

Caroline Duroselle-Melish & Roger Gaskell
I-40: The Illustrated Scientific Book 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. Yes. RG's articles were especially useful.
2. Very useful.
3. Useful. I'd already read some/most for other purposes. Though we were told to bring our heavy books and didn't use them!
4. A useful blend of preparatory reading, brief selections in class, and a comprehensive "advanced reading list" that I will be sure to mine for knowledge in coming months and years.
5. They were helpful, but I would have liked more global readings. The readings we were assigned were primarily on English books.
6. Yes, they created a good base level of knowledge and the required readings weren't too overwhelming.
7. Yes, they provided much needed context so I could absorb lecture content.
8. The readings for this course were relevant and extremely helpful for grounding our discussions over the course of the week.
9. On the whole, the pre-course assignments were very useful. Although it's important for understanding the construction/printing of the book, I think the Gaskell could be removed since: 1) it's quite long; 2) we did not talk about any of those topics in depth; 3) and other RBS courses cover the same material.
10. Yes.
11. I found the readings very useful.
12. The selection of required and recommended readings were appropriate and interesting. It was good to have had a wide variety of topics and several readings for each.

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. It was adequate for the course week. Unlikely it will be useful later.
2. Very useful during and after the course.
3. Very useful workbook—we referred to every page, all rich with info, and no fluff that we didn't use.
4. As above: (see Q1) well structured—useful both in class and as a resource for future research.
5. The content was useful and will continue to be. Please include blank pages for notes in the future.

6. Very helpful to include materials we didn't specifically cover in class—something to look at on my own. I also appreciate the extensive bibliography.
7. Absolutely. This is a reference I will continue to use. The bibliography is especially helpful.
8. The course notebook helped keep me anchored all week since we undertook so many different activities and exercises. I plan to hang onto and to use the reading list.
9. The workbook was excellent. It would have been helpful if the PowerPoint slides were distributed as well.
10. Yes, the workbook is helpful.
11. Yes, I will continue to use the workbook, it has a lot of content. The listings of the books we looked at in SC were very handy to have.
12. The course workbook was extremely useful. The instructors followed the content and the lists of books we viewed have now been annotated with observations and other information for later reference.

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 will be able to analyze illustrated books with much more sophistication and nuanced understanding. "Aha!": authors, artists, and engravers often refined plates through an iterative process.
2. Better insight into initial bibliography and the physicality of the book.
3. I enjoyed being amongst librarians and book workers from dramatically different disciplines, but all pertaining to the sciences.
4. I feel more confident teaching with illustrations. The focus of my institution's collection is the history of science and technology, so all is relevant.
5. I will more accurately and contextually describe books in my inventory and have greater appreciation for the care and detail of scientific illustration.
6. I will generally look at the rare books in my library's collection in a new way and will think more critically about the presence of illustrations and their functions.
7. No single salient point emerges. However, I learned a wealth of information that will aid my understanding of a current related research project. I will also use the practical components when I evaluate works on paper in my role as curator.
8. I expect the knowledge gained in the course to inform my teaching, research, and approach to preparing for exhibitions.
9. Answering reference questions, teaching students, acquisitions, &c.
10. Instruction and exhibits.
11. I have a broader understanding of the variety of ways to interpret these scientific illustrations. Seeing "throwout" plates in action was an "aha!" moment as was learning that intaglio plates for book illustration were often both etched AND burin engraved.
12. Every day produced several "aha!" moments. The course exactly met my learning objectives about book illustration generally and in science and medicine in particular. I will view illustrations differently and have the tools and language to do formal analysis.

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. What I didn't learn was due to the paucity of the historical evidence.
2. Yes.
3. Yes. Everything that was promised was covered.
4. Yes—immensely.
5. Yes. RG and CDM are brilliant and experienced, and I appreciate that they are both willing to admit when they do not know an answer.
6. Yes, they were thorough.
7. Yes. Entering the course, I was particularly keen to learn more about the material process of book manufacture with special emphasis on illustrations. I also wanted to begin to be able to identify different methods of printmaking.
8. Yes and yes.
9. Absolutely, RG and CDM were better instructors than I could have hoped.
10. I wish there had been more in terms of putting scientific illustration into larger cultural contexts. Maybe the readings were supposed to do that work—but the lectures were largely high-level bibliographical questions that weren't as interesting to me.
11. Yes!
12. The instructors were fantastic! Their knowledge and willing ability to share it made for a fascinating and exciting learning experience. Each successive session built on the preceding content or circled back to include new content in context.

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

1. Showing books to a group of 12 plus people crowding around is ineffective, especially for long periods. Creative use of technology (e.g. document camera) would probably improve the experience.
2. {no response}
3. Really loved the Oak Spring Garden Foundation field trip! What a treat. More behind-the-scenes options would be great—especially a course (or panel) taught by/about bookselling.
4. {no response}
5. Require students to take I-10 or I-20 before this course so we do not spend time on an overview of illustration processes.
6. {no response}
7. Receiving PowerPoint lecture slides for later reference would be very welcome.
8. No.
9. Nothing that comes to mind.
10. More CDM!! 98% of the info/lectures came from RG, and I really would have valued getting more instruction from CDM. I would suggest she teach half and RG teach half.
11. {no response}
12. Not that I can think of.

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

1. Librarians, curators, researchers studying scientific works. Anyone interested in the illustrated book.
2. Librarians, book historians, and historians of science.
3. Assistants all the way through late career.
4. {no response}
5. Booksellers, catalogers, collectors, librarians.
6. Anyone who works with scientific illustrated rare books; it will help them think about the books in new ways.
7. Anyone with an interest in the practical processes involved in book production and illustration production. I even think those with no history of science background would find the course useful.
8. Librarians, curators, catalogers, book dealers, lay persons with interests in descriptive and critical bibliography.
9. Anyone who works with scientific illustrations (librarians, curators, booksellers, graduate students, &c.).
10. Anyone who works with botanical collections or other scientific collections. Would not recommend it as a first RBS course—prior knowledge needed for sure.
11. Our group had people from a wide variety of backgrounds and occupations and it seemed to me we all benefitted.
12. Anyone working with rare books of any type.

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

1. Yes and yes.
2. Yes.
3. Yes—thank you!
4. Yes, yes—though I was on fellowship I would have gladly used PD funds.
5. Absolutely.
6. Yes to both!
7. Absolutely. I have already recommended the course to colleagues.
8. Yes and yes.
9. 100% yes! This was the best RBS course yet!
10. Not entirely—the lectures I found to be sort of dry and focused more on semantics—if there had been more group discussion and historical context, I think I would have gotten more out of it.
11. Yes and yes!
12. Unqualified yes to both questions.

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

1. The trip to the Oak Spring Garden Foundation was a nice change of pace and an opportunity to see some fabulous things. It was hindered by the awkwardness of the showing method (see

Q5) and by confusing instructions on who can touch what.

2. The trip to the Oak Spring Garden Foundation was both pleasant and interesting.
3. Upperville/Oak Spring Garden Foundation was amazing! Just the right amount of time.
4. The trip to the Oak Spring Garden Foundation was a highlight of the week. Not only for the quality and range of materials available there, but also for the different kinds of interaction among participants afforded by the space.
5. The Oak Spring Garden Foundation was the highlight of the week and I feel lucky to have seen Bunny Mellon's collection.
6. Yes, the trip to the Oak Spring Garden Foundation was rewarding—to see more examples and also, mentally, to break up the week.
7. The field trip to the Oak Spring Garden Foundation was an absolute highlight of the week.
8. Yes. The visit to the Oak Spring Garden Foundation was unique and informative.
9. While there were some things I enjoyed about the visit to the Oak Spring Garden Foundation, I don't think that it was time well spent. We ended up driving for four hours just for five and a half hours at Oak Spring. While there, we were discouraged from handling materials and couldn't explore the books as we might have wished. I almost would have preferred additional time in UVA's SC or lecture time.
10. While a nice getaway, I didn't actually think spending time with the Oak Spring Garden Foundation collections was any more useful than seeing books in UVA SC (which I find hugely useful and fantastic!). I also think there was potential to discuss pros and cons of wealthy people buying rare books and private collecting, but it didn't happen.
11. Yes—the trip to the Oak Spring Garden Foundation was amazing and eye-opening.
12. {no response}

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

1. {no response}
2. {no response}
3. Grateful for any/all scholarship opportunities.
4. {no response}
5. Read Bamber Gascoigne's "Print Book" so you have prior understanding of illustration technology.
6. {no response}
7. No.
8. If you're at all interested, do it. RG and CDM are generous instructors, work hard to prepare meaningful lessons, and are also very accessible and kind.
9. {no response}
10. N/A
11. This course is a very balanced blend of classroom time, hands-on practical exercise, and looking closely at collections. The week will just whiz by. Come rested and prepared and it will be a fun journey.

12. {no response}

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

1. {no response}

2. I learned a lot and met interesting people from across a wide range of professional areas.

3. I can't wait to return!

4. {no response}

5. Brain dead, eyes sore, heart and mind full.

6. Very rewarding!

7. Not only was the course professionally and intellectually worthwhile, the spirit of community and the instructors' enthusiasm made it totally inspiring. I feel I will return to work with much needed energy and clarity. Very grateful.

8. Inspiring and edifying!

9. Incredibly useful course taught by wonderfully kind people.

10. I will always love RBS!

11. {no response}

12. {no response}