograph (see Fig. 2) clearly showed the painting displayed in the Chicago mansion of Potter and Bertha Palmer, a wealthy couple who amassed a significant collection of American and European artwork in the late nineteenth century. Jensen and Dr. Carolyn Carr, former deputy director of the National Portrait Gallery, are writing a biography of the American curator Sara Tyson Hallowell, who helped the Palmers build their collection, thus the request for information about the Melchers painting. Jensen's emails provided Niederstadt with previous unknown details about the painting's provenance.



Fig. 1: Julius Garibaldi Melchers, *Audrey, The Shepherd Lass*, 1886, oil on canvas, 43.25 x 24.25". Gift of Mrs. Thomas J. Watson (Jeannette Kittredge, Wheaton College Class of 1902).



Fig. 2: Art on display in Bertha and Potter Palmer's Chicago, IL mansion, which was torn down in 1951. *Audrey, The Shepherd Lass* can be seen hanging as the middle work in the second column of paintings from the left. The image was taken in the late 19th or early 20th century.

At the time of Jensen's initial email, Niederstadt was co-teaching an exhibition design course in which the student-curated exhibition *100 Years, 100 Objects* focused on the narratives that can be told with objects.¹ Such object-based learning is central to Niederstadt's pedagogy and to her work as curator, as it is to many other Wheaton faculty members.² Conversations with Jensen and with Niederstadt's co-instructor Stickney and their exhibition design students, prompted Niederstadt to consider if Wheaton students could investigate the provenance of objects in the college's collection. Such an assignment would require them to conduct research with and to analyze primary and secondary sources, to write a paper that explored both the process of research and their findings, and to present their results. It would also strengthen documentation on the collection and the result of the students' research could be published via the collection website, making it a service-learning project.³

¹ "100 Years, 100 Objects: Exhibition curated by students honors Wheaton's centenary as four-year college," Wheaton College, accessed April 2, 2014, <http://wheatoncollege.edu/news/2013/01/22/100-years-100-objects/>.

² "Access & Use," Wheaton College, accessed April 20, 2014, <http://wheatoncollege.edu/permanent-collection/access-use/> and "Out of the Classroom and Into the Archives," Wheaton College, accessed April 29, 2014, <http://wheatoncollege.edu/archives/category/classroom/>.

³ "Pasture with Cows," Wheaton College, accessed April 20, 2014, <http://wheatoncollege.edu/permanent-collection/2013/10/04/pasture-cows/>.