BKS 1002H: Book History in Practice

Time: Mondays, 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Location: Colin Friesen Room, Massey College
Instructor: Dr Alan Galey, Faculty of Information
Email: alan.galey@utoronto.ca
Office: Bissell Building (attached to the north side of Robarts Library), room 646
Office hours: Tuesdays 1:30 - 2:30 in Bissell 646; or by appointment
Course website: q.utoronto.ca (login required)

Overview

The approach of the course reflects what David Greetham calls "the disciplinary interrelatedness of all aspects of the study of the book" (Textual Scholarship: An Introduction, p. 2). The course consists of seminars on key topics in book history, punctuated by case studies of particular books, events, and debates. These case studies are designed to pull together ongoing threads of inquiry from the readings, and to allow students to work outward from specific artifacts to general questions. Students will gain a detailed understanding of current topics in the field of book history, and how to situate their own research within ongoing debates.

Students who have successfully completed the course will be able to:

- demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of practices, theories, projects, and debates in book history and related fields, with an emphasis on current practice (assessed mainly through course participation);
- present their analysis and lead discussion on topics relevant to the practice of book history today (assessed mainly through seminar presentations and participation);
- identify worthwhile topics for research and develop detailed analyses using book-historical approaches and methods (assessed mainly through the reader profile and final essay).

Evaluation

20% Participation
20% Seminar presentation
25% Annotating reader profile
35% Final paper

All assignments are evaluated in accordance with (the University of Toronto Governing Council's University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy. See below for details on assignments.
**Late Policy**

Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard by **noon** on the due date. (The reason this deadline is set at noon, not midnight, is so that the instructor has time to help students with any technical problems with the submission system.) Extensions will only be granted in the event of illness or emergency, and then only once appropriate documentation has been submitted to Student Services. Late assignments will be penalized by one full letter grade per week (e.g. from A to A-), for a maximum of two weeks. After that point, late assignments will no longer be accepted. Furthermore, late papers will not receive detailed feedback or comments. Written assignments that do not meet a minimum standard (in terms of legibility, formatting and proofreading) will be returned for re-submission, with late penalties in full effect.

**Academic integrity**


**Writing support**

Work that is not well written and grammatically correct will not generally be considered eligible for a grade in the A range, regardless of its quality in other respects. With this in mind, please make use of the writing support provided to graduate students by the SGS Graduate Centre for Academic Communication. The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers and all programs are free. Please consult the current workshop schedule [http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Current-Years-Courses.aspx](http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Current-Years-Courses.aspx) for more information.

**Accommodations**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or a health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach Student Services and/or the Accessibility Services Office [http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as) as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

**Course texts**

The only required book purchase for this course is Geraldine Brooks’s novel *People of the Book* (New York: Penguin, 2008); new and used copies should be widely available in local bookstores. All other required readings and many optional readings will be available digitally via links in the class schedule, below. The following list includes several general introductions to the field as well as compilations of readings. Most will be on course reserve in the Inforum Library (Bissell Building, 4th floor), and they are also good books to have on your own shelf.

Note that the UTL catalogue normally has separate entries for print and digital versions of the same book. If the links below or in the class schedule take you to one format but you’d prefer the other, try searching title/author to see if the other format is available.
Recommended texts:


**General assignment guidelines**

**Referencing and format.** The American Psychological Association (APA) citation style is the most commonly used one in academic writing in the social sciences, while Chicago and MLA (Modern Language Association) are the most common in the humanities (at least in North America). For this course, you will be expected to use **Chicago's notes + bibliography format**, as it is the referencing system most suited to the course topic. The *Chicago Manual of Style Online* is also an excellent writing reference for our course on matters of grammar, usage, and other writing conventions apart from citation. You can find it here: go.utlib.ca/cat/6662347. A bookmarkable quick reference can be found here: [www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

Written assignments must be submitted electronically as PDF files in double-spaced 12pt Times New Roman with 1.5-inch margins. Assignments at the graduate level should be free of writing errors. Be sure to proofread your work carefully before submitting, and refer to the Chicago Manual of Style on questions of grammar, punctuation, and usage.

**Images.** Book history and textual studies are fields that often rely heavily upon images in their publications. Students are welcome—encouraged, in fact—to make use of images in their written assignments within the following guidelines:
1. Images may be included as appendixes or integrated into the body of the text, whichever you prefer; all images must be accompanied by a caption that includes the image’s source. It’s a good idea to number your images (e.g. "Figure 1") for ease of reference in your text.

2. Assignments will be read digitally, not printed, so students are welcome to use colour images. However, please be sure to use an image editing program such as Gimp (www.gimp.org) to reduce the image file sizes so that the PDF files you submit don’t exceed 10MB.

3. Students may include copyrighted images in their assignments without acquiring permission as long as they follow the Canadian Copyright Act’s current exceptions for fair dealing, in that the images must only be used for the purposes of criticism or review, and each image must be accompanied by: 1) the source; and 2) the name of the creator (if given in the source).

*Secondary sources.* As graduate students, you are expected to rely upon scholarly (which usually means peer-reviewed) sources in your written assignments. The course schedule and seminar discussions will include many suggestions for secondary sources on various topics related to the course. However, students are strongly encouraged to track down those resources that are best suited to their specific area of interest or inquiry, rather than rely too heavily on those provided in class. Media texts (books, comics, television episodes, films, videogames, websites, etc.) can be used and referenced as needed, but should always be treated as artifacts of study and analyzed accordingly.

**Participation**

This mark is determined by the quality of your contributions to class discussion. The course is largely structured by ongoing intellectual debates in book history and related fields, and you should come prepared to engage those debates, not just observe them. This means reading all of the week’s primary assigned materials, doing further reading (based on suggestions from the reading list, references from the assigned readings, or your own initiative), allowing yourself enough time to think about the readings, and coming to class with things to say. Participation depends just as much on listening, so you should listen carefully to everyone’s contributions, consider the effects of your own comments, and respect all members of the class.

**Seminar presentation**

At some point in the term you will lead a class discussion on the class’s topic and one of the week’s required readings. You are not required to draw upon any of the recommended readings, though you are welcome to do so, and to bring in relevant material from beyond the reading list.

This type of presentation involves doing the kinds of preparation that instructors do, namely formulating discussion questions, highlighting key topics or passages, and contextualizing the material. You are expected to think critically about the material just as you would in writing a conference paper or article: you should select the salient points, evaluate how well the article makes those points, provide the group with relevant context from beyond the readings (such as examples not mentioned in the readings), and offer your own critical response to the material.

Your presentation should take about 20 minutes, followed by another 20 minutes of discussion led by you. You will be graded on the quality of your preparation, your ability to communicate what you know to the group, and the skill with which you facilitate discussion. This term we will be taking an old-school approach to presentations, which means doing without a data projector or internet connection. Presentations must include at least one paper handout to be distributed in class.
Presenters are required to post two potential discussion questions, arising from the reading, to the course discussion board **by noon on the Thursday before their presentation**. The rest of us should make sure to check the discussion board for the questions, think about what the presenters have asked us to consider, and come prepared to engage those questions during the discussion on Monday. (For non-presenters, this will be reflected in the participation grade.) Presenters are also welcome to ask the class to look at some material of their choice in advance, such as a website, provided that the addition to the assigned reading isn't too onerous.

When two students are presenting in the same class, I encourage you to coordinate to ensure your presentations don’t duplicate each other. The class schedule indicates which presentations go first and second when there are two, but we can reverse the order if both presenters agree.

You are not required to submit a written version of the presentation. However, please provide me with a digital copy of your handout and a brief (one-page) outline of your presentation **by noon on the Thursday following your presentation**.

**Annotating reader profile**

*2,000-2,500 words, excluding bibliography*

*Due by noon Friday, Feb. 8*

The purpose of this assignment is to understand how a reader used a book by examining material traces left behind in the form of annotations, highlighting, and other marks. This mode of research is forensic, in that you’re looking for traces of past users who are not available for interviews or focus groups. A secondary purpose of this assignment is to gain practice in explaining your analysis of this kind of evidence to others via words and images.

For this assignment, you will select a book with reader marginalia and profile how and why its annotator (known or unknown) has interacted with a book as an object. You are welcome to discuss multiple annotators in the same book, or the same annotator in multiple books (which would be harder, though not impossible, to find). Your book could be a rare book held in the Fisher or other rare book library, or a modern book you’ve pulled from in the stacks of any UTL library. However, it must be a book held in the UTL system so that the instructor can access it for grading purposes. E-books or digital facsimiles of annotated codex books are not eligible; students must use a book that they have held in their hands, just as the original annotators did. If you have done an adopt-a-book assignment in a previous course, you are welcome to use that book, provided: 1) you indicate that you’re doing so; and 2) none of your previously submitted assignments dealt with the marginalia.

As one possible approach, you could write your profile as a series of answers to the following questions (not necessarily in this order):

1. What did the annotator(s) tend to mark up in the book? What topics interested them?

2. What different ways have they marked up the book? Do they underline, highlight, draw arrows, add words in the margin? What is their graphical vocabulary for annotation, so to speak (i.e. the range of marks and notes they tend to use)?

3. If they write words in the margins (or between lines) what kinds of things do they say, and who are they writing to? What do they seem to care about? Consider our reading from Jackson and its point that not all annotation is directed toward the self; does the annotator seem to be imagining other readers as an audience?
4. Finally, does your annotator seem to be very good at annotating? You don't need to find the world's most brilliant annotator, but someone who's semi-randomly used yellow highlighter and little else might not be the most interesting candidate.

Once you've started going through your evidence in this way, the key is to look for patterns. Ideally you want to be able to say things like "One of Annotator A's tendencies is to [something], as may be seen in several instances. For example..." Assignments will be graded on the suitability of the chosen primary source(s), the detail and effectiveness of the analysis, the quality of the writing, and (if applicable) the effective use of secondary sources.

**Some tips on hunting down annotated books.** The hunt for materials is very much part of the assignment. It can be the most fun part, but it also requires planning ahead. One strategy is to use the library catalogue to search for annotated books held in U of T's various rare book libraries. You can use the online catalogue to search for annotated books in the Fisher and other rare book libraries on campus. Just go to [http://search.library.utoronto.ca/advanced](http://search.library.utoronto.ca/advanced), enter "marginalia" in the "anywhere" field, select the Fisher or another library in the "Library" field, and you should get the full list of annotated books which you can then filter according to your interests. For example, the search I just described returned this promising entry, among others: [http://go.utlib.ca/cat/3729871](http://go.utlib.ca/cat/3729871). If you click "MARC view" and look at field 700, you'll notice that the cataloger has noted that there's marginalia in the book, which allowed our search to find it. Notice, too, that this book exists in multiple annotated copies, and that the Pratt Library at Victoria College has Northrop Frye's annotated copy. Frye was a prolific and expert annotator, and any of his books would be great candidates for this assignment. Searching for "Frye annotated" in the call number field brings up 2,072 records (!!), and you can go to the Pratt Library's website to find out how to call up those books (ideally not all at once...). Marshall McLuhan's personal library is also held at the Fisher, containing some fascinating annotations by another well-known and intriguingly systematic reader, and you can ask the Fisher staff how to access these books.

A second strategy for finding suitable books is to go hunting through the regular stacks at one of U of T's libraries, such as Robarts. This will probably involve going up and down the stacks and pulling books to see if they're annotated. (If you find a book so heavily annotated that it would drive a librarian crazy, then you've struck gold.) Be aware that the library catalogue won't list annotated books if they're just regular circulating books. One strategy you might adopt if you choose the stacks option is to start with a section of the stacks that contains books close to your own knowledge and interests. This will help you to understand how your annotator(s) are interacting with the content of the book, which is also part of the assignment. This should prove easier than trying to understand someone's annotations in a book whose topic is entirely new to you. A related strategy is to look at textbooks first: they are hard-working books, so to speak, and often record traces of a reader who is wrestling with new knowledge as part of a learning process.

**Final essay**

*4,000-4,500 words, excluding bibliography*

*Due Wednesday, April 3*

In the final essay, students will identify a specific research question related to the course and write a scholarly research essay about it. There is a fair amount of latitude available: students may take up a particular theoretical or methodological question, explore an historical context in relation to specific books or communities, analyze the development of a specific aspect of the materiality of texts, or approach their topic some other way. What matters most is that the essay engage with topics and materials related to the course, and advance an original and relevant argument that is appropriately supported by your research into primary and secondary sources, including readings beyond those assigned for the course — these are the criteria upon which the essay will be graded, along with the strength and accuracy of the writing. All students are required to consult with me about their topic at least **three weeks** before the due date.
Course schedule

If you are unable to access any of the readings, please email the instructor asap. Our final class will focus on Geraldine Brooks’s novel People of the Book (New York: Penguin, 2008), but you should plan to read it alongside your course readings, and we will discuss it periodically.

7 Jan. **Week 1: Introduction**

- required reading
- further reading
  - explore some of the other articles in the Lynch and Ender special issue on “Cultures of Reading”

14 Jan. **Week 2: Books in East Asia (field trip to the H.H. Mu Far Eastern Library, Royal Ontario Museum)**

- we’ll meet at 2:00 at Massey College and walk over to the ROM as a group
- guest: Max Dionisio (Librarian, H.H. Mu Far Eastern Library, Royal Ontario Museum)
- required reading
  - Peter Kornicki, "Japan, Korea, and Vietnam," in Eliot and Rose, 111–25 [go.utlib.ca/cat/7875444]
- further reading
  - The ROM’s Library and Archives website: [www.rom.on.ca/en/collections-research/library-archives/](http://www.rom.on.ca/en/collections-research/library-archives/)
  - Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: a Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001)

21 Jan. **Week 3: Reading the Form of Premodern Books (field trip to the Fisher Rare Book Library)**

- we’ll meet at 2:00 in the McLean-Hunter Room at the Fisher Library
- no seminar presentations this week
- required reading
- further reading
  - on bibliographic codes (McGann) and the sociology of texts (McKenzie)

  - on Caxton
    - the Fisher Library’s announcement about acquiring the 1481 Caxton Cicero, including a video showing details of the book: fisher.library.utoronto.ca/news/oldest-english-language-book-canada-now-fisher

  - on the 1611 King James Bible

  - on the Shakespeare First Folio
    - explore the DYI First Folio website at the Folger Shakespeare Library, including the "Virtual Printing House" section: www.folger.edu/publishing-shakespeare/first-folio/diy-first-folio

28 Jan.  **Week 4: Traces of Reading**

- 2 seminar presentations
- required reading
- further reading
  - Inscriptorium.wordpress.com: Andrew McLuhan’s blog about his father’s and grandfather’s annotated books in the Marshall McLuhan library, now held at the Fisher

4 Feb.  **Week 5: Contexts of Reading**

- 2 seminar presentations
- read People of the Book to the end of “An Insect’s Wing"
• required reading
• further reading

11 Feb. Week 6: Forgery

• 2 seminar presentations:
  • required reading
  • further reading
    o Nick Wilding, Friends of the Fisher lecture, 19 September 2018 (audio recording: fisher.library.utoronto.ca/events-exhibits/friends-of-fisher-events)

18 Feb. Reading Week (no class)

25 Feb. Week 7: The Language of Paper

• 2 seminar presentations
• read People of the Book to the end of “Wine Stains”
• required reading
• further reading
4 Mar. **Week 8: Field trip to Paperhouse Studio (confirmed)**

- no assigned reading this week, but check out Paperhouse Studio's website ([paperhousestudio.com](http://paperhousestudio.com)) and blog ([whattheflax.tumblr.com](http://whattheflax.tumblr.com))

11 Mar. **Week 9: Reading Digitization Critically**

- 1 seminar presentation
- required reading
- further reading
  - Marilyn Deegan and Kathryn Sutherland, *Transferred Illusions: Digital Technology and the Forms of Print* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009) [go.utlib.ca/cat/11385125]

18 Mar. **Week 10: Textual Criticism and Variant Texts**

- 1 seminar presentation
- required reading
- further reading
  - TBA

25 Mar. **Week 11: Transnational Approaches to Book History**

- 2 seminar presentations
- required reading

• further reading
  o TBA

1 Apr. Week 12: Material Texts in the Cultural Imagination

• no seminar presentations
• reading
  o Geraldine Brooks, People of the Book (New York: Penguin, 2008)