

Terry Belanger
I-20 Book Illustration Processes to 1900
12–17 June, 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. Yes
2. The reading was useful. It was dense but useful to have some background information before coming to RBS.
3. Yes—Gascoigne is an excellent resource. Also appreciate the list of additional resources found in the workbook.
4. Yes, useful.
5. Yes. TB was correct in his direction to read, and re-read if possible Gascoigne.
6. Yes—Gascoigne was very helpful and a logical way to prepare. It was a beginner-friendly text that also provided a more in-depth explanation of illustration processes.
7. Yes, Gascoigne was indispensable. Read it in short bursts. Please do not add any additional readings.
8. The assigned reading was essential and adequate for preparation.
9. Gascoigne was essential; Hults was not referred to at all. Perhaps it could be moved to optional reading.
10. Gascoigne is exceptional reading and I will no doubt be exploring the recommended materials in the workbook for some time.

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. Great course packet. Love that they were not printed two-sided.
2. The materials were useful and will be useful later as references.
3. Workbook: very helpful. Illustration packets: extremely helpful. All content: extremely useful (now and in the future).
4. Useful.
5. Yes. Some of the printing in the workbook of images could be improved, but I am looking forward to delving into the exit and specialized bibliographies.
6. Large collection of prints was key. Time consuming to source and make appointments to see this amount of variety on my own.
7. The workbook is good but the star of the show is the materials that TB had collected

and meticulously put together. Truly mind-boggling!

8. The many materials distributed were very useful. I will never again have an opportunity to examine so many kinds of print in such a short space of time.
9. The structure of the workbook could be improved. Not all of the packets we used were listed, and not all that were listed were listed in the order we consulted them. This made it difficult to follow along. The images are very low quality and some were not used at all. Some references were incomplete (i.e. the fish book).
10. They provide much to mull over after the course.

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. Yes, will help enormously with acquisitions and teaching with rare materials. Yes, many “aha!” moments; I am sure to create small digitization projects with rare processes focus.
2. For professional development and career growth.
3. Plan to use skills/resources in my work on a daily basis.
4. In my teaching in the museum. Confident to let students look and identify details of prints.
5. To use in cataloging graphic arts. No “aha!” moments per se, but much clarification on post 1840s technologies.
6. I am a cataloger and special collections librarian, but I want to curate an exhibition on illustration processes—particularly process prints with photo finishing.
7. There is so much that my brain is processing that I do not know yet how I will use things I learned. My notes are filled with arrows for things to come back to and process further.
8. The course will help me more accurately catalog prints at my place of employment. I am also thrilled by the possibility of using mezzotint rockers and stippling roulettes on silver for decorative metalwork. How well will a linocut impress on annealed metal in a rolling mill? We shall find out.
9. {no response}
10. Again, much to mull over.

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—more than expected. So many great hands-on examples.
2. Yes, it was a lot of information but having all the packets and examples was helpful when learning the course information.
3. Yes—TB is most definitely an expert in the subject area.
4. Yes.

5. Yes, mostly. It did get a bit rushed from 1850–1900.
6. Yes, we covered a great deal. The list of references and identification tips will be very useful for my work and further study.
7. Yes! And more! TB is brilliant and truly astonishing (and inspiring). With each item and process, I felt new doors opening.
8. Yes.
9. I did not. I was hoping the course would include more practice in identifying techniques. Instead, the vast majority of the time was spent examining prints where the technique had already been identified for us. The pacing of the class was off, with far more time devoted to the relatively easy to identify woodcuts and engravings than the more complicated photo assisted processes. At the end of the course, I still do not feel like I can identify most of the processes that were touched upon in class. Overall, the pacing of the course was off—as entertaining as many of TB’s stories were, they did not contribute to student learning; and, in fact, took up valuable class time that could have better been spent on the packets (one story took a full 45 minutes and did not relate at all to illustration). Consequently, we were constantly behind schedule.
10. I think I have the tools to identify prints. Actual mastery of the content will take a bit more time.

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

1. Decaf coffee—instant packets fine! Having students change seats each day and sit next to different students. Networking is so important. Early career participants should be informed more overtly to take advantage of breaks, receptions, dinners, &c. Your next boss, direct reports, and peers could be in the room!
2. {no response}
3. More space (this is understandable, however, given logistical challenges this summer).
4. Maybe save time to work on one project by experience printing from various ready-made blocks/plates.
5. {private response}
6. No. I really enjoyed how the class was taught. The studio sessions allowed for a break after intense focus during lectures.
7. This is hard to say because time is so short and we have so much to cover, but I wish there was more time to discuss—both with the instructor but also with peers. I feel I would learn even more if I could be image-detective with peers on occasion.
8. Dedicated question time at the end of each section. Choosing the right moment for a question felt like trying to step into someone else’s skipping rope game.
9. Please do not make students carve linoblocks ever again! Neither the relief nor intaglio labs were helpful to identify illustrations. Most of the students came in with practical printing experience, so those exercises did not teach anything new. Because the linoblocks were so time-consuming we could not take advantage of the books that

were reserved in the classroom for us to consult. All breaks and lunches were just spent carving. It would be better if those sessions were dedicated to practicing identification instead.

10. The course has been taught far too long for me to improve it.

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

1. Early career librarians, curators, &c. Those without Ph.D.s.
2. Anyone in the book community.
3. Booksellers, collectors, catalogers, and anyone with interest in the subject.
4. Catalogers, instructors.
5. Anyone interested in thinking about how images are produced.
6. Catalogers, curators, booksellers.
7. Anyone studying prints, especially in the nineteenth century.
8. Antiquarian booksellers, artists and art students, academic cataloguers.
9. A beginner: someone with no familiarity with illustration processes before and needs an overview.
10. Anyone looking to collect, catalog, or teach with prints.

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

1. Yes, but it is expensive for those paying out of pocket. Would definitely recommend.
2. Yes.
3. Yes and yes.
4. Yes!
5. Yes.
6. Yes, definitely.
7. Yes, very much so. This course will stay with me for a very long time, and has changed how I see illustrations!
8. I did not pay for the course, but I feel very much that it was worth the cost of travel, &c. I would recommend it.
9. While I think I know more about illustration than I did coming into this course, I did not learn as much as I had hoped to.
10. Yes. TB is a fountain of wit and wisdom, anecdote and expertise. Kudos to the RBS staff assistants also who keep this breadth of material so organized and the presentation so well-choreographed.

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

1. Yes. The trip to the press in SC was wonderful. A bit of time set aside for relevant

- exhibitions would be good.
2. Yes, it was helpful to see the actual prints previously only seen in reference texts.
 3. Yes—the trip to SC to print our lino blocks was a highlight of the week.
 4. Yes!
 5. Yes.
 6. Yes, printing on the press was an enjoyable experience.
 7. We did two labs: dry point and a linocut and it was great to have them. Especially in the afternoon when it felt like my brain would burst, the different pace and creativity was a nice change.
 8. Our trip to the printing room was very well spent.
 9. I do not. The visit to the common press in SC did not sit well with the stated course objectives.
 10. N/A.
- 9) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*
1. Prepare to be in a tight space. Maybe review how to handle materials before coming. Do the readings intently.
 2. It is a lot of information in a short period of time, but it is worth it.
 3. Definitely read as much of Gascoigne as possible.
 4. The staff should announce the plan throughout the week earlier and clearer, especially lunch on Friday.
 5. Definitely do the advanced reading, it is essential for getting the most out of the course.
 6. Look at as many examples as you can to prepare. The intaglio and process prints were the trickiest for me.
 7. Plan to sit a lot! 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 8. The reading is essential. You have to know something about illustration processes already or you will be lost.
 9. {no response}
 10. Start reading Gascoigne weeks in advance.
- 10) *If you had to sum up your RBS experience with a single sentence, phrase, or haiku, what would you say?*
1. Thank you!
 2. {no response}
 3. A very educational and memorable experience that I am incredibly grateful for!
 4. Great learning and knowledge exchange with all practitioners.
 5. I feel very fortunate that I was able to take this course while TB is still an instructor!

6. RBS gives me energy and inspiration. For the rest of the year I always feel recharged and have a renewed sense of purpose at the end of the week.
7. If you were proud of your knowledge of aquatint photogravure before you will leave with trip-like Pochoir in your head. And secure in the knowledge that someone cares about it including you and its creators!
8. Much book, very yum.
9. {no response}
10. It is like nothing else. ☺