

Terry Belanger
I-20: Book Illustration Processes to 1900
26–31 October 2014

Detailed Course Evaluation

- 1) *How useful were the pre-course readings? Did you do any additional preparations in advance of the course?*
 1. Very useful—essential. I read Hults and Griffiths on prints beforehand as well. Gascoigne was the best.
 2. Gascoigne was very useful as a preliminary intro, although best used as a reference source.
 3. Gascoigne is a fantastic source.
 4. Gascoigne is extremely useful, although I had already gotten a good grounding on pre-1800 technique from other books, which would have been sufficient for pre-photography.
 5. Very useful, especially Gascoigne. I found it helpful to talk over printmaking with friends who are artists in their fields.
 6. Gascoigne was very helpful—although his descriptions made *a lot* more sense after seeing real examples.
 7. Pre-course readings (especially Gascoigne) were *essential*. I personally could identify print processes that I have seen a lot of—so access to a print collection and lots of looking is invaluable.
 8. Relevant, but somewhat difficult to grasp without looking at prints while reading. I didn't do any additional preparation, but I wish I had read some printing or book history as a supplement.
 9. I pored over Gascoigne for weeks, but should have pored over it for months—hard to digest. A little bit goes a long way.
 10. Essential.
 11. Gascoigne was essential with a capital “E.” ‘Nuff said.
 12. Useful.

- 2) *Were the course workbook and other materials distributed in class appropriate and useful (or will they be so in the future, after you return home)?*
 1. Yes! The bibliography will be a great resource for my continued study. The workbook helped me keep up well.
 2. Yes.
 3. Yes, I always save and refer to them at home.
 4. All very useful, though workbook could do with a thorough proofreading.
 5. Very useful, both now and in the future.
 6. Yes! Although it would have been useful if it included small photocopies (four to six per page) of examples from the packets.
 7. Yes—in retrospect. I took too many notes. I could/should have made notes directly in work book.
 8. Yes, very much so.
 9. Course workbook great for references and supplemental information.
 10. Yes.

11. The workbook dovetailed with pre-course reading very nicely and—like Gascoigne—was essential to understanding the course.
 12. Yes.
- 3) *Have you taken one or more RBS courses before? If so, how did this course compare with your previous coursework?*
1. No.
 2. This is my first RBS course. I previously took a course at CalRBS.
 3. Three before; more hands-on. I *really* liked individual packets.
 4. Yes. All RBS courses are great; this is one of the more clockwork-like ones because of its longevity. Switched from facts and techniques to anecdotes so smoothly that the transitions were invisible.
 5. This is my first course.
 6. No.
 7. N/A.
 8. No.
 9. This is my first course.
 10. Yes—on par with most others.
 11. Have taken several RBS courses, and this was much more dense than any of them.
 12. Equally good.
- 4) *Which aspects of the course content were of the greatest interest or relevance for your purposes?*
1. Pre-1820-30 content. My period comes to a close here, so the later technologies were simply not within my normal range.
 2. The manual processes, as I see more of these in my work.
 3. Vast exposure to multiple prints that I could actually see.
 4. 1) Pre-1800 techniques and identification and history; 2) labs and practice trying out processes—hands-on is essential.
 5. Learning about the processes, seeing examples, and trying some out in the labs.
 6. Everything!
 7. Intaglio processes.
 8. Learning print identification *within* the context of the history of book illustration.
 9. The “differences” information regarding how to distinguish print methods. I loved TB’s knowledge of the printing trade from his personal experience and his book trade anecdotes.
 10. Being introduced to post-hand-press processes.
 11. The fact that the instructor gave real insight into the identification of the many different processes. (No interpretation or course in art history.)
 12. Opportunity to view *many* prints and compare.
- 5) *Did the instructor successfully help you to acquire the information, knowledge, and skills that the course was intended to convey? Was the intellectual level of the course appropriate?*
1. Yes—very appropriate.
 2. Yes.

3. Yes, a lot of information to process—but that is the idea.
4. Yes. Yes. A great group of people asking smart questions with challenging material.
5. Yes, especially as this is only an introduction to a complex and rich area of study.
6. Yes, the intellectual level of the course was definitely appropriate.
7. Yes—I appreciated that TB said, fifty-plus times, “The text must come from somewhere.” By the end of the week, I finally realized how important this was.
8. Yes, largely.
9. The course was hands-on, funny, grueling, and memorable. I think I’ll be able to apply most of it.
10. Yes, and yes.
11. *A lot* of information was covered in this course and it was—at times—too much, too fast for me. I can’t help but wonder if it might be a little easier to digest if it were cut in half.
12. Yes.

6) *What did you like best about the course?*

1. The endless packets—access to the numerous examples is the essential benefit here. Seeing the technique in the original cannot be matched or provided by secondary sources.
2. The packets add so much depth to learning the content. It made it a hands-on experience—as did the printmaking exercises.
3. TB’s depth of knowledge.
4. TB! Labs! Gorgeous images—some of the time. Rich history and knowledge of processes plus RBS itself. The lore is important!
5. The combined energy of my fellow students and the depth of knowledge and experience that TB and Tess brought to the class.
6. Using the packets to help illustrate the actual processes was very helpful. I also enjoyed the labs—they really helped me understand how a certain process worked, and how difficult printing before 1900 really was!
7. *Looking* at the collection—nothing compares.
8. That we constantly stopped to consider how the print processes we studied were situated within book history.
9. I liked the “magician and the hat” aspect of constant surprises and unusual “show and tells.” The ability to touch the objects was key to the learning.
10. The stuff! It was great to see so many examples of real things.
11. That there were actual examples of the printing processes in front of us, as the instructor described them.
12. Access to the collection. Access to the teacher’s knowledge.

7) *How could the course have been improved?*

1. Less time making our own examples. It was useful, but the amount of time it took was simply too much for me. Doing just linocuts or spending less time on all three would be good.
2. {No response—RBS staff}
3. Trip to SC.
4. 1) More examples, or slightly better time keeping (yes, mutually exclusive). 2)

- More space for note taking in booklet on play list.
5. The labs were good. One hands-on addition that would be helpful is lithography.
 6. It would have been useful to see side-by-side examples of different but similar processes so we could compare. It would have been useful to have more time to study the individual illustration examples.
 7. Not sure—it was all very well done.
 8. {No response—RBS staff}
 9. {No response—RBS staff}
 10. 1) Ditch the labs and replace them with self-study time. 2) Workbook playlist: include basic process (relief, intaglio, plano) with each description.
 11. Either break genres/processes in half (or thirds) or cut class size (and it would be worth the rise in tuition).
 12. {No response—RBS staff}

8) *Did you learn what the course description/advertisement indicated you would learn?*

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. Yes.
4. Yes.
5. Yes.
6. Yes.
7. Yes.
8. Yes.
9. Yes.
10. Yes, I think so.
11. Yes.
12. Yes.

9) *How do you intend to use or apply the knowledge or skills learned in this course?*

1. As a starting point for examining some objects I am interested in the archives. The skills here I am hoping to use in research.
2. In catalog records—I will add genre terms/access points and describe the prints when identifiable.
3. To evaluate/identify books.
4. To use probable processes to help me understand better the production decisions and reception of printed images.
5. To evaluate the rare book collection I manage, and to develop an institutional plan for making the collection of more interest to our patrons.
6. Hopefully I will be able to identify and then elaborate on the specific printing techniques used in a particular book when doing instruction and reference.
7. 1) Print examination for loan condition reports. 2) Perhaps to recognize incorrect labels describing print processes.
8. By incorporating descriptions of the print process(es) used to create book illustrations into my catalog descriptions.
9. The information will be useful in collecting, appreciating, and identifying prints so that they aren't misrepresented (as much as humanly possible).
10. To be more informed about what I'm looking at as I do my work.

11. To make sure what our institution acquires is genuine.
 12. {No response—RBS staff}
- 10) *If your course made any trips outside the classroom, was the time devoted to this purpose well spent?*
1. {No response—RBS staff}
 2. N/A.
 3. N/A.
 4. N/A.
 5. N/A.
 6. N/A.
 7. N/A.
 8. N/A.
 9. Going to the bookstores was fun because it allowed me to try out my new skills on their stock.
 10. N/A.
 11. N/A.
 12. {No response—RBS staff}
- 11) *If you attended the evening events (e.g., RBS Lecture, Video Night, RBS Forum, Booksellers' Night), were they worth attending?*
1. No. I was in school while attending RBS—I had too much homework to attend these events.
 2. N/A.
 3. N/A. October course of twelve students.
 4. Yes.
 5. Booksellers' Night only thing applicable, but with only one group, not completely successful.
 6. Yes. Booksellers' Night was enjoyable.
 7. N/A. I missed Booksellers' Night.
 8. Only event that wasn't extended study (Booksellers' Night) was a lot of fun and worth it. I wish we had more options for such activities, especially since we weren't staying together on campus. {"RBS Lecture," "Video Night," and "RBS Forum" each crossed out—RBS staff}
 9. Yes.
 10. Yes. The evening self-study and self-test were great.
 11. Yes.
 12. Yes.
- 12) *We are always concerned about the physical well-being of the collections used during RBS courses. If relevant, what suggestions do you have for the improved classroom handling of the materials used in your course this week?*
1. {No response—RBS staff}
 2. {No response—RBS staff}
 3. TB handles well.
 4. Wash hands after cheese curls—there were (old) orange thumbprints on my Vico!

5. No suggestions. Love all the breaks and breakfast.
6. I think the Mylar sleeves are a good way to protect the materials.
7. Some of the brittle sheets should have a rigid support and not flop around just under Mylar.
8. {No response—RBS staff}
9. Ballpoint pens should be discouraged because they leak ink.
10. Do not give out cheese doodles where rare materials are on the table.
11. N/A.
12. {No response—RBS staff}

13) *Did you get your (or your institution's) money's worth? Would you recommend this course to others?*

1. Yes. Yes.
2. Yes, and yes!
3. Yes.
4. Yes. Yes!
5. Yes, yes.
6. Yes, and yes!!
7. Yes!
8. Yes, absolutely!
9. Yes!
10. Yes, and yes.
11. Yes, without a doubt.
12. Yes.

14) *Any summary thoughts about your Rare Book School experience? Any advice for those considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. {No response—RBS staff}
2. Although this course was in the fall rather than summer, there was still a sense of the RBS community—mainly because the staff was so welcoming. Thanks for offering this course an extra time this year.
3. My favorite week of my professional year.
4. Be prepared to learn a lot, humbly but with good humor and occasional thunder bursts. Don't expect all your free time.
5. I thought the course was well presented in the preliminary materials—I recommend that students review all of that carefully, and they'll do well!
6. It was a great experience. I don't think I've ever learned so much useful and practical information in the span of one week!
7. Take this course! TB is one of a kind—extremely intelligent, with a thorough understanding of print processes. And he is very funny, with a gift for telling stories and describing historical events.
8. RBS is an invaluable experience.
9. This was one of the most informative and pleasant weeks I've spent, ever! You don't have to be in a book profession to benefit from this class. I believe it would fascinate anyone.
10. Read Gascoigne to the end, even though you won't get very much until you look at the real stuff. Visit print collections with Gascoigne and a loupe in hand. The key

- to success in identifying prints is successive iterations.
11. Keep your mouth closed—except to ask a question—and your ears open.
 12. {No response—RBS staff}

Aggregate Statistics

Number of respondents: 12

Leave

- Institution gave me leave: 8 (66.67%)
N/A: student, retired, or otherwise have summers free: 2 (16.67%)
N/A: self-employed, or my work is unrelated: 2 (16.67%)

Tuition

- Institution paid all (or almost all): 6 (50%)
Student paid tuition: 2 (16.67%)
Institution and student shared the cost: 1 (8.33%)
Exchange or barter: 1 (8.33%)
Scholarship from RBS: 1 (8.33%)
Fellowship from RBS: 1 (8.33%)

Housing

- Institution paid housing: 7 (58.33%)
Student paid for housing: 3 (25%)
N/A: stayed with friends or lived at home: 2 (16.67%)

Travel

- Institution paid travel: 7 (58.33%)
Student paid for travel: 4 (33.33%)
N/A: had only local travel expenses: 1 (8.33%)

Which one category most closely defines what you do for a living, or why you are at RBS?

- Antiquarian bookseller: 1 (8.33%)
Archivist: 1 (8.33%)
Cataloguer: 3 (25%)
Ph.D. student (humanities): 2 (16.67%)
Librarian with some rare book duties: 2 (16.67%)
Rare book librarian: 1 (8.33%)
Work in a museum or cultural institution: 1 (8.33%)
Other: 1 (8.33%)