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T-60v: The History of Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Typography & Printing
10–14 July, Online Only

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. Extremely.
2. They were very useful. The readings were selected thoughtfully and were very relevant to the course. I can't think of anything to add at present.
3. Great choice of reading, I felt ready to start this course after reading all the required chapters and books.
4. I appreciated the mix of reading and video assignments: some things are best understood and appreciated with one format or the other. No suggestions for additions, but it might be helpful to clarify a schedule of advance reading/viewing so that students will know which assignments pertain specifically to one session. For example: "Read this overview at least one to two weeks prior to the start of the course. View this video between Day One and Day Two in preparation for our special collections visit." If I had attempted to cram all the video viewing into the weeks before the course, I couldn't have retained it all and it wouldn't have made sense. But I wish I had done some of the midweek readings earlier!
5. Yes, the pre-course reading assignments were useful. They provided a strong overview of the history of typography, from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century, and the assigned videos offered great visual cues to put what we read to something practical. I would not change the assigned readings or videos.
6. Pre-course reading list is voluminous could not complete. Fortunately, there was no test.
7. The readings were a thoughtful balance of the technical and historical; Robert Bringhurst's writing style is especially accessible. One book often cited during the course was Rob Roy Kelly, *American Wood Types: 1828-1900*; perhaps it should be on the required reading list. A reference like *Art of the Printed Book, 1455-1955: Masterpieces of Typography Through Five Centuries* from the Morgan Library could be a valuable addition.
8. I think the readings gave helpful context to the class lecture. I was previously familiar with Bringhurst and Lupton from my design studies. The Updike book was a bit of a struggle, only because I had to read it online through HathiTrust and would've appreciated a PDF copy of it (like the Howard reading).
9. I found the pre-course reading assignments very useful. They were a great way to

prepare for the course by getting acquainted with the basics beforehand so that the instructors could teach on a higher level and utilize the class time to the maximum.

10. I would say all the readings were very useful in contextualizing the lectures. The assigned videos were especially helpful in illustrating the type of content covered throughout the week and often made the readings more understandable (seeing some aspects of various printing processes in action can be easier to understand when viewed rather than read about).
11. Yes, all the readings were relevant and useful.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Incredibly helpful, easy-to-read, and insightful. I especially enjoyed reading Bringhurst, as well as the *Crystal Goblet* and *Thinking with Type*. I do wish that the reading list on the RBS website reflected the material on the course syllabus—while there was a little bit of overlap, there was a lot on the reading list that was only in the workbook supplement, not the course syllabus, and all the videos on the syllabus weren't on the reading list. If those two documents could be combined, I would have felt a little less rushed working through all those videos when I got the syllabus the week before the course started.
15. The pre-course reading assignments were critical to allow students to have enough background info to get the most out of the instructors' lectures. It would be great to include more recent type/design history/criticism. I am thinking of books like Russell Marat's *Visionaries and Fanatics*; *Just My Type* by Simon Garfield; *The Anatomy of Type* by Stephen Coles; *The Eternal Letter* by Paul Shaw; *Revival Type* by Paul Shaw; *Typographers on Type* by Ruari Maclean.

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. Yes.
2. Yes, they were very appropriate and useful.
3. The compilation of resources in the workbook was amazing! I will definitely use this workbook in the future.
4. Great workbook: the succinct version of material presented in longer readings. I will keep it and refer to it.
5. Overall, I thought it was useful but sometimes I wish there was some more context to the included diagrams, especially at the beginning of the workbook. I think, though, that this will be a good reference material later on when I need to easily access a reference material.
6. N/A
7. The required reading covered much of the content that was then presented in the

workbook; the videos were extremely valuable as a visual presentation of the readings. The Student Technology Guide could be strengthened. All of the materials will be much used going forward.

8. The workbook is full of illustrations and definitions that were helpful to reference throughout the week. I'm certainly keeping my copy.
9. I thought the workbook and the rest of the teaching materials were very good. The content was very useful, both as an introduction to the subject and as a resource that I can refer back to after the course.
10. I thought the course workbook and all materials distributed and shared during class were very useful. Holding the course over Zoom was also helpful in this respect as classmates, with all of their different professional backgrounds (and from different locations in the world!), could easily share links and other resources in the chat section. I will definitely be saving the workbook for future reference and have already started to dig into the links shared throughout the course week.
11. Yes, the content was appropriate and will continue to be a useful reference post-course.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. I appreciated the illustrations in the workbook, as well as the beginning glossary and the supplemental reading list at the end. Useful as a reference during lectures but I'd argue that the PowerPoint slides will be a more helpful document to return to after this course; the workbook felt more supplementary.
15. The workbook was very useful to show the tools, techniques and vocabulary that were key to understanding what was discussed in the lectures. I also thought the resources (video links) were tremendously useful.

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. It fostered a much deeper appreciation of the subject matter.
2. Both instructors were immensely learned and experienced. Everything they shared with us was rife with insights that will stay with me for the rest of my life. I am very grateful to them for being so generous in sharing their knowledge and inspiring us to delve into the intricacies of typography.
3. I think JK and KR's knowledge of letterpress printing is amazing! I am planning to acquire a Vandercook press in about a year and so I will definitely try to stay in touch for advice.
4. I was hoping this course would help me with scholarly detective work: looking at the end product of a printed object and being able to deduce some things about how and by whom it was designed and made. I definitely feel better equipped to do this with regard to typographic elements.
5. As someone with little knowledge of typography, this course provided me with a good

history of how graphic design has changed from Gutenberg to the late twentieth century. I also learned about how, though typography has changed, there is a lot of continuity from previous typefaces.

6. I learned a lot about typeforms. Also, one teacher used more adjectives than Roget.
7. The virtual tour of the Boston Athenaeum was fantastic; clearly a lot of preparatory work was done to enable such a smooth and informative tour.
8. I enjoyed my classmates' presentations on their typefaces of choice. It highlighted everyone's areas of interest and expertise. I also LOVED the virtual visit and would've liked to have seen more of that or imagine how the professors could coordinate with students who work in special collections to do a collaborative visit to take advantage of the diversity of students in the class.
9. The more theoretical parts were the most relevant to my interests. But I also enjoyed the practical demonstrations. They gave me some ideas on how I could better develop projects currently under consideration.
10. I had a very basic understanding of the history of typography and printing when going into the course but I did not realize quite how layered and extensive it was. I also didn't realize quite how rich the scholarship was in this field and I'm excited to dig into it more with the help of the stepping stones that this course provided.
11. As a typographic neophyte, I gained a good working knowledge of typography and typographic history, and a much better understanding of nineteenth- and twentieth-century printing technology. This will be very useful in my teaching!
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Oh gosh—everything! The terminology alone for typefaces, a sort, and page design would have been enough, but learning about the evolution of printing (and how type evolved with it) gave me context that will help the rest of the knowledge stick. I was worried initially that the student presentations would distract too much/take up too much time compared to instructor-led lessons, but it was great to hear from different voices about different typefaces. I learned way more than I expected to!
15. I really enjoyed the visit to the archives to see primary sources. This was a nice bonus!

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.
2. Yes, absolutely.
3. I learned what I hoped for and more.
4. Yes! I'm so grateful to have been exposed to the expertise of KR and JK. Both of them have a rare combination of practical and deep historical knowledge: as working printers, as aficionados of the art and craft, and as kind humans.
5. Yes, I learned about the general trajectory of typography over the last few centuries and

how context has shaped that trajectory.

6. Yes.
7. It will take me some time to fully absorb all the information that was presented, but that is a pleasure I will now undertake.
8. Yes, though my only disappointment was missing out on hands-on demos. It's not the same watching as it is doing ... but that's the limitation of zoom.
9. Yes, I got out of the course all that was promised and I am very satisfied with the whole experience.
10. KR and JK brought so many insights to class with both of their extensive careers and experience in the field. I certainly learned what I had hoped to and more. They really opened my eyes to a "new" (to me) avenue of publishing history and one that I would love to look into even more.
11. Yes, KR and JK were absolutely wonderful, and provided all the information I could have hoped for. Their insight (and demonstrations) as working printers made what we learned very real, and they both have such wealth of knowledge about printing and typography, and communicated it eloquently, passionately, and perceptively. It was so enjoyable listening to them, and useful.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Without a doubt.
15. Yes. The instructors were really passionate about their topic and that made the learning experience very enjoyable.

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

1. Absolutely.
2. I am interested in the history and aesthetics of typography. I will use these skills and knowledge to probe the print cultures of South Asia and the Middle East.
3. I am a young letterpress printer, I love hand-setting and composing type and like JK said, I'll help in the next generation's watch to preserve this amazing art. I am also a high school teacher and I hope to pass on my passion for letterpress to the next generations.
4. Ongoing scholarly research.
5. I plan to apply my new skills and knowledge toward finishing my doctoral dissertation.
6. Ego inflation.
7. In addition to broadening and enriching my perspective of the world of books, the course will help me become a more discriminating and informed book collector.
8. I hope to do more research using the holdings at my library and pairing it with the study of artists' books.
9. I plan to use both theoretical and more practical knowledge to further my relevant work: recognize and describe letterpress-printed books, work on collaborations with

printing museums and help design books we expect to publish.

10. I've been increasingly more involved in the production of the publications where I work and I hope to carry over a lot of what I learned last week into my day-to-day tasks especially regarding the histories of various typefaces. I'm hoping to continue to read up on the literature that is available to better my ability to recognize certain typefaces and learn more about their histories so that I can be more thoughtful when designing pages or selecting a typeface to use in a project (which had been one of my main goals prior to taking the course).
11. I teach sessions on various aspects of book history to classes visiting our Archives and Special Collections. What I've learned in this course will greatly help me explain, contextualize, and use our nineteenth- and twentieth-century books.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. My manuscript editing work will be all the stronger for this course; I'm a bit more tempted to buy good letterpress printing anytime I see it; and my comments on page design and typeface selections for the books I consult on are so much more informed after taking this course.
15. I will use some of the course content as inspiration in my own work and also as content that I will cover in my own classes with graphic design students.

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

1. Librarians, artists.
2. Everyone.
3. I would say anyone that loves letterpress and typography would benefit from this course. Printmakers and rare book librarians definitely.
4. I was surprised there weren't more graduate students and early career scholars in the course. It is vital to understanding the history of the book!
5. I feel those who might benefit most from this course are those interested in the history of graphic design, especially those interested in learning how letterforms have changed within print culture.
6. Nerdy people with this specialty interest.
7. The course is accessible to students with all levels of book familiarity. Despite not being an academic or in the profession, I felt welcomed and embraced by the instructors and other students.
8. People who are new or unfamiliar with the history of printing and letterpress, people who enjoy type and want to understand the terminology better. People who want to get better at identifying the differences between types.
9. This course, due to its subject, could benefit a wide variety of people. I would mostly recommend it to library curators and catalogers, book designers and editors, and anyone interested in the history of the printed books.

10. I think anyone who works on making books or with books would gain a lot from this course. Having a foundation of how print books started out and all that was involved in getting the printed word onto the page is so helpful to take with you into a modern context. If you work in InDesign, having a better understanding of typefaces and their development will be so useful to how you approach your work. I believe those who work in history, libraries and/or archives, and publishing would all benefit from the course as well—anyone interested in deepening their knowledge about design and book history will take away something valuable.
11. Anyone with a reason for seeking to learn more about nineteenth- and twentieth-century typography and printing really: educators, letterpress printers, graphic designers, book sellers, &c. We had the full gamut in attendance in our class.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Anyone! I don't think the course description did justice to the phenomenal overview that KR and JK gave us about the history of printing and type design. The course was more comprehensive than the name suggests. People interested in graphic design, page layouts, and (of course) typefaces will gain tons of knowledge—in context!—that's directly applicable to their work. I'm an editor, the only corporate stooge of the cohort, but we had antiquarian booksellers, graphic designers, newsletter editors, printers, professors, and librarians. I know we all took something away from this course that will impact our thinking for quite some time.
15. It is beneficial as back for practicing graphic designers and instructors of typography and design.

7) *If applicable, what were the most powerful, or otherwise noteworthy educational moments in the course? Were there any "aha!" moments you'd like to share?*

1. Finally understanding the complexity of letterpress through its history.
2. Too many to count.
3. I am a total fan of JK's quotes!
4. An appreciation of the linotype and monotype machines and the people who designed and used them. The history of red type in printing and the etymology of "rubrication." The way we're still rehashing the old beefs of the Moderns against the Victorians. :-)
5. {no response}
6. Nope.
7. The hands-on demonstration using the Vandercook press, with the crafting of the broadside, was a great diversion.
8. JK said so many amazing things throughout the week ... but his care for the field and insights from a life spent working with type and letterpress really shined through. KR sharing her home studio with us was also a delight.
9. Not "aha!" moments as such, but a better understanding, during the week, both of the

many innovations in printing design and the continuous presence and transference of traditional elements.

10. Over the week, I was continuously blown away at how complicated letterpress printing is. I had a cursory understanding of it before and knew it was extremely involved compared to the processes and resources we have at our disposal today, but seeing just how involved and skilled this art form is made me appreciate books even more (and I didn't think that was possible). It really is amazing how printing technology developed and allowed books and reading to be so much more accessible to people around the world. I also got a much deeper understanding of publishing vocabulary that I have used over the years without really knowing the background of where these terms came from (such as "leading"—I've used the term for several years, mostly in the context of InDesign, but didn't know it derived from the actual lead material that was used to add space in between lines of text!) and was introduced to a large set of new vocabulary terms to use going forward.
11. The printing demonstrations were very effective at bringing what we'd talked about in abstract to life, as JK and KR explained how they print and solve issues that come up. The virtual visit to the Boston Athenaeum was also excellent—so wonderful to see actual examples of historical typefaces, in some splendid books. By the way, KR's use of two video feeds was excellent—being able to see the instructors speaking while also seeing books or the press on the second video feed was great. Very seamless—I've been inspired to try something similar in my online teaching.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. I'd like to say how grateful I am for the thought that KR and JK put into designing this course—I appreciated how many different pedagogies they used (a couple lectures, but also printing demonstrations, Q&As, visits to the archives, and student-led presentations). I was absolutely never bored in this course, and frankly wished it was longer! This is the best online course—and the most engaging RBS course—I've ever taken. Frankly, I might take it again, I enjoyed it so much.
15. Seeing the letterpress demo and understanding how to create the second color and have it register properly was tremendously helpful.

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

1. {no response}
2. This is already perfect.
3. I loved this course!
4. {private response}
5. {no response}
6. No.
7. {no response}

8. {no response}
9. No.
10. {no response}
11. No, the mix of lectures, demonstrations, and student presentations kept things lively, and I feel I got my full tuition's worth.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Give us more! Given how thoughtfully JK and KR delivered the course, I would have happily (and wanted to) spend more time with them and with this material.
15. I thought there was a nice balance of the length of class time and the material covered. I really enjoyed the student presentations on typefaces. It broadened the perspective and added variety to the content.

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. 8
6. 9
7. 9
8. 8
9. 10
10. 10
11. 10
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. 10
15. 10

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

1. {no response}
2. Yes, absolutely.
3. Amazing visit to KR's printing shop. We got to see her beautiful Vandercook press, Universal 1, in action.

4. Great virtual visit to the Boston Athenaeum—almost better than IRL in many ways, since we could get such close-up views of items. Also appreciated the hands-on printing demonstration.
5. Yes. I think the camera setups for the virtual visits to special collections were excellent! I felt like I was there in person!
6. Boston Athenaeum woo hoo!
7. Yes, see Boston Athenaeum, above.
8. That's the best part about RBS ... the field trips. Keep them!!
9. Yes, the virtual visit was great and gave as thorough an overview of the history of Western and American printing as time permitted.
10. The visit to the Boston Athenaeum was wonderful—it was very exciting to "visit" another institution's special collections and it was something that wouldn't have been possible if the class hadn't been virtual. And seeing KR's press in action at her home studio was a great perk as well—both fun to see and instructive.
11. Yes, the Athenaeum trip was excellent, and the comments by its director a useful addition to JK and KR's commentary.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. These were a crucial component (but by no means the only) of the course's success. Our visit to the Boston Athenaeum allowed us to see different faces in context, and the demo cameras gave us a closer view than we may have had as a large group in person. Similarly, seeing KR's home and Wellesley College studios, and how she printed in each, as well as how type was cast in the handheld machine, gave invaluable context to our readings and the slide lectures.
15. The visit to the special collections library on the second day of class was really exciting and inspiring.

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

1. {no response}
2. Everyone should take this course.
3. Definitely read the books before the first class, it helped me a lot with terminology.
4. {no response}
5. No.
6. No.
7. {no response}
8. {no response}
9. Study the preparatory materials beforehand and make sure to enjoy the course itself.
10. If offered virtually again, I would recommend taking the full week off if possible, as the readings and homework can take a considerable amount of time outside of class.

They're of course worth the time investment, but it can be tricky to manage and fit everything in if you decide to work around the class hours like I did. (However, this was my first RBS course as well so perhaps I would have known better if I wasn't a first timer! I wasn't quite sure what to expect from a RBS course let alone a virtual one at that.)

11. If you like typography or letterpress printing, expect to have fun! And learn a lot.
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. This is a foundational (dare I say, required) course for anyone interested in books—post-incunabula and beyond. It's never dry and includes startlingly practical insights. I cannot recommend this course enough!
15. This is well worth the cost. The online version allows for participation for those who can't afford the time and expense of travel. Please continue to offer online courses in the future!

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

1. I thought the two professors complemented each other wonderfully. Fantastic course.
2. Profound and inspiring.
3. My experience was as memorable as this quote by Bringhurst: "Well-chosen words deserve well-chosen letters; these in their turn deserve to be set with affection, intelligence, knowledge and skill."
4. I shot the serif?
5. T-60v is a great course in learning how typography changes but maintains continuity with the past.
6. Nerd heaven.
7. Oh to be among fellow bibliophiles!
8. This course demonstrates that the hand of tradition can be a living hand ... and it's important to pass that knowledge on so that this art and craft, so central to book history, can continue to live.
9. Great experience, hopefully I'll get a chance to do it again.
10. An enlightening experience that has sparked motivation to dig deeper into the history of book design and book history in general.
11. {no response}
12. {no response}
13. {no response}
14. Encore!
15. RBS online / An intriguing book beckons / Serene letterforms.