

Tony White  
H-155: The History of Artists' Books since 1950  
23–28 June 2019

**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, but more on book binding, structural resources, or historical narratives would have been useful. More resources on books related to people of color.
  2. Useful, but wish they were referenced directly in class more often.
  3. Very useful.
  4. Yes—more on individual book artists would be useful.
  5. They were useful. A number of them were difficult to obtain through ILL, so having the updated list earlier would have been helpful.
  6. Yes, and they will be helpful after the fact after some of the discoveries we've had in class.
  7. Very useful. {private response} It was very generous of TW to make them available as PDFs.
  8. Extremely useful. I knew very little about this era/movement of artist publications, and the reading provided me an excellent foundation of knowledge.
  9. Readings were very helpful and doable. I was very grateful to get them in electronic format through Dropbox so I didn't have to go searching.
  10. I would've liked more readings. We got a lot dealing with artist books from the sixties and seventies, which was great, but I would have liked more about the eighties, nineties, and two thousands as well.
  11. Yes, readings were helpful—can compile and provide a list of additional sources for possible future inclusion.
  12. Yes they were helpful. I would love for the readings to be updated as more people engage in the discourse about artists' books. TW seems to be very passionate about the field, so I don't doubt that he'll do that.
  13. I found the reading assignments very helpful, and I appreciate the inclusion of additional optional/suggested readings rather than one long reading list—this helped me focus my time while also providing broad resources.
  
- 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. Definitely will be a resource I return to and build on. Fantastic foundation for a professional working with artist publications.
  2. {No response.}
  3. The workbook will be useful in the future. It would be helpful to have the pages numbered (and possibly the books).
  4. It was good.
  5. The content was useful, but there were some inconsistencies in the times of class

- sessions in the various class schedules. An alphabetical as well as chronological listing would be useful for post-class use.
6. The list of books was helpful, and will continue to inform me in terms of potential acquisitions, &c. Some extra space for writing comments around the titles would have been somewhat more helpful.
  7. List of books in workbook could be better arranged. List will get me to add to my personal collection.
  8. The workbook was useful. I understand that the list of books needed to be published far in advance so there were added objects—I think the trade-off of not having everything on the list was worth it. And yes, I will definitely use the list for collection purposes.
  9. The workbook gave us the list of the many books we saw, which was really important to the flow of the class and for my note-taking.
  10. Absolutely, although, there were many books added to the course that weren't in the workbook.
  11. If list does not follow the trajectory of class, perhaps organize by theme.
  12. Yes. Course workbooks included useful information that allowed me to listen better instead of rushing to write everything down.
  13. The workbook was a helpful reference during class, and I will continue to refer to it.

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 plan on applying my new knowledge and expertise to building up our collections, formalizing our collection development policy, and enhancing my instruction. I also plan on researching race and gender in artist books.
2. {No response.}
3. This course will be helpful in completing my degree, thinking about future employment, and creating projects and papers.
4. I'm still processing.
5. Better insight into the history and context of artists' books will help me provide better, more accurate descriptions. I also have some new ideas about better processing of workflows.
6. The course will help inform some of the acquisitions decisions I will be making, but will also help me when teaching seminars on artist books. I definitely want to do some more professional writing in this area, and this course has given me some ideas of topics to explore.
7. Start collecting more aggressively! Aha—I need those books!! Projects: get more shelving.
8. Collection development, instruction, outreach, conservation/preservation, cataloging.
9. I hope to publish about artist books myself, and I was also inspired with ways to teach with them.
10. This course has helped me understand my institution's own artists' book collection in much greater depth. I feel more confident making collection development decisions.
11. To broaden my knowledge of this area.

12. Yes! More collaborative projects with my colleagues in the art library and special collections in my home institutions. Ideas for several papers. TW is passionate, humble, and very encouraging in getting us to publish on what we care about.
13. I will use this knowledge in my work acquiring, caring for, and teaching with artists' books. I am leaving with so many ideas I can't wait to delve into further.

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, but more on instruction, collection development, historical narrative, and diversity (POC, Queer, &c.) in book history would have been great.
2. I hoped for more history and context—art historical, social, and conceptual.
3. Yes! This course approached the topic in a new and critical way that I very much appreciated.
4. See 4.3
5. Yes.
6. Yes, and yes.
7. I learned what I like and not like in the field of artists' books.
8. Yes, I learned so much! I think it would have been helpful to have more historical connections between viewings, but I also understand that these gaps are opportunities for research. However, maybe that could be more explicitly stated?
9. {private response}
10. Yes.
11. Yes, the instructor broadened my knowledge extensively on offset printers and artist books and contemporary sources.
12. I would have liked to learn more on collection development practices and challenges. I feel more confident in my general knowledge of the history of artists' books in the US, and I have a good foundation to build off of to learn more.
13. Yes—I did learn what I hoped to learn. I found TW to be very approachable with questions about particular aspects we wanted to learn about, and he's very knowledgeable and enthusiastic.

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

1. More time on collection development and conservation. More inclusion of POC voices and international artist books. More information on description and cataloging.
2. I would have preferred to see fewer books, to get a chance to examine them more thoroughly, and to engage in more discussion about them.
3. A workbook that reflects the arc of the class better, but otherwise it was wonderful, well-paced, and had just enough variety.
4. More collections development!
5. {No response.}
6. Perhaps weaving in more of the issues (acquisitions, collections development) through the week (and generating some group discussion) would have been more helpful, rather than leaving it to the last few hours of the last day.
7. {No response.}

8. None. The course was excellent. High points were the trip to MoMA and the risograph printing outing.
9. N/A
10. A list of cheap lunch places would've been nice. The metro cards were confusing.
11. Develop and concretize larger themes—sometimes jumped too much back and forth.
12. I would have loved to have more discussions. The materials we got to see up close were incredible, no doubt. But I think many students would appreciate having more space for discussion and questions and if that means shortening the list of artists' books we see, then that's okay.
13. I think the information about collections development, conservation, &c.—things many of us in the room were very interested in—could possibly have been more interwoven rather than given time at the end of the week. Also I sometimes felt that looking at so many books made me lose sight of the overarching trends, styles, &c. we were observing. {private response}

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

1. Curators, Instruction librarians, educators, catalogers, collectors.
2. Art librarians.
3. Students, library professionals unfamiliar with the subject.
4. Other librarians, artists, students.
5. Art librarians and curators.
6. Anybody with an interest in artist books.
7. {No response.}
8. Anyone interested in artist publications.
9. Anyone! I learned so much. I appreciate RBS courses in the twentieth and twenty-first-century period, and it felt like this genre is a really important development to know about.
10. People with modern and contemporary artist books in their collection.
11. {No response.}
12. Librarians, cataloguers, MFA and PhD students, MLIS/MLS students, collectors.
13. Librarians who work with artists' books, collectors, makers interested in the history of the medium.

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

1. Yes. Great instructor who cultivated our individual passions and encouraged discussion and critical reflection. I appreciated his willingness to accept feedback and criticism.
2. Yes and yes.
3. Yes, absolutely!
4. The cost was high, maybe too high.
5. Would recommend to others, but the overall cost is quite high, and I was only able to attend because I can afford to pay part of the cost myself.
6. Yes on money's worth. And yes on recommending (I've already suggested to a

- colleague that she should take it next year.)
7. Well worth the tuition. Yes, many younger special collections librarians should take this course.
  8. Absolutely. Yes
  9. Yes! TW is brilliant, knowledgeable, kind, and clearly put so much effort into making this a great class for us. He's an excellent teacher.
  10. Yes on both accounts.
  11. Yes.
  12. If you had asked me this question on Tuesday, I would've said no. BUT, by the end of the week I had a much better learning experience. The Riso shop visit was fantastic. Other than that, the rest of the course is NOT hands-on. So take that into consideration.
  13. Yes, I do, and I would recommend the class to anyone who finds the course description compelling.
- 8) *If your course made any trips outside of the classroom, do you feel that they were time well spent?*
1. Field trips and practicum were great! Made the course more memorable and profound. Loved the RISO workshop.
  2. Yes! MoMA was wonderful.
  3. Yes! All the visits were wonderful and added a lot to the class.
  4. Yes!
  5. Yes, definitely. They helped to provide different perspectives on the topic, as well as break up the day.
  6. Trip to the printmaking studio to make a risograph machine was one of the highlights. Please keep that part of the course intact!
  7. Yes, the visit to Blackburn studio was worthwhile. A visit to the Center for Book Arts would have been more valuable to the students than the visit to MoMA.
  8. Yes, see 4.5
  9. The trip to make a risograph zine was a huge highlight. Amazing to get behind the scenes—and really fun!
  10. Yes. All were superb. The Riso zine-making was highly beneficial. I had been wanting to learn the process.
  11. Yes.
  12. {No response.}
  13. Yes—in particular our trip to the printmaking studio to make a collaborative zine was both a lot of fun and very instructive about how artists are making work today.
- 9) *Do you have any additional thoughts or advice for anyone considering taking this course in a future year?*
1. Do the readings! You'll get more out of it. Check out/research materials at your own institution before arrival.
  2. {No response.}
  3. TW is a wonderful and engaging instructor and this is one of the best RBS courses I've taken!! It approaches the subject from a perspective that is different and

- refreshing and much needed in the book world.
4. {No response.}
  5. {No response.}
  6. It helps to bring some knowledge of books into the class, although the readings do help. And come in with an open mind when thinking about “what is an artist book?”
  7. As this course is offered in NYC—necessitating a visit to CBA—not even putting CBA’s street address on the syllabus really short-changes the students.
  8. {No response.}
  9. N/A
  10. Make sure to pack tennis shoes. My comfortable flats were not nearly as comfortable as I thought.
  11. Browse non-required readings before attending.
  12. Definitely do the required readings.
  13. Take the class and do the advance reading!

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

1. Empowering, inspirational, foundational.
2. So much to take in!
3. {No response.}
4. Engaging and illuminating.
5. A wonderful, welcoming community of librarians, practitioners, and scholars.
6. Everything bagel.
7. It is going to make me go down the rabbit hole of collecting.
8. Inspirational time I will never forget. I never in my life thought I could have such an experience.
9. RBS supports and quenches my curiosity!
10. I’ll be back!
11. Insightful and enriching.
12. TW is a lovely person. I appreciated his humility as a professor. I would love for him to continue teaching this course at RBS and get the support that he needs. RBS needs more courses like this.
13. This class was enlightening and empowering.

## **Student Data**

*Number of respondents: 13 (of 13)*

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

My institution/employer gave me professional leave time: 8 (61.54%)

I am self-employed, and can arrange my own schedule: 1 (7.69%)

I am a student or non-year-round employee, with a more flexible summer schedule: 2 (15.38%)

My situation does not fit any of the options above: 2 (15.38%)

*Who paid your RBS tuition costs?*

I paid 100% myself: 4 (30.77%)  
My institution/employer paid 100%: 4 (30.77%)  
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 2 (15.38%)  
I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive 100%: 2 (15.38%)  
I used a scholarship/fellowship to pay/waive part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)

*Who paid your RBS housing expenses?*

I paid 100% myself: 3 (23.08%)  
My institution/employer paid 100%: 4 (30.77%)  
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover 100%: 1 (7.69%)  
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)  
I stayed with friends/family, or stayed in my own home and commuted: 4

*Who paid your RBS travel expenses?*

I paid 100% myself: 5 (38.46%)  
My institution/employer paid 100%: 4 (30.77%)  
My institution/employer paid part; I paid the rest: 2 (15.38%)  
I used a scholarship/fellowship to cover part; I paid the rest: 1 (7.69%)  
I live locally, and had no travel expenses: 1 (7.69%)

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

**Library disciplines:**

Archivist: 1 (7.69%)  
Cataloger/metadata librarian: 2 (15.38%)  
Curator: 1 (7.69%)  
Public services librarian: 2 (15.38%)  
Subject specialist/bibliographer: 2 (15.38%)  
Other: 1 (7.69%)

**Student working toward a/n:**

M.F.A.: 1 (7.69%)  
M.L.I.S./M.L.S.: 1 (7.69%)  
Ph.D./D.Phil: 1 (7.69%)

**Other occupations/vocations:**

Other: 1 (7.69%)