

School of Library and Information Studies
Faculty of Management
Dalhousie University

LIBS 6150 — History of the Book

Winter 2005

Thursdays, 9:00 am - 12:00 noon, Room 4106, Killam Library

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Office Hours: posted on course notice board (or by appointment)

Note: This syllabus is subject to minor change either before or during the course

Description

The “History of the Book” or “History of Print Culture” is an especially vibrant field of scholarship and this course will reflect the intellectual excitement found in much of the recent research. Throughout the course the instructor, who is active in the field, will share insights from his own research and of national and international colleagues. The course surveys the development of print culture within international intellectual and cultural history. The course emphasizes both continuities and changes in the shifts from orality to literacy, and writing to printing to digital publication. Books, serials and ephemera (in manuscript, print, and digital forms) are discussed in terms of their creation, production, distribution, and reception. The course will also consider aspects of humanities and scientific scholarship and their impact on the development of the history of print culture.

Goals of the Course

The goals for this course are:

1. To introduce theoretical models for the study of print and digital culture.
2. To survey the extensive scholarship on the study of print culture
3. To provide an appropriate intellectual and historical context for information professionals

Student Outcomes

By the conclusion of this course students should be able to:

1. Describe and explain historical models of book history (including the place of libraries and information services in the models)

2. Explain the processes of print creation, production, dissemination, and reception and understand these processes in social, economic, and political contexts
3. Intelligently critique methodologies and results of research in book history
4. Understand issues concerning research resources for book history and cultural history more broadly.

Instructional Methods

This graduate seminar course includes instructor-led discussions, guest speakers, visits to relevant repositories, explorations of digital research resources for book history, and consideration of an array of recommended readings. Students will have the opportunity for extensive examination of a topic of their choice.

Evaluation Methods

For all written assignments give close attention to the instructions provided. Assessments of all assignments will be directly related to attention to the instructions, clarity of expression and presentation, and evidence of critical thinking. Further specific guidelines for the assignments are given below.

Annotated bibliography on the topic of the major paper, accompanied by an outline of the paper	10%
Book review	20%
Evaluation of digital resources for the history of print culture	10%
Major paper and presentation	50%
Participation	10%

Texts and Supplementary Readings

The following texts are available for purchase at the Dalhousie University Bookstore, and will be used extensively in this course:

Finkelstein, David and Alistair McCleery, eds. *The Book History Reader*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002.

Gaskell, Philip. *A New Introduction to Bibliography*. Winchester, England: St. Paul's Bibliographies; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1995 (first published by Oxford University Press, 1972).

Additional supplementary readings will be placed either on reserve at the Killam Library (for

books) or in the course file (for papers) in the Working Collection file cabinet. These readings will be introduced as the course unfolds.

Journals

Numerous scholarly journals publish research on book history topics. Among the key journals that you will find relevant for consultation are:

Book History

Épilogue

Devil's Artisan

Libraries & Culture

Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America

Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada

The Library

Printing History

Publishing History

Studies in Bibliography

Bibliographic Aids

For Canadian book history topics, consult the electronic resources website for the History of the Book in Canada / Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé project at www.dal.ca/hbic-hlic

For international book history topics, consult the print volumes of the *Annual Bibliography of the History of the Printed Book and Libraries*, and the more recent Book History Online at www.kb.nl/bho (which contains the records of the ABHB since 1998).

Electronic Discussion Group and Website

The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP), established in 1990, is the leading international scholarly association for book history. For the duration of the course it is recommended that you join the international discussion list SHARP-L (details at www.sharpweb.org) and consult the wealth of book history information available at the the SHARP website www.sharpweb.org.

General Course Guidelines

Records of class attendance are maintained. Students are expected to contact the instructor if they cannot attend a class, must arrive late, or leave early.

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who would like to discuss classroom accommodations are asked to inform the instructor as soon as possible.

Intellectual honesty is a serious matter. In 2002 the Senate at Dalhousie reaffirmed and strengthened the university's stance on plagiarism. Please note the following statement:

Dalhousie University now subscribes to Turnitin.com, a computer based service which checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the *Policy on Intellectual Honesty* contained in the Calendar or on the Dalhousie web site at: www.registrar.dal.ca/calendar/front/ureg.htm#10

The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer readable format, and to submit any paper to a check such as that performed by Turnitin.com. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand. Copies of student papers checked by this process will be retained by Turnitin.com.

The School has established Standards and Ethical Guidelines for Term Papers and Projects. For details see: www.mgmt.dal.ca/slis/CurrentStudents/standards.html

General Guidelines for Written Assignments

Grades in this course will be given in accordance with the grading system outlined on the SLIS website - <http://www.mgmt.dal.ca/slis/CurrentStudents/grading.html> Note that a B+ is "above average performance." Assignments are due on the dates indicated. There is a penalty for late assignments, unless prior permission has been given by the instructor to submit an assignment late, which normally will be for medical or family emergencies only. Assignments will not be accepted ten days or more after the due date, and in such cases the student will receive a zero grade for that assignment.

For all written assignments pay close attention to the instructions provided. Assessment will be based particularly on the quality of the submissions (including logical flow, critical analysis, and presentation of ideas). In addition, follow the general guidelines outlined below:

- always include a title page.
- all pages in reports (except the title page) should be numbered.

- all reports submitted in this course must follow the rules for bibliographic style as outlined in one of the following: 1) *Chicago Manual of Style 15th Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), or 2) Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1998). Do **not** invent a style, do **not** mix styles, and do **not** invent a solution for an unknown style rule! Check the appropriate style manual and/or a reliable website that gives the relevant style rule(s). ***Failure to adhere to the rules of the selected bibliographic style will lead to a full letter grade deduction.***
- any text or paraphrase taken from a published work must be attributed using the correct citation rules. Keep in mind that acknowledgement of another writer's ideas or arguments is needed even if you do not use the exact same words in expressing those ideas or arguments. For further information see Dalhousie's policy on "intellectual honesty" - www.registrar.dal.ca/calendar/front/ureg.htm#10 - and the School's policy on academic offenses - www.mgmt.dal.ca/slis/CurrentStudents/standards.html#plagiarism
- please adhere to the School's policy on Non-sexist Language - www.mgmt.dal.ca/slis/CurrentStudents/standards.html#sexist

Schedule of Topics - *Note: the sequence of topics may change to accommodate guest speakers.*

Week 1 - 6th January 2005

Introduction to the course, including discussion of the course syllabus, and the general subject of book history as an international research subject.

Week 2 - 13th January 2005

Book history models; communities of knowledge; origins of writing and books; sources for research

* ***Guest: Karen Smith, Head of Special Collections, Killam Library***

Week 3 - 20th January 2005

Book culture in the ancient world; the early manuscript period

Week 4 - 27th January 2005

Books and their uses in the Medieval period

* ***Field trip to St. Mary's University for discussion of the Book of Kells with Dr. Cyril Byrne, Irish Studies, St. Mary's University***

Literature review and major paper outline due

Week 5 - 3rd February 2005

Gutenberg and the hand-press period; the circulation of information in Europe in the early modern period

* ***Guest: Dr. Cynthia Neville, Department of History, Dalhousie University***

Week 6 - 10th February 2005

The printing press as an agent of change; print culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

* *Guest: Dr. Ian Stewart, History of Science, University of King's College*

Week 7 - 17th February 2005

The beginning of the machine press period; print culture in the nineteenth century; the circulation of information in Europe and North America; the rise of the author

* *Guest: Dr. George Parker, Department of English, Royal Military College, retired*

Book review due

Term break - 21st - 25th February 2005

Week 8 - 3rd March 2005

Readers and reception in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; popular culture and print culture including cheap printing and periodicals

* *Guest: Dr. Ronald Tetreault, Department of English, Dalhousie University*

Week 9 - 10th March 2005

Print culture in the twentieth century and the launch of the digital age

Digital research resource evaluation due

Week 10 - 17th March 2005

Library history within the context of book history

Week 11 - 24th March 2005

Major paper presentations

Week 12 - 31st March 2005

Major paper presentations

Week 13 - 7th April 2005

The print culture and communication at the beginning of the twenty-first century; book history projects, e.g., the History of the Book in Canada - Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé; the future of print culture

Major paper due

Specific Instructions for Assignments

1) Major paper assignment

Note: there are two distinct parts, and two due dates, for this assignment.

Part 1 — this part is due on 27th January 2005 and is worth 10% of the course grade

After performing an in-depth search for publications / archival records on a broad topic of interest to you in the area of print culture, prepare a report with the following three sections:

- a) An annotated bibliography of ten or more items. An item is typically an essay in a collection, a journal article or a monograph. Each entry in your bibliography will include the bibliographic description followed by an annotation. The annotation should be about 100-150 words in length and should be both descriptive and evaluative.
- b) A paragraph explaining the focus, from your reading to that point, that you intend to take with your major paper.
- c) A tentative outline, of one to two pages, of the contents of your proposed paper. It is expected that this outline will evolve as you complete further reading and exploration of your chosen topic. The outline will help you to set a focus for the paper.

Part 2 — this part is due on the last class on 7th April 2005 and is worth 50% of the course grade
Ten percent of this part of the grade will be based on your oral presentation in one of the classes noted below.

Write a paper in the range of 5,000 to 6,000 words (excluding the bibliography) on your chosen topic. This essay may be submitted as a printed document (if it is entirely text) or on CD if it includes images and/or multimedia elements. Your topic will determine the most appropriate format for submission. Your paper should include graduate-level analysis and synthesis of the materials you have read and should reflect the understanding of the field of print culture that you will have gained by the conclusion of the course.

During the classes on 24th and 31st March 2005 each student will make a 15 minute presentation on the major theme and points of interest in his or her paper. A sign-up arrangement will be established to determine which students present on either date. Feedback from the instructor and classmates may be used to revise the paper before submission at the last class.

2) Book review assignment

This assignment is due on 17th March 2005 and is worth 20% of the course grade

For this assignment, choose one of the assigned books and prepare a review of 1,000 to 1,500

words. The list of titles will be available early in the term.

As background preparation for your review, consult previously published reviews in *Épilogue*, *SHARP News*, and other scholarly journals on the history of print culture. You may find it necessary to examine books or papers on the same topic as the volume that you have selected. In addition, you may wish to read published reviews of the book (if any exist).

Write your review in the style of a scholarly review. Your review should include a brief summary of the content of the book, and an assessment of the “intellectual accessibility” of the volume to an intelligent lay reader, such as yourself. Your critical assessment of the volume is expected. In addition, you may comment on the scholarly apparatus, as appropriate.

Turn in the book with your review. All reviews prepared for this course will be considered for publication in *Épilogue*.

Your review will be assessed on the following criteria:

- a) clear evidence that you read the book
- b) quality of your scholarly assessment of the volume, including the quality of your expression, and the logical flow of the text.

3) Evaluation of digital research resources for the history of print culture

This assignment is due on 10th March 2005 and is worth 10% of the course grade.

This assignment will introduce students to digital resources as potential research sources for the history of print culture, and will provide an opportunity to practice evaluation skills. To complete this assignment:

- a) examine at least two of the resources provided in a list circulated to class (or at least one of the listed resources and one or more of your own choosing).
- b) consider each digital resource (typically available via the internet) from the perspective of a history of print culture student and evaluate the resource for its usefulness for research on book history.
- c) prepare a five-page essay in which you evaluate the resources that you chose and include appropriate points of comparison. Your paper should be single integrated narrative rather than annotations about the digital resources.