

Terry Belanger
I-20: Book Illustration Processes to 1900
7–12 June 2015

Narrative Course Evaluations

1) *Were the pre-course reading assignments useful? Did you do any additional preparation for your course? Are there any books or articles that you would like to see included in future years? Any that you might suggest removing?*

1. Yes, quite. Gascoigne won't keep you on the edge of your seat, but it certainly helped coming in having read it. I also used our collections at work as study preparation before arriving.
2. Reading was very useful, although I wish I'd had time to read the *History of Printing* book cover to cover. Gascoigne is great, but one reason I wanted to take this class was because the illustrations don't convey some characteristics.
3. Pre-course reading was perfect. Be sure to read.
4. Pre-course reading was very useful. Look at some examples from the course books that were in our collections.
5. Essential. Gascoigne is constantly used throughout the class.
6. Yes. The course is based on Gascoigne, so that book is essential.
7. It's essential to complete the pre-course readings. I would have been lost if I hadn't read Gascoigne.
8. The Gascoigne was invaluable! Best to start reading it well before the course, and to read it in small chunks—too much at once is hard to absorb.
9. Yes—thought TB might consider sending us a few links to useful videos on processes that he thinks are worthwhile, as included in the workbook.
10. Gascoigne is excellent for learning to identify prints, but it is frustrating how few/poor the illustrations are, and how little insight he provides about methodology.
11. {not available}

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 materials distributed in class accented the packets quite well (too bad we can't take those home!). I will certainly be using my notes and his reading lists in order to further my print identification education.
2. Workbook was very useful during class, and eliminated the need to frantically jot down references. It will continue to be useful, particularly the "Exit Reading" list.
3. Workbook doubled as a notebook, and will be referred to in the future.
4. The list of course packets and the extensive bibliographies will provide years of further learning.
5. Useful during class. The exit reading list should prove invaluable for further study.
6. Yes. I took lots of notes keyed to the workbook. I plan to refer to both in the future.

7. The course workbook was very useful—especially the timeline. The bibliography is also excellent, and will definitely be used to acquire some references for my library.
8. Yes. I will continue to use my workbook and the copious notes I took during class. The packets provided during class were fabulous—I only wish I had a way to take replicas back with me.
9. The packets are an excellent system—the workbook is quite useful.
10. It would be great to include some thumbnails to go along with the “playlist,” so we can recall them after the course.
11. {not available}

3) *If you've taken previous RBS courses, how did this one compare?*

1. {no response}
2. I enjoyed this as much as I enjoyed “Visual Materials Cataloging” with Helena Zinkham, which is to say immensely.
3. Each course has been unique, so this one was as good as the others.
4. They have all been good. This was the *best*. Truly inspirational.
5. N/A
6. N/A—this is my first class.
7. Both courses I've taken were excellent. Each taught exactly what each proposed to do.
8. N/A
9. Hard to compare—perhaps as many physical examples, but improved because we each had our own example in so many instances, rather than passing just one.
10. I took “Desbib” before, and I found this course much more pedagogical.
11. {not available}

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

1. When I took my first history of art class, our study materials consisted of cut-outs from Janson's *History of Art*. I was in awe the first time I visited the Met. TB has brought the Met to RBS. I am excited to look through our collections with new eyes—as well as take some printmaking courses!
2. Actually getting to do several processes was hugely useful in understanding them. One process I would have liked to do or to have seen is Litho. I'm sure I would have a better understanding if I had.
3. Seeing actual examples, and having details explained was most helpful. I plan to re-look at all the prints on my walls.
4. It was all interesting and relevant, but I particularly enjoyed learning about nineteenth-century American periodicals, and how they were illustrated.
5. Provided an excellent start for practical self-study afterwards.
6. It was most useful to see examples of the various illustration processes. I loved the packets, and appreciate the doggedness (or perhaps obsessiveness) that was required to assemble them.
7. I'm walking away with a new plan of attack for looking at prints I need to identify. TB explaining how to study prints was extremely useful.
8. Pre-1800 printing processes were most essential to my research. I leave here better equipped to work with materials important to my dissertation. I only wish I had

- taken this course earlier in my graduate career.
9. Almost everything was interesting and relevant.
 10. Learning the vocabulary of prints, and how to use microscopy to discern it.
 11. {not available}
- 5) *Did the instructors help you to acquire all the skills and information promised in the course description? Was anything left out or undeveloped? Did you learn what you had hoped to learn?*
1. The course exceeded all expectations—I only wish there was more time to look at some of the packets he has put together. They have been incredibly helpful in understanding the different printing processes.
 2. Yes; no; yes.
 3. There were many suggestions for further research into all of the print processes covered in the class. The class did all it promised to do in helping to identify prints and print processes.
 4. Mostly I learned how much more there is to learn, but I was humbly inspired to keep reading about book illustration, and to learn more about the collections with which I work.
 5. TB was great. Given the amount of information we covered, his calm, measured teaching style helped me stay focused. And frequent stories about RBS and/or donation sources proved useful breaks when we needed a breather.
 6. Yes.
 7. Yes—across the board.
 8. Absolutely. TB explained concepts so clearly, and was very good in responding to questions we had. Also, the lab components of the class were fantastic—they really clarified a lot about the processes we were discussing.
 9. I would have liked more time with various color processes and hand coloring, but that's entirely my own research agenda.
 10. I learned exactly what I came here to learn.
 11. {not available}
- 6) *How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge acquired during your time here?*
1. I can use them directly in identifying materials I work with in collections. I also hope to use them in teaching others about the prints in our collections. Finally, I hope to continue making prints.
 2. I hope to add process identification of prints to a longer class including process identification of photographs. (I already teach the latter.)
 3. What I learned will assist in my work.
 4. I will be re-reading Gascoigne, and it will be a part of my class preparations in the future.
 5. To better identify and explain visual materials in my day job.
 6. I work on Victorian print culture, so I plan to use the skills and knowledge in my research and teaching.
 7. To identify prints in my institution's collection.
 8. To assist me in my dissertation research, part of which involves eighteenth-century illustrated materials.
 9. In my research and teaching.

10. I will use them daily to describe/catalog antiquarian books/prints.
11. {not available}

7) *Please briefly describe the intellectual level of the course. What sort of person might benefit the most from taking it?*

1. I think anyone who is willing to put the time in can benefit. I don't think it's about intellect—it is more helpful to have a genuine interest/curiosity about the subject.
2. Between intro-level (no knowledge) and intermediate (some knowledge). This class is as useful to people studying art as to those studying books. I would highly recommend this class to anyone archiving and/or cataloging visual materials.
3. {no response}
4. The course is demanding, it has a lot of material to master, but it is a challenge all new special collections librarians should take.
5. Anyone with a serious interest in the subject should benefit. If you don't know, try reading some of Gascoigne and see if the puzzle interests you.
6. The intellectual level was appropriate!
7. You need to be able to keep up—we go through a lot of examples. I think many individuals who work with prints could benefit from taking the course.
8. This course is rigorous and fast paced, covering a lot of territory in a relatively short period of time. That being said, TB was very good at answering questions and making clarifications when we had questions.
9. I see the appeal for dealers and rare book librarians, who see a wide variety of material often—perhaps also particularly good for nineteenth-century specialists. Not a lot of critical engagement about what a process might *mean*, or how it means, but enough, I think, given the objectives of the course.
10. One must have a strong eye and good memory in this course. The data-rich environment may be draining for an amateur.
11. {not available}

8) *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. See Q2, above. There is *nothing* like working with the real thing—and TB has clearly spent a lot of time putting the materials together. You will never get the chance to take a class like this anywhere else. Having the class make prints was also a valuable experience.
2. Too many to count. One of the best aspects of this class, aside from TB's insights and accounts, is getting to look at lots of prints of specific processes. It was *so* helpful to have TB point out key characteristics mentioned in Gascoigne, but which are not really visible in that book's illustrations.
3. Seeing each print and having it described was an “aha” moment. Completely different from reading a description in a book.
4. The entire week was an “aha” moment.
5. Gascoigne doesn't provide much about how or why each process was used or needed. TB's explanations put the processes in context, which, when I finally internalize it, will be very useful.
6. I loved making the etching, dry-point, and “wood” {linoleum} block print. The

- hands-on practice gave me a much clearer sense of how illustrations are made.
7. {no response}
 8. The labs! They were so wonderful. Also, just seeing so many original examples of the processes we discussed—seeing my first mezzotint, first Audubon, &c., was very powerful (and instructive).
 9. The labs were very useful for me, and perhaps more so because we did three kinds of prints, which makes comparison possible.
 10. Producing a counterproof! There is no way to understand the process from a written description, but now that I've made one, I do.
 11. {not available}

9) *How could the course have been improved?*

1. Could you make it a two-week course?
2. Add an additional week for twentieth- and twenty-first-century prints.
3. Slightly more time for questions.
4. This course can only be improved by more gifts to RBS and more eBay successes to add to the stellar course packets.
5. For me, time spent on a decision matrix that will help a viewer decide, when examining a print, what processes can be eliminated (or not). The hard part is we cover so much that these approaches can't easily be done until late.
6. N/A—why quibble?
7. I enjoyed the course immensely, and don't know how it could be improved.
8. To me, it was perfect as is.
9. It is no doubt a fairly fixed system, but I would have preferred to speed through woodcut and wood engraving a bit faster the first day, leaving more time to look at more color examples and photographically assisted processes at the end.
10. N/A
11. {not available}

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

1. Since I won a fellowship, I can't honestly say "yes." But I would absolutely recommend the class.
2. Yes. Absolutely!
3. I would recommend this course to anyone interested in the subject, and I will.
4. Yes. I recommend this course to all book people. It was privilege, a great privilege, to take this course.
5. Very much so. Highly recommended.
6. Yes, and yes.
7. Yes, and yes.
8. Yes, and yes!
9. Yes.
10. Absolutely.
11. {not available}

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

1. {no response}
2. N/A
3. N/A
4. {no response}
5. Yes. Print shop was great.
6. N/A
7. N/A
8. N/A
9. N/A, but I loved the labs.
10. N/A
11. {not available}

12) *If you attended any of our optional evening events, do you feel that they were a good use of your time? Were there any that were particularly important to your RBS experience? Any that you could have done without?*

1. Honestly, I wasn't too excited about these speakers—although some of those listed later in the summer I'm sorry to miss.
2. I attended the building tour of SC, but I did not find it especially good; it was too short, and not very enlightening.
3. N/A
4. {no response}
5. They weren't useful to me professionally, but were in an overall book "ecosystem" sort of way.
6. I thought the first lecture was weak, but otherwise, all events were a good use of time, intellectually or socially.
7. I attended both lectures and Booksellers' Night. The Tuesday evening lecture was interesting, but neither was terribly memorable.
8. The lectures and exhibit tour were all interesting. I felt like the lecturers could perhaps be reminded that the audience is quite varied, and to explain acronyms, trade term/jargon, &c., they were using, but this is relatively minor point.
9. {Private response}
10. The two lectures covered material from roughly the same time period and language—I would have appreciated more diversity.
11. {not available}

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

1. *Do it.* It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.
2. It is essential to read Gascoigne in advance, I would have been completely at sea had I not.
3. This class has the added value of learning book history *and* RBS history. TB's many anecdotes about RBS make you appreciate, all the more, the exceptional experience you're having.
4. {no response}
5. Read Gascoigne. Then read it again. I'll read it again now that class is done, and it will make even more sense.

6. Think of RBS as adult summer camp for folks who like books.
7. Take it! The time spent making etchings and linocuts is very useful, and was invaluable to this visual learner.
8. Take it!
9. Take preparation seriously, and definitely apply if your work would benefit.
10. Bring a sweater to class, read the “Differences” portion of Gascoigne *several* times.
11. {not available}

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

1. What a privilege.
2. A fabulous educational vacation.
3. I learned things that can't be taught anywhere else.
4. Had I but world enough, and time...
5. RBS will help re-invigorate your love of books, and help you make new friends along the way!
6. Lovely.
7. Wonderfully exhausting; satisfyingly spent.
8. Simply wonderful—I hope to come back soon.
9. Exhausting, but wonderful.
10. It was more fun than my wedding.
11. {not available}

Student Data

Number of respondents: 11 (of 11)

How did you arrange for time off to attend this course?

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 6 (54.55%)

I am self employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 2 (18.18%)

I am a student/non-year-round employee, with a more flexible schedule: 3 (27.27%)

Who paid your RBS tuition costs?

My institution/employer paid 100%: 6 (54.55%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (9.09%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 3 (27.27%)

I exchanged goods or services in lieu of tuition: 1 (9.09%)

Who paid your RBS housing expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 5 (45.45%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (18.18%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (9.09%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (9.09%)

I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 1 (9.09%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 1 (9.09%)

Who paid your RBS travel expenses?

I paid 100% myself: 5 (45.45%)

My institution/employer paid 100%: 2 (18.18%)

My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 1 (9.09%)

I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (9.09%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 2 (18.18%)

*Which of the following **best** describes your current occupation?*

Library disciplines:

Archivist: 1 (9.09%)

Curator: 1 (9.09%)

Library assistant/clerk: 1 (9.09%)

Special collections librarian: 2 (18.18%)

Student working toward a/n:

Ph.D./D.Phil: 2 (18.18%)

Professional educator:

Associate professor: 1 (9.09%)

Book trades:

Antiquarian bookseller: 3 (27.27%)