

Martin Antonetti  
H-30: The Printed Book in the West to 1800  
10 – 15 July in Charlottesville, VA

### **Narrative Course Evaluations**

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Are there any readings that you would like to see added or removed in future years?*

1. Very informative, but shorter articles by diverse scholars would be appreciated.
2. Yes, they were useful, though it was a heavy load.
3. The readings were great! I thought the mix of terminology and narrative history was perfect.
4. Yes.
5. Yes, excellent readings. Informative and complementary to material covered in the course. The course is not a repetition of the readings so they are well worth the time spent.
6. Yes, the "ABC for Book Collectors" was especially informative and interesting.
7. Yes and frankly the right amount/skill level.
8. Yes. I felt they gave me an introductory grounding to the course.
9. They were both really useful. Not only were they useful to this class, I believe they will be useful to my future studies and provide great background knowledge for a future career in libraries.
10. Yes, the readings were useful.
11. Yes, the readings were useful and enjoyable, although the Chappell book was heavier on typography than felt necessary for the class. A book like Sarah Werner's "Studying Early Printed Books" or the Broadview intro to book history might have been more relevant to our course topic.

2) *What are your thoughts on the course workbook and/or other teaching materials distributed during class? Was the content appropriate and useful? Will it continue to be useful for you after the course?*

1. I loved all the hands-on demonstrations and activities. Seeing rare books, letterpress printing, folding, and binding was unforgettable.
2. I loved having a notebook in which to make notes, but the outline could have been more detailed.
3. It was helpful to have a list of names/sources. I mostly used my own notebook, which I intend to use as a reference source moving forward.
4. I think the workbook was helpful to follow the professor's lectures.
5. The workbook was handy to have and captured key terms. Explanation was given as to how the workbook would be used which was practical. It will be useful after the course as I took many notes directly in it.
6. The teaching material (handouts) were useful, but the workbook often led to confusion since

the lecture didn't often follow the order of information in the workbook.

7. It was helpful for tracking books but a timeline of historical events discussed would have been helpful for situating book history within historical context.
8. {private response} Useful to follow. Will definitely keep for reference.
9. It was useful. I'm not sure if I will use it after the course, but I know I have access to all the information in this course inside the workbook so if I do need it, it will be easy to find.
10. The course workbook was very helpful. It made it easier to take notes and follow along with the lecture and PowerPoint slides. I think it will be useful after the course as well.
11. The workbook worked perfectly for my notetaking method, and I'm sure I will refer to it. It will be particularly useful after MA shares his PowerPoint slides.

3) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your RBS course? Did you walk away with any "aha!" moments, new ideas, or project plans?*

1. I hope this will better prepare me to work with our rare book librarians.
2. This will be so helpful in understanding and interacting with my institution's rare book collection. I see things with new eyes.
3. I work with a rare book collection as part of my job. I feel that I now understand this collection on a new level.
4. Yes. I will apply it to? my dissertation.
5. Many "aha!" moments, new ideas, and project plans! This course, the instructor, and classmates were inspiring!
6. The skills and knowledge that I acquired in this class will help when I view books in special collections libraries. I look forward to identifying binding and illustration techniques.
7. Plan to incorporate into sessions I give during support of history classes to contextualize book as object—especially paratexts.
8. Plan to apply to my rare books collections. Terms and concepts clicked into place with my collections at my home institution.
9. I definitely plan on using this knowledge in my courses at school!
10. It will be helpful in identifying bindings, typography, and other elements of the book.
11. I plan to use what I have learned to develop an online exhibit to walk through material elements and paratextual features.

4) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*

1. Yes, I learned so much about how to identify elements of the early book.
2. Yes.
3. Yes, absolutely!
4. Yes.
5. I did learn what I hoped and more. Opportunities for learning in different ways (lecture, readings, material handling, and practice) ensured that. Also MA always made time to answer questions and elaborated if needed/requested.

6. Absolutely!
7. Yes.
8. Yes! Yes!
9. Yes!
10. Yes and yes!
11. Yes, and more!

5) *Are there other ways in which the course could have been improved?*

1. Updated references to current scholars in the field.
2. Only better time management. I fear we missed some material because we ran out of time.
3. I would suggest having PowerPoint slides for all lectures—even if it's only portraits of key individuals. Most lectures did have slides.
4. {no response}
5. More time?! The only thing that could be better is just having more time for everything! So much to cover in a short time.
6. I would have liked to practice the skills we learned in class more by examining a larger number of books independently or in small groups perhaps.
7. I'm not sure—I have learned a lot—I really liked the format (lecture, SC, book viewing).
8. Perhaps earlier time for class to finish, but I understand packing a semester's worth of knowledge into a week is hard.
9. Can't think of any.
10. I can't think of any, except more time to finish lectures that we didn't have time for.
11. Shorter lectures—we often didn't make it through the full lecture.

6) *Who might benefit the most from taking this RBS course?*

1. Ph.D. students from institutions without rare book collections.
2. Honestly, anyone who is interested! But particularly those in professions dedicated to the understanding and preservation of bibliography.
3. Individuals working with rare books—whether students, staff, or librarians.
4. {no response}
5. Great foundational course giving broad coverage of major concepts, ideas, figures, &c.
6. Anyone who is interested in book history but needs foundational knowledge.
7. Rare Book librarians.
8. Special collections librarians and library administrators.
9. Obviously special collections librarians, but also anyone in the rare book trade would potentially benefit.
10. Early career rare book librarians, catalogers, anyone interested in book history but who doesn't have a strong background in it.
11. Graduate students, early career rare books librarians.

7) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? Would you recommend the course to others?*

1. Yes and yes.
2. Yes and yes!
3. Yes, absolutely!
4. Yes.
5. {no response}
6. Yes.
7. Yes.
8. Yes!
9. Yes to both!
10. Yes and absolutely.
11. Yes and yes!

8) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*

1. We did. The wooden letterpress demonstration, which was wonderful. More demonstrations please!
2. N/A
3. I loved the printing press demo! A highlight of the week! The bookbinding demo (done in class) was also wonderful.
4. {no response}
5. {no response}
6. Yes—I loved using the printing press!
7. N/A
8. Yes!
9. Yes I do!
10. Yes, the trip to the printing press was very helpful.
11. N/A

9) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*

1. Wonderful course with lots of hands-on learning.
2. {no response}
3. This is a great introductory course. I actually think it is a perfect first course for anyone interested in pursuing a certificate.
4. Have good sleep nights.
5. {no response}
6. No.
7. No.
8. Do it!
9. Just make sure to read the required reading, and if possible, read the extra titles MA provided!
10. Bring pencils and a notebook.
11. Come in willing to be flexible, to take lots of notes, and to ask lots of questions.

10) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*

1. An incredible opportunity I'm immensely grateful for, especially as a fellow.
2. Magical!
3. This was a fun and rigorous experience that I will always cherish!
4. It was an amazing experience.
5. {no response}
6. Absolutely amazing!
7. I really enjoyed this class. In many ways it emphasized how much I do not know about book history while at the same time I found myself resolved in learning more.
8. Thank you for giving foundational knowledge in rare books!
9. Fabulous!
10. An amazing opportunity.
11. I wish the week never had to end!