

Minnesota State University Moorhead, Spring 2012
Art 497/Art 590 The Book: History, Culture, Art
Tu/Th. 1:30-3:10

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Office hours: available by apt. or Mon-Wed: 2-4 p.m; Tu-Th 3:15-4:30.

"Tout, au monde, existe pour aboutir à un livre."
"Everything in the world exists in order to end up in a book"—Stéphane Mallarmé

Course Description and Objectives:

This special topics seminar is a 4-credit art history course open to upper level studio and art history students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Students of literature, mass communications, library science and other appropriate fields are also welcome to enroll in the seminar.

The seminar focuses on the history, cultural practices, and the physical presentation(s) of the book. After a basic introduction to the anatomy of the book, we'll delve into some canonical essays on book history to gain a broader understanding of the book as a major cultural and symbolic object in civilizations past and present. A portion of this seminar will also focus on the 20th and 21st-century interpretations of the artist's book: defining it as a genre, exploring its diverse forms. The seminar will conclude with a lively investigation into the transformations of the book through new media.

As a seminar, students will be expected to actively participate in class discussion as well as present research papers on topics that reflect their interests. There are no exams but there will be extensive reading and journaling assignments throughout the semester and some group-led discussion projects (detailed below). Moreover, the class will be undertaking several field trips to visit specialized collections and meet experts in the field of books. These trips are listed in the syllabus as "zigzags of a bibliophile," please note that students should not miss more than one visit as they constitute a vital part of the course.

Students with disabilities who believe they may need an accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact Greg Toutges, Coordinator of Disability Services at Flora Frick 154; 218.477.4318 or 800.627.3529 MRS/TTY as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Attendance: If a student has more than four unexcused absences his/her grade will be lowered by an entire letter grade, refer to your student handbook for MSUM policy.

During the class-period no electronic devices will be allowed. The only exception is a laptop rule for note taking. If the student uses it for any other purpose (facebook, email, games etc.) they will lose the laptop privilege for the semester. For emergencies, students can adjust their ringtone to silent or vibrate mode.

Course Requirements/Grading Guidelines:

1. Critical Reading Journals (35% of grade). Each student should procure a specially designated notebook to maintain a journal for all the seminar readings. If you keep an electronic journal, you will need to submit it in hard copy appropriately collated or bound. These journals must be brought to class every time we meet to facilitate discussion of the assigned readings. We will be sharing and even exchanging these journals during the class period. As journals are a very individual form of expression and learning, each student journal will be unique. Nevertheless, I will require three basic features: 1) General notes for review and reference taken of reading assignment **prior to class** 2) A brief synthesis of the reading including questions and/or significant vocabulary or concepts introduced in reading. 3) Notes from class discussion of the reading to complement what you wrote prior to discussion. Finally, each journal entry needs to be labeled clearly (author, title, page #, class date when reading was discussed). Journals will be collected twice during the semester but I will also be checking them informally during class meetings and field questions from students about form and content. The last entry in the journal will cover our final reading for the Round Table discussion during finals week.

2. Class Discussion and Preparation (10% of grade). As a seminar course, the rigor and content of our discussions will be determined by the quality of participation among students. Clearly, the journals will play a role in preparing for class but it is the students' task to share the contents of their journals including questions/problems encountered with a particular reading. I also define preparation as providing constructive interaction and feedback for one's peers. In other words, comments or questions should not simply be directed at the instructor but the entire class.

3. Independent Research Papers and Presentations (35% of grade). Each student will be embarking on an independent research project that reflects his or her interests and that contributes to the overall themes of the course (for suggestions see list). Students will share the fruits of their research in a 20-30 minute oral presentation. Based on the student's research, an eight to ten page paper will be turned in one week after the presentation. An annotated bibliography with a minimum of four high caliber research sources is required. A detailed handout will be distributed providing guidelines for the paper. **Topics will be chosen by Jan 24th.**

4. Group Discussion Projects (20%). We will form four discussion groups. Periodically each group will be responsible for leading discussion of an assigned reading. When your group is designated to lead discussion, each member of the group needs to tackle the reading ahead of time and then meet with other members of the group (electronically or face to face) to discuss the reading and decide how to lead class discussion. Group dynamics can be tremendously rewarding but they can also be frustrating, therefore to avoid the classic pitfalls of group work, members will rotate responsibilities (detailed below). Moreover, I expect a brief written report detailing the contribution of each member.

When a group is responsible for leading discussion, each member will be assigned a role (or roles, depending on how many are in a group) and these roles should rotate when the group takes their second turn. Ideally, there should be an assigned spokesman for the group during class discussion. Other tasks for group members include: taking notes during discussion of the group meeting, looking up supplementary information or vocabulary, assembling/creating handouts or supplementary material as needed for class discussion, writing of final report detailing the contribution of each member.

Required Texts:

1. Jerome Rothenberg and Steven Clay, eds. A Book of the Book. Some Works & Projections About The Book and Writing. New York: Granary Books, 2000.
2. Johanna Drucker. The Century of Artists' Books. New York: Granary Books, 2004 ed.
3. A series of essays on reserve.

Highly recommended:

1. David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, eds. The Book History Reader. New York: Routledge, 2002.
2. Betty Bright. No Longer Innocent. Book Art in America, 1960-1980. New York: Granary Books, 2005.
3. Renée Riese Hubert and Judd D. Hubert. The Cutting Edge of Reading: Artists' Books. New York: Granary Books, 1999.
4. Alberto Manguel. A History of Reading. New York: Penguin Books, 1996.

Syllabus:

Jan 10th Introduction and distribution of first assignment, due for next class on Jan 12th. Review syllabus and course requirements carefully and bring questions/concerns to class. **Be sure to procure the Rothenberg/Clay book as soon as possible for Jan 24th class reading.**

Library Book Report assignment distributed; due in class on Jan 19th.

Jan 12th Book Basics: Discussion of first assignment:

- What is a book?
- What characterizes some of the **experiences** of interacting with a book?
- What are some of the **cultural/ historical associations or metaphors** associated with the book? Are there common expressions regarding books or reading?

-Distribution of Glossaries.

-Discussion of Critical Reading Journals and other questions about seminar procedures.

Jan 17th Book Basics: A Lecture on The Anatomy of a Book: Vocabulary and History

Review glossaries distributed in class
Formation of Discussion Groups

Jan 19th Book Basics: Library assignment due.

Guidelines for Research Papers and Presentations distributed.

Jan 24th Book Basics: reading/journal assignment: Thomas Vogler, "When a Book is Not a Book," in Rothenberg & Clay, 448-466.

Topic declarations due

Jan 26th Zigzags of a Bibliophile: Visit to MSUM's very own book gem: The New Rivers Press.

Jan 31st Book Basics: reading/journal assignment: Keith Smith, "The Book as Physical Object," in Rothenberg & Clay, 54-70.

Meet with group #1

Feb 2nd Zigzags of a Bibliophile. A Visit to the University of North Dakota's collection of Artist's Books (including an edible artist's book!)

Feb 7th History/Culture of the Book: reading/journal assignment: Robert Darnton "What is the History of Books?" (1989) on reserve. Background reading: Joan Shelley Rubin, "What Is the History of the History of Books?" *The Journal of American History* (2003) 90 (2): 555-75.

Group #1 Discussion Leader

Feb 9th History/Culture of the Book: reading/journal assignment: Walter Ong, "Orality and Literacy: Writing Restructures Consciousness" (1982) on reserve.

Group #2 Discussion Leader

Feb 14th Zigzags of a Bibliophile: Meet with Ronald Ramsay, book collector and bibliophile. Meeting place to be announced in class.

Feb 16th History/Culture of the Book: reading/journal assignment: Elizabeth Eisenstein, "Some features of Print Culture: Standardization," selection from her book The Printing Press as an Agent of Change (1979), 80-91, on reserve.

Group #3 Discussion Leader

Feb 21st Roger Chartier, Selection from "Labourers and Voyagers: From the Text to the Reader," (1992) on reserve.

Group #4 Discussion Leader Note: **Journals due**

Feb 23rd College Art Association Meeting. No Class.

Feb 28th Books/The Book as Art: reading/journal assignment: Johanna Drucker, "The Artist's Book as Idea and Form," in The Century of Artists' Books also reprinted in Rothenberg and Clay; and Lucy Lippard, "Double Spread," from Put About: A Critical Anthology on Independent Publishing. London: Book Works, 2004, on reserve.

Group #1 Discussion Leader.

Mar 1st Zigzag of a Bibliophile. Meet with Janeen Kobrisnky at Temple Beth El. 809 11th Ave S. Fargo Artists'

Mar 6th Student Presentations begin.

Mar 8th Artists' Books/The Book as Art: reading/journal assignment: Drucker, "Artists' Books and the Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde," in The Century of Artists' Books; F. T. Marinetti "Imagination without Strings—Words in Freedom," (1913) in Rothenberg & Clay, 178-185.

Discussion Leader Group #2

Mar 12-16 Spring Break. Read, Make, Indulge in Books. Recommended Viewing: The Stone Reader

Mar 20th Zigzag of a bibliophile: Contemporary Artists Engaging with the Book Arts. Meredith Lynn and Kelli Sinner will be coming to our class.

Mar 22nd Artists' Books/The Book as Art: reading/journal assignment: Drucker, "Conceptualizing the Book: Precedents, Poetics, and Philosophy," William Blake from "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," and David Erdman, Introduction to The Illuminated Blake, Rothenberg & Clay, 104-111.

Group #3 Discussion Leader

Mar 27th Artists' Books/The Book as Art: reading/journal assignment: Review pertinent portions in above Drucker reading; Marjorie Perloff, "The Futurist Moment," (160-77) "Blaise Cendrars and Sonia Delaunay "La Prose du Transsibérien" (examine facsimile fold out and the translation of poem) André Breton Forward to The Hundred Headless Woman and also the Max Ernst text of The Hundred Headless Woman as well as Marcel Duchamp's Boîte en Valise (217-221), Jess O! (403-422); all in Rothenberg and Clay.

Discussion Leader Group #4

Mar 29th Student Presentations.

Apr 3rd Artists' Books/The Book as Art: reading/journal assignment: All the following selections from Rothenberg and Clay: Tom Phillips from The Heart of a Humument and Notes on a Humument (375 and 423-430); Richard Hamilton on Dieter Roth (395-398) and Dieter Roth Introduction to Books and Graphics (389-394); Alison Knowles On the Book of Bean (399-402); Allan Kaprow Words: An Environment (445-447); Alec Finlay Afterword to Little Sparta (467-469) and Ian Hamilton Finlay/Robin Gillanders from Little Sparta (470-472). The Drucker book will also provide important background on these canonical texts.

All Groups prepare.

Apr 5th Department of Art & Design Portfolio Reviews: No Class

Apr 10th Staging of the Book: I'll share my current project regarding a utopian book project from the late 19th century. Student presentations also on this day.

Apr 12th Neuro-Humanities Entanglement Conference. Georgia Tech. No Class.

April 17th Student Academic Conference. A select number of students will be present their research papers. All students required to attend. Details to be announced in class.

Apr 19th Books and Readers: Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library," from *Illuminations*; Jorge Luis Borges, "The Library of Babel," in *Ficciones* on reserve. ***All Groups Prepare for Discussion.

Apr 24th Lecture on the Practices of Reading.

Begin reading readings on Future of the Book/Reading in preparation for discussion.

Apr 26th The Future(s) of the Book/Reading. Readings to be announced.

May 1st The Future(s) of the Book/Reading. Readings to be announced. Roundtable question distributed.

Wednesday, May 9 12:00-2:00 pm Final Exam. Round Table Discussion.

Suggested Research Topics (only the tip of the iceberg!) Note: Many of these suggested topics are broadly conceived. In order to make the research more manageable, students will need to find a particular focus.

- The Ancient World and the Early Forms of the Book: the scroll, the codex, etc.
- Books in Non-Western Cultures (choose a specific region/era for your focus)
- Medieval illuminated manuscripts
- Books and spiritual knowledge: The I Ching, the Kabbalah, The *Sefer Yetsirah* (The Book of Formation), The Torah, The Koran (also known as "*The Book*": al-Kitab), The Vedas, The Upanishads, The Bible, The New Testament Gospels, The Gnostic Scriptures, etc.
- *Incunabula* and the transition from manuscript to print
- Emblem Books
- Encyclopedias and Encyclopedism
- Famous Libraries: The Great Library of Alexandria (the original ancient library and/or its most recent reincarnation), The New York Public Library, The Library of Congress, The Boston Public Library, The Minneapolis Public Library, The Book-Shaped Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris), The British Library (London), The Bodleian Library (Oxford) and others.
- Famous Private Libraries: The Athenaeum (Boston), The Newberry (Chicago), Pierpont Morgan Library (New York) etc.
- *Abecedarium* and/or other books of pedagogy
- Specialty books: elephant folios, *taschenbücher*, Albums/scrapbooks, guestbooks, almanachs etc.
- Celebrated book illustrators: P.J. Redouté, Thomas Bewick, William Blake, Tony Johannot, J.J. Grandville, Walter Crane, Aubrey Beardsley, Félicien Rops, and many many more
- Books and Gender: Form, Content, Readership
- Books and Censorship
- Books and the passions they inspire
- Books and Theft, Contraband, and other Misdemeanors!
- Books of Evil, of Magic, of Spells
- Photographic Interpretations of the Book
- Books as Sculpture: Sculpture as Books
- Architectural metaphors and the book
- Books/Libraries and the Literary Imagination: Borges, Blake, Eco, Mallarmé, Benjamin, etc.
- Books and the Cinematic Imagination
- Children's Books
- The Avant-Garde Book
- The Book as an Agent of Social Change
- Alternative/specialized artists' books: Franklin Furnace, Printed Matter, Art Metropole etc.

- The impact of the "printing revolution" on Humanism and the Enlightenment
- New media and the future of the book
- Visual Expression in E-Lit (electronic literature)
- Digital Poetics/Imagery and the Book
- Cybertextuality and the Book
- Illustrated books: the dynamics of word-image relationships, history and genres of illustration
- Books and the cultural/experiential dimensions of reading, looking, and touching
- Eroticism/Sensuality of the Book
- The Book as World, The Book as Stage
- The Anti-book
- Altered Books

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Barker, Nicolas, ed. A Potencie of Life: Books in Society. The Clark Lectures, 1986-1987. London: British Library/ New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2001. **[Z4 .P63 2001]**

Basbanes, Nicholas A., A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomanes, and the Eternal Passion for Books. New York: H. Holt and Co., 1995. **(ILL)**

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_____. Among the Gently Mad. Strategies and Perspectives for the Book Hunter in the 21st Century. New York: Henry Holt, 2002. **[Z987 .B28 2002]**

Battles, Matthew. Library: An Unquiet History. New York, Norton & Norton, 2004. **(ILL)**

Benton, Megan. Beauty and the Book: Fine Editions and Cultural Distinction in America. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000. **[Z479 .B475 2000]**

Bertram, Alan. Five Hundred Years of Book Design. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001. **[Z116.A3 B37 2001]**

Bettley, James. The Art of the Book: From Medieval Manuscripts to the Graphic Novel. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, Abrams, 2001. **[Z116.A3 A77 2001]**

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Birketts, Sven. The Gutenberg Elegies: the Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1994. **[Z1003 .B57 1994]**

Bischoff, Bernhard. Manuscripts and libraries in the age of Charlemagne. Michael Gorman translated and ed. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994. **[Z8.F8 F5713 1994]**

Bright, Betty. No Longer Innocent. Book Art in America, 1960-1980. New York: Granary Books, 2005. **[Z1033.F5 B75 2005]**

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Castleman, Riva. A Century of Artist's Books. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994. **[N7433.3 .C38 1994]**

Cavallo, Guglielmo and Roger Chartier, eds. A History of Reading in the West. Transl. by Lydia Cochrane. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999. **(ILL)**

Chartier, Roger, ed. The Culture of print : power and the uses of print in early modern Europe. translated by Lydia G. Cochrane. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989. **(ILL)**

_____. The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth centuries. Stanford University Press, 1994. **[Z1003.5.E9 C4713 1994]**

A Companion to the History of the Book. Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose eds. Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007. **(ILL)**

Courtney, Cathy. Speaking of Book Art: Interviews with British and American Book Artists. Los Altos Hills: Anderson-Lovelace, 1999. **[N7433.35.G7 C68 1999]**

Curtis, Gerard. Visual Words. Art and the Material Book in Victorian England. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 2002. **[PR468.A76 C87 2002]**

Darnton, Robert. The Case for Books: Past, Present, and Future. New York: PublicAffairs, 2009. **(ILL)**

De Hamel, Christopher. Scribes and illuminators. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992. **[Z124 .D3 1992]**

Digital Convergence: Libraries of the Future. Rae Earnshaw and John Vince, eds. London: Springer Verlag, 2008. **(ILL)**

Dodge, Martin, and Rob Kitchin. Mapping Cyberspace. London & New York: Routledge, 2003. **(MSUM Internet availability as an electronic book or through interlibrary loan)**

Douglas, Jane Yellowless. The End of Books--or Books Without End?: Reading Interactive Narratives. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000.**(ILL)**

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Useful websites: [see sites listed in Gestalten Book Art source]

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/book%5Fhistory/>

<http://www.philobiblon.com>

The Institute for the Future of the Book: <http://www.futureofthebook.org>

Centre for Fine Print Research; UWE, Bristol, School of Art Media and Design
<http://www.bookarts.uwe.ac.uk>

Mimeo Mimeo, Jed Birmingham & Kyle Schlesinger, editors
<http://mimeomimeo.blogspot.com/>

Parenthesis: The Journal of the Fine Press Book Association; <http://www.fpba.com/>

Betty Bright's Blog <http://letterpressbkart.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.garyhall.info/open-book/>

<http://www.theartistsbook.org.za/view.asp?pg=links>