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G-20: Printed Books to 1800: Description & Analysis  
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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. One of the videos needs to be updated. In Terry Belanger's *Anatomy of a Book* video, about 26 minutes in, there is a line comparing folding book pages to being in "an origami concentration camp," which is pretty offensive. I think it would be easy to clip this particular part of the video as it doesn't add anything important to the discussion. Short of that, I think it would be a good idea to include some sort of acknowledgement/warning about this comment, as it was fairly jarring to hear with no context.
2. Very useful.
3. Yes; having Gaskell and Pearson as guides was great preparation for the lesson in class.
4. The readings were incredibly helpful. I was still nervous about some components of the course going in, but I knew what questions to ask and where I needed examples or hands-on experience. It would be great to have the course workbooks a bit in advance to review.
5. All the readings were very appropriate and useful. I can't imagine reading much more by early June. The load was about right. More would be difficult to finish.
6. Not only useful, but indispensable. Without them, the course would move too fast.
7. Maybe I shouldn't admit that I didn't do any of the pre-course readings (the semester snuck up on me!) but I didn't feel that I lacked any preparation.
8. The assignments were useful, especially Gaskell and Pearson. Bowers was pretty dense and made little sense until after DW's explication. This is feedback from someone with no experience writing collational formulae.
9. They were extremely helpful. I got way more out of the class than I would have if I had not done the readings and watched the videos. Bowers was largely incomprehensible, but even just the exposure helped me pick things up better during an intensive week.
10. I felt the readings were useful and were good grounding for class discussions. They were referenced in class in a way that they could serve as a touchstone to return to topics in the future for consultation in a way that will be very useful.
11. None to add or remove. They were great. Only thought: at the beginning of class we received a breakdown of the pre-course readings over the week. That would have been helpful to have before we came to RBS.
12. Yes, useful.
13. The pre-course reading assignments were very useful. I thought they provided excellent context that helped inform our classwork.

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. The course workbook is great. I can tell I will continue to refer to it after class and there are a lot of great resources included in it.

2. Very useful.
3. The course workbook and general organization were clear and helpful throughout. I also expect that the workbook will continue to be a key reference resource for me.
4. The content is appropriate and will be useful after this course—I will be able to apply some of the exercises we did with books here to my institutional collection for students.
5. Honestly, I was astounded when I walked in on Monday and saw the workbook. I didn't expect to receive something like that. I definitely will keep it with me and refer to it often. DW put a lot of work into it and I really appreciate his efforts.
6. Extremely well organized and carefully selected. I will keep it and use it.
7. The workbook was very helpful, and I look forward to referring back to it as I go forward. I was confused by the additional materials we purchased—the email seemed to imply they were required for the course, but it was unclear how they would be distributed, what they contained, or why we bought them.
8. The course workbook is outstanding and will continue to be very useful. DW obviously put a great deal of thought into the material he included and the reference tools he shared. It was also incredibly helpful that DW shared his PowerPoint slides for our review outside of class hours.
9. I will use the workbook at work all the time, especially as a reference guide from my own notes. And the slides—to have image examples is so helpful.
10. The workbook is extremely useful and effectively compiled for use in class to accompany discussion and complete activities and will be a great resource to revisit in the future; I appreciate the bibliography and reference material included for further study.
11. The content was very useful and very thorough. The content will be a reference that I use when I get back to my institution. You can see the care and expertise in the course materials.
12. I admired how carefully organized the workbook was and how closely it corresponded to class conversations and the materials passed around. Pretty seamless.
13. The coursework book was very helpful. One thing I would have liked is one large outline covering all the topics, just to help get my bearings and refer to in the future.

3) *Which aspects of the course were most intriguing and relevant for you as an individual? Did you walk away with any new insights, ideas, or project plans?*

1. I learned a lot of new terminology and new ways of looking at books. I look forward to bringing these ideas to my classroom and sharing the knowledge with students.
2. All very useful—paper, printing, binding, illustration processes, collation, and provenance.
3. The workshops were my favorites: printing, composing, description/collation, and provenance were all dulce et utilis! They gave me new ideas about the labor of bookmaking and ways I can help my students build their observational and analytical skills with physical books.
4. Honestly each piece will be useful, to a greater or lesser degree, as I work with and teach with my home collection. I have several ideas for teaching a new generation of book scholars!
5. The numerous examples and hands-on experience really helped with identifying prints and bindings, especially.

6. I am planning an exhibit based on this course. It was all relevant, even collation formulas.
  7. The physical use of the presses was the more useful for me—it helped bring my research to life!
  8. I was most intrigued by the materials on provenance research—it most relates to my personal interests, and many of the reference sources DW shared were new to me. I'm taking home too many insights to name here!
  9. Too many to count—I'm ready to go back to my own institution's collections with fresh eyes.
  10. I especially appreciated the physical and hands-on activities, specifically getting to use the common press and do the typesetting. It's one thing to read about processes and another to experience them firsthand. Seeing the wide variety of bindings and decorations in person and handling them really deepened my knowledge of this area.
  11. The physical description of books' paper, bindings, type, and embellishments (components of a book) was very intriguing. Learning how to write bibliographical description was very interesting. I have too many insights, ideas, and projects I got from this course. I can't fit them all in this small space.
  12. Booksellers and especially binders led to a new interest in/appreciation for difficulty of assembling formats.
  13. The material inspection and close handling of materials, and how they each relate to process was particularly eye opening and connected the concepts from the reading to practical use, solidifying what I learned. I'm brimming with ideas on how to teach to my students.
- 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. DW's a very engaging instructor and clearly very knowledgeable. I definitely feel like I learned a lot from him. He was also approachable and welcoming.
  2. Definitely.
  3. Yes, this was just what I was looking for! In addition to particular skills and facts, I've gotten a “big picture” view of the hand press era that will ground my future study and teaching.
  4. Yes. It also helped me identify which courses I may take in the future, to delve into specific topics more deeply.
  5. Yes, and yes!
  6. It was a privilege to learn from somebody with the knowledge and experience of DW.
  7. Yes, but the most confusing part of the course experience was deciphering the course description and its comparison to the “full” descriptive bibliography course. The explanation online was not especially clear in what each would or would not cover in relation to each other. I chose the right one, but it was tricky!
  8. Yes—absolutely. I successfully wrote collational formula, which was a victory in itself. Between the course material itself and my conversations with other students, I learned more than I expected to.
  9. I wish we had more opportunity for optional practice at collation and provenance workshops, but I know there are separate courses more focused on both of these topics. This course is an excellent overview for knowing better what questions to ask and using which tools to try and answer them.

10. Yes, I really enjoyed DW's presentation, not only for his incredible wisdom and lifetime of expertise, but also for his dry wit and obvious delight in sharing his deep knowledge of the topic.
11. Yes, I acquired all the skills promised. I learned more than I hoped to learn. I have more I wish to explore and expand upon after taking this course.
12. Yes, and yes.
13. Yes! I learned more in five days than I have in years.

5) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*

1. I teach instruction sessions using early printed works, and I hope to use my knowledge to better assist my students in exploring these materials and looking for important details.
2. I plan to use the skills in my teaching and when working with items from our Special Book Collections.
3. I want to practice bibliographical and copy-specific descriptions of books in my own collection. I will design new assignments for my book history students to help them see what's distinctive about hand--press books. I want to do provenance research in connection with a new research project.
4. Teaching with and better cataloging/describing my home collection and potentially others.
5. Through RBS courses, starting with this one, I'm striving toward a clear examination of various copies of about five to six books I use for research. I hope to produce a scholarly edition of one. More immediately I will use information from this course when teaching my early British literature courses.
6. Sharing knowledge about rare books is an integral part of my work. I will put it to use immediately.
7. I will use these skills as I assess and write about printed sources in my dissertation.
8. To enhance my bibliophily; to improve my skills and enjoyment as a collector; perhaps to find my next professional path.
9. In my current job, on a regular basis.
10. I will use both in my personal research as a scholar and as a teacher, particularly in teaching undergraduates using special collections materials.
11. In many ways, through description of books in our collection, making descriptions better, teaching better, and understanding our collections better.
12. Teaching courses in histories of books, reading, &c.
13. I have a lot I would like to take back to my collection, from all that I have learned here. I will certainly teach differently and am much more aware of the tools that I'll need for provenance research.

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

1. Anyone who works with rare books!
2. {no response}

3. Those with some background in bibliography or book history, especially self-taught, who are looking to go deeper and put all the pieces together.
  4. Folks new to bibliography who do not need to catalog/write full descriptive bibliographies, maybe just read them once in a while.
  5. Someone researching early modern European literature.
  6. Curators, catalogers, and scholars of the early modern period.
  7. This course was useful for me as a historian without an extensive background in hand-press era printing. I suspect others would benefit similarly.
  8. I believe this course would be equally beneficial to the enthusiastic amateur, the special collections librarian, or the teacher seeking to educate students in book history.
  9. Special collections librarians who do a fair amount of reference/research/management with hand-press era materials.
  10. Really anyone interested in either an introduction to rare books or alternatively someone like me who works with them but has certain gaps of knowledge to fill in. Great for Ph.D. students or educators wanting to incorporate rare books teaching into courses.
  11. Anyone interested in the physical description of books from the Hand press period. Anyone who wants to understand the physical components of hand-press books.
  12. {no response}
  13. Anyone studying history or involved with rare books in any capacity.
- 7) *If applicable, what were the most original, powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any "aha!" moments you'd like to share?*
1. I enjoyed hearing DW's stories about how bibliographical description is useful (which he shared on the last afternoon). This really crystallized for me why this work is important and what kind of an impact it can make.
  2. {no response}
  3. I realized how craft-period the physical study of books can be, from printing to the present day. I loved getting to set type! I need to do that again.
  4. Format: I get how it works now.
  5. Discovering that I could actively tell the difference between an etching and an engraving!
  6. Setting type in the workshop. Understanding how type was set in the form. Learning about hand-made paper. Also, understanding how much can be learned about the history of each book through different bindings.
  7. After learning all of the book components, being able to see them in books from the RBS collection was very rewarding.
  8. Understanding and then writing a collational formula, after years of seeing them in descriptions, was an "aha."
  9. The optional collation workshop on Thursday was so helpful—it really locked several elements into place. It was worth skipping the bookshops. Do it!
  10. The realization that the same setting of a text could be printed in two different formats, i.e., a text set in octavo but printed on quarto paper for an upscale buyer. I knew binding could serve to show a buyer's status but that the printing format/paper use could too was a revelation.

11. Bibliographical description is valuable information and has high research value and potential. How do we utilize it when working with researchers?
12. The “aha” moment was that collational formulas were quite fun—not what I came in expecting. Loved the chance to set type.
13. The use of the press was a magical moment that really connected the dots for me, same with the paper mold, and the binding examinations. The opportunity to collate was also helpful in seeing our knowledge come to life.

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

1. I'm torn—I found myself wanting more practice with collation (in class rather than on my own evening time) but I also acknowledge that I probably won't be writing many collational formulas anyway. I guess that's what the more advanced RBS courses are for, huh? :)
2. {no response}
3. {private response}
4. The classroom is a little awkward for looking at the examples of books brought out—we need a better way to access them for additional study.
5. I wonder if it would help to scaffold the collation exercises: starting with distinctions of imposition and format, working up from easier to harder collation formulas, and setting signature statements and pagination last. Of course, I don't know how you can do that without more copies of the same book.
6. I don't think I would change anything. I would start working on cloning DW.
7. I wish we could have spent more time doing the printing and typesetting workshops, maybe a full period dedicated to each one.
8. None.
9. Sometimes a microphone. The room has a lot of ambient noise at times, making it harder to hear.
10. I overall feel very happy with the whole experience!
11. None; it is great, and all the amazing examples are great. The course was thorough and well put together; the instructor was wonderful. I only wish it could be a two-week course instead of one, there were areas I wish we could have delved into deeper.
12. {no response}
13. None!

9) *Do you feel that you got your money's worth? How likely are you to recommend this course to others? On a 1-10 scale, 1 would indicate that you disagree that you got your money's worth, 5 would indicate a neutral response, and 10 would indicate that you agree that you got your money's worth.*

1. 10
2. 10
3. 10
4. 10
5. 10
6. 10
7. 10

8. 10
9. 10
10. 10
11. 10. If only the scale allowed a 20+. I will definitely recommend this class to others. The teacher was truly an expert in their field. I learned so much, more than I had hoped to learn.
12. 10
13. 10

10) *If your course made any (virtual) field trips outside of the classroom or had guest speakers, do you feel that they enhanced the course experience?*

1. n/a
2. {no response}
3. Yes, the trip to SC to use the common press was great.
4. Yes—I loved the composition practice with actual type and would have liked more time with that.
5. The trip to the common press and letterpress was great! So, absolutely!
6. The course is packed as it is. I would rather not add any more field trips.
7. The workshops were very useful! The after-hours bibliographical description workshop was a little lackluster—I thought it would include more content/interaction, not just classroom access.
8. Yes, the trip to the printing press/printing office was well worth the time. It was a highlight and helped anchor the material.
9. The print shop/type setting practice was both fun and gave the kind of context you really can't get anywhere else.
10. Our “field trips” were to use the common press and work with typesetting, if those count, and were extremely useful to make the topics “real” through experience.
11. The printing press workshop was amazing! I wish it had been longer it was such a highlight of the class. It made what we were learning real.
12. Typesetting next door—great experience.
13. Absolutely. As I said, working with the printing press and compositing was very helpful.

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

1. Do it! It was a lot of fun and I really feel like I learned a lot and came away with some valuable insights.
2. {no response}
3. Give yourself time to do the reading, but don't freak out about details. The class will reinforce what's important.
4. Yes, do the readings. In advance.
5. Ask DW questions. He's a fountain of knowledge about bibliography.
6. Be ready because this course requires stamina.
7. Oddly, I find RBS physically very tiring. Wear comfortable clothes and drink lots of water—the humidity is killer here!

8. {no response}
9. Absolutely take it, especially if you're not as keen on or need deep practice in writing or collation statements like G-10. This is a sort of goldilocks amount of just right.
10. {no response}
11. Definitely take the class, you won't regret it. Even if you are not sure if it is applicable, its applicability will become apparent once you dive in.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}

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

1. I can't wait to rewatch *The Ninth Gate* now. :P
2. {no response}
3. This place is an intellectual home for me.
4. What an excellent community of folks. I always feel welcomed and valued here. Thanks!
5. I'm sad to leave my new friends, this class, and Charlottesville. It's been idyllic.
6. This course will change/enhance/completely transform your notion of "book history."
7. Very rewarding—many thanks to all who were part of making it happen!
8. This was a transformative experience that exceeded my expectations.
9. Enthralling.
10. This is a welcoming and accessible environment where everyone forms a community for a week with one shared goal: the deep appreciation of the book.
11. RBS never fails to be life changing.
12. What a joy to learn from the best and to be in a room with people from so many different backgrounds and occupations. (P.S. good breakfasts, good coffee.)
13. I never knew just how much meaning resides in the most minute aspects of such an invisible thing as a piece of paper.