History of the Book in the West: A Survey of Material Culture/Social Implications

Wednesdays 9:00-12:00  Harry Ransom Center (HRC) Seminar Room, 2nd Floor 2.212

Lecturer: Consuela (Chela) Metzger

Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:00-4:00 or by appointment. My office is at the UTA building, 1616 Guadalupe, 5th floor 5.440 Instructor’s phone: office (512) 471-8293, or home (512) 453-8504 e-mail chela@ischool.utexas.edu. I will generally not check work e-mail after 5pm or weekends, and I generally do not answer the home phone, but I do check phone messages at home and at work.

Course requirements: Willingness to participate fully and consistently in both faculty and student led seminar’s by asking questions, making connections between the different readings, and listening carefully Must be responsible for choosing readings, developing seminar questions and leading the seminar when assigned to do so. Interest in the material culture of the book, and curiosity about the interactions between books and society is crucial. A significant final project is required, with annotated bibliography. Some seminar responses will be due on Blackboard.

Course objectives:

--Using a seminar environment, examine the kinds of information and evidence scholars might need when working with bound library/archive collection materials, focusing on pre-industrial book making.

--Understand the basic elements of handmade and printed books in the west, including parchment making, papermaking, inks, page layout, evolution of scripts, and bookbinding.

--Survey the techniques and technical requirements of texts in the West, including hand-drawn and printed illustration.

--Explore the social implications of the book, from educational change, to government controls and censorship.

--Begin to understand the dimensions of book historiography in the west today.

--Examine the “end of print culture” and the “death of the book” in the wake of the digital age.

Required Texts: (Available at the UT Coop)
A Companion to the History of the Book, ed. Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose
De Hamel, Scribes and Illuminators any edition
Twyman The British Library Guide to Printing, any edition

Course Structure:
The class will be seminar based. Most seminars will be student led. If you are not a fan of student led classes this course may not be for you. Consistent, positive class participation, including
asking questions, sharing your views, and creatively leading the group, is required. A major part of the class will involve opportunities to examine and discuss books from the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center. Each student will take responsibility for leading a seminar discussion, including assigning readings, developing study questions, and choosing material from the HRC for the class to examine. There will be 2 short essays, and one final paper required with annotated bibliography. Due to the security measures involved in meeting at the HRC, promptness is essential and will be part of the participation points possible.

**Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar leadership/ participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10 for seminar leadership, 25 for overall participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create one book</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of 2 short “response” essays</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final “Exhibit” or research paper</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>10 points for presentation, 35 for the final paper</td>
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**Grading:**

Letter grades will not be given until grades are due at the end of the semester. That means assignments will be given points instead of a letter. The number of points possible for each assignment is listed in the syllabus. The points will be added up at the end of the semester.

95-100 A
90-94.5 A-
86.5-89.5 B+
83.5-86 B
80-83 B-
76.5-79.5 C+
73.5-76 C
70-73 C-
66.5-69.5 D+
63.5-66 D
60-63 D-

I will use half points when possible when evaluating assignments, but the final point totals are not rounded up: for example, a final score of 89.5 will receive a B+. I do not use any curve or “quota” system, but students should keep in mind that in this department, a typical grade distribution is one A awarded for every 3 B’s.

**Assignment details:**

**Seminar leadership:** design a one page handout for the class, and print it on yellow paper for everyone, post 2 focus questions on blackboard 2 days before the seminar, and choose 2 or 3 books from the HRC to share with the class. Plan at least one small group discussion aspect for your part of the seminar.

**Create your own book:** Sources for buying or downloading texts will be provided. Or write and print your own. Instructor will be available in a bookbinding workshop at pre-arranged times to help students complete their books.

**2 short “response” essays:** (3-5 pages): These should be well written personal responses to particular readings. You must attempt to connect with the material both intellectually and personally.
Final paper requirements: (choose one of these format options)

“Exhibit” paper option:
Min. of 10 exhibit items. You will choose the book related theme, select which items should be exhibited, design the exhibit space (will it include any “interactive” features?), write the exhibit “labels” for each item (including who owns it), write an introduction for your “catalog” and include an annotated bibliography on the topic for interested readers. (MLA style) You can chose from items at the HRC, or arrange for an exhibit created from “loaned” material from other institutions.

Research paper option:
Read published articles related to the themes in the history of books and printing to get a feel for what published articles look like. Choose a research question to investigate and write on. The paper should be 12-15 pages long, with MLA style notes and an annotated bibliography.

Topics for final projects can vary widely. Some ideas include:

Authorship
Reading
A genre of book
Technical changes in book production
Illustration in books and journals
Typography
Editing
Evidence in books
Book Business

Sharing your work on the last day…arrange to have one book from HRC or other source to share with the class, as well as your handmade book and a oral summary of your final project. Plan on talking around 10 minutes.

Dates to Remember:

--February 3rd: Response Essay #1 due: (5 pages min) Read the Methods and Approaches essays in part one of The Companion to the History of the Book and compare at least two of them to each other. What is “the book” considered to be in the two approaches you are comparing, and what disciplines might be more likely to use one approach or another (for example English, History, Librarianship) and why.

--February 24: “Response” essay #2 due (5 pages min) Spend Significant time with a book of your choice at the HRC, describing its physical details, its history and content and how it feels to use it in the rate book room. Compare this experience to reading a book you love at home, its history and content and its physical details.

--April 28th: Hard Copy and electronic copy Draft of Final Project Due 9:00 AM

--May 5th: Share your final project topic, a book related to your final project, and your handmade book in class, attendance required.

--May 12th: Final copy of project due, with annotated bibliography 9 am
Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

The University of Texas at Austin defines academic dishonesty as cheating, Plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any Act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of faculty members.

By accepting this syllabus and participating in the course, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University.

For more information on scholastic dishonesty, please visit the Student Judicial Services web site at: http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/

Policy on Students with Disabilities

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate accommodation for qualified students with disabilities. For more information contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6529.

ALL ASPECTS OF SYLLABUS SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

Week 1
January 20th

Introduction to use of HRC and UTA building booklab
Introduction to class, review syllabus, discuss readings

Readings for first class found on Blackboard. Bring a question or questions from at least one article for discussion in class:
Chapter on clay tablets and chapter on scrolls from Companion to History of the Book
Schmandt-Besserat, How Writing Came About, U Texas Press 1996, chapters 6 and 7
Ong, Walter, “Writing restructures consciousness”
“Listening to Braille” New York Times Magazine January 3rd 2010

Week 2
January 27th

The World Before the Codex/The Book Beyond the West
Read pages 97 – 176 of Companion, This will include:
Edgren, J.S “China” pp. 97-110
Kornicki, Peter “Japan, Korea, and Vietnam”, pp. 111-125
ASSIGN SEMINARS

You will each be responsible for leading parts of this seminar throughout the semester. Seminar leaders will post one class reading more as needed one week in advance of class, posting a PDF either on Blackboard or e-mailing the PDF to the class. They will also post two focus questions on blackboard, prepare a one page handout, and plan at least one small group activity for the class. Seminar leaders also choose one or two pertinent examples from the HRC collections to illustrate the seminar ideas. You must request HRC materials at least one week in advance, if not sooner. You should expect to prepare questions for the class to discuss, and post them on blackboard on the Sunday before the Wednesday seminar.

Plan on meeting with the instructor or chatting through e-mail at least two weeks in advance of your seminars for consultation.

Move to UTA Building at break to look at models and materials, which show the evolution of the codex
--Western book vocabulary, the anatomy of a codex,

Week 3
February 3rd
Response essay #1 due

Intro to basic materials and techniques and aesthetics for western medieval codex manuscript production and bookmaking

NOTE: You Must schedule time to look at a pre-1800 manuscript HRC book from any country and write a paragraph on the experience to post on-line by February 3rd 9 AM

Companion chapters: __________________________  
Brown, Michelle “The Triumph of the Codex: the Manuscript Book before 1100” pp. pages 178-193
Clanchy, M.T. “Parchment and Paper: Manuscript Culture 1100-1500” pp. 194-206


De Hamel Scribes and Illuminators for background information, or any website on medieval manuscript production that discusses and illustrates the steps
Plan a 1 ½ hour time in the future to come to 1616 and try your hand at producing a short illuminated verse on a scrap of parchment using 2 colors of ink. Bring a short quote or verse to illuminate on a scrap of parchment no bigger than 3 inches x 4 inches, have a sketch of your desired result to start with. You will be supplied with parchment.

Week 4
February 10th
Early Printed Books: technology and product

Video to view: The Making of the Renaissance Book, at AV library and write a paragraph on the experience to post on-line by February 10, 9 am.

Read Companion Hellinga, Lotte “The Gutenberg Revolutions” pp. 207-219

Use British Library Guide to Printing for background information

Variety Within Mass Production: choose books within the same edition at HRC and show differences in binding and text

Week 5
February 17th

Early Scholar/Printers readings to be announced

Johns/Eisenstein debate

Johns/Eisenstein readings found on-line

Week 6
February 24th

How did the book business work, who was the reader? : Europe to 1800

Read Companion
Vliet, Rietje van “Print and the Public in Europe” pp. 247–258

Printed illustrations (artistic or scientific), mapmaking and atlases?

Readings to be assigned
Week 7
March 3rd

Read *Companion* Martin, Russell L. III “North American and Transatlantic Book Culture to 1800 pp. 259-272, and find one additional article on Spanish Colonial book culture

______________________________

Dutch/English dominated colonial book culture_______________________________.

Class may meet at the Benson Latin American Collection

Week 8
March 10th

Read: *Companion* pp. 480-507

Workshop in the Booklab 1616 Guadalupe, have your printed pages and decorative pages ready to make into a textblock

Week 9
March 17th
No class meeting, Spring Break

Week 10
March 24th

Printing and pamphleteering cause trouble, cause the modern world, or none of the above, you decide

One student covers printing and the French (or other) Revolution__________________, one printing and the Reformation__________________, the other the

Readings as assigned by seminar leaders

Week 11
March 31st

Industrialization of the Book, and Mass Publishing

Companion Wald, James “Periodicals and periodicity” pp. 421-433, and Andrews, Martin “The Importance of Ephemera” pp. 434-450

Week 12
April 7th

BookArt/BookPolitics: responses to industrialization in the art world

Background reading in Companion Benton, Megan “The Book as Art” pp. 491-507.

Show several arts/crafts movement books from England, discuss the influence, and find good reading to assign to the class

Futurists fight back: Show Italian futurist response to industrialization

Week 13
April 14th

Mass literacy/Mass Readership

One student cover the history of pulp fiction, one newspapers, both seminar leaders should keep in mind the changes in ideas of literacy after 1800 to today

Week 14
April 21

Faculty Gone, Guest Lecturer, potentially on censorship/copyright and intellectual property issues

Literacy Causes Trouble

Read Companion Crain, Patricia “New Histories of Literacy” 467-479 and Heath, Deana “Obscenity, Censorship, Modernity” pp. 508-530
Find an article on how censorship worked in France before the revolution...how does it seem the same or different from modern censorship?

NOTE: Post your own responses to these articles on Blackboard, as well as any experiences with censorship you care to share.

Week 15
April 28th
Draft of final project due in electronic form 9am

Eat the future: Death of the Book


Companion Phillips, Angus “Does the Book have a Future 548-559, plus at least one other article or website on the topic____________________________________

Please bring in a Kindle, Sony reader, the Barnes and Noble machine, your laptop, or smartphone for book reading (if you have them), and be prepared to discuss your likes and dislikes when faced with screen delivery?

We will look at images of computers in art...if you know of any non-advertising images of people using computers, let me know

Week 16
Semester Wrap Up
Bring your handmade book, have one HRC or other book selected to share that relates to your final project, and share your final project with the class. Prepare for about 10 minutes max talking time, and I prefer no powerpoints...

Final Draft of Project with annotated bibliography due May 12th 9AM

Thank You