

University of Toronto Faculty of Information

BKS1001H: Introduction to Book History and Print Culture (Fall 2020)

Time: Mondays, 2:00AM-5:00PM

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Office hours: By appointment, via video or call



COURSE SYLLABUS

Course description: As the foundational course for the BHPC specialization, this course will introduce students to basic topics such as the semiotics of the book; orality and writing systems; book production from manuscript to the latest computer technology; the development of printing; the concept of authorship; copyright; censorship; the economics of book production and distribution; libraries and the organization of information; principles of bibliographical description; print in other formats (newspapers, magazines, advertisements, etc.); reading and readership; editorial theory and practice. We will also study many artifacts and tools of the trade in situ through visits

Students who have successfully completed the course will be able to:

- situate book history studies within its interdisciplinary academic disciplines and apply several theoretical frameworks to investigate the book as a movable and mutable object;
- understand the historical and technological development of the book;
- describe the material book using the conventions of descriptive bibliography;
- competently explore and assess archival materials to identify potential research opportunities;
- locate the commodified book at the centre of a socio-political economic system of production, distribution, and consumption.

Course Format and Schedule: The class will meet for three hours each week, both online and in-person. The format of the course will consist of short lectures, in-class activities, and seminar-style discussions. Students are required to join every class and be prepared to participate in discussions and activities. Classes delivered online will be recorded and made available on Quercus for reviewing purposes. Please contact the instructor ahead of time if you have any scheduling issues.

Technology: Students will need access to a personal computer, video camera, and microphone (please visit this [website](#) to learn about borrowing services that are available exclusively for Faculty of Information students).

Course Website: Course documents are available electronically through the course site on Quercus. Please check the site periodically for newly posted materials including updates, readings, assignments, or announcements.

Email Communication with the Course Instructor: At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email (via Quercus). To that end, all UofT students are required to have a valid UofT email address registered on Quercus. I will only respond to email during regular 9-5 working hours.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignment description	Date	Weight
Book selections/descriptions (4)	See schedule	40%
Bibliographical exercises (3) (In person)	October 18, November 15, November 22	30%
Final essay	November 1, December 6	20%
Class participation	Throughout	10%

Book selections/descriptions: The goal of this assignment is to learn how to write concise and compelling bibliographical descriptions that ascribe diverse meanings to books by interpreting concepts or applying methods from book history, print culture, bibliography, and other disciplines concerned with the study of books as physical objects. Students will research, select, and briefly describe four books with the purpose of exploring themes and ideas presented in the weekly case studies, readings, or based on the students' own interests. Students will have the opportunity to share their findings in class and, in some cases, integrate this research into their final essay. In their selections and descriptions, students may choose to focus on a single bibliographical feature or evidence; describe the role of one or more 'creators' in production, circulation, reception, preservation of their book; or highlight new ways to understand particular facts or notions evident in their books. As far as is relevant, students are encouraged to contribute their selections/descriptions to enrich the discussions during the weekly case studies. See assignment template for additional details.

Bibliographical exercises: The goal of this assignment is to assess students' knowledge of bibliographical concepts and evidence in connection to a selection of books and other printed material. Students will complete three in-person exercises divided into the following themes: printing and typographical evidence (October 18), printed book illustration (November 15), and publishing, reading, and provenance evidence (November 22). The exercises will be divided in two parts, the first consists of identification questions and the second of short definitions. Students will be provided with a [list of terms](#), online resources, and practice sessions in preparation for these assignments. An alternative version of the assignment will be made available as an online activity in the event the University restricts access to in-person classes.

Final essay: The goal of the final essay is to expose students to different ways of writing about books. The prose of book history is vast and diverse, it is influenced by multiple academic, commercial, social, cultural, or ideological factors, and determined in many ways by its target audience. Readers in this field have access to a wide range of publications, including academic articles published in

journals like *Book History* and *The Library*; bibliographical descriptions issued in booksellers/auction or exhibition catalogues; essays appearing in magazines or newsletters like *The Book Collector* or *The Halcyon*; and entries submitted to online publications like *The Public Domain Review* or *Atlas Obscura*. In preparation for the final essay, students will decide their own topics, objectives, methodology, and writing style, always keeping in mind a potential publication or audience for their essay. One way to approach this assignment is to think of it as the first draft of an essay written for a specific audience and with a particular publication in mind. Therefore, the final essay should not only engage with book history theories and methods and integrate research from the book selections/descriptions (whenever possible) but, more importantly, the essay should reflect the student's academic interests and professional goals in the field of book history. Students are encouraged to conceive their academic work as valuable contributions to the fields of bibliography, book history, print culture, material culture, visual and media studies, and other disciplines concerned with the study of books. The course instructor will be available throughout the semester for individual or group appointments to discuss and provide feedback on this assignment. See assignment template for additional details.

Class participation: Students are expected to prepare every week to engage in discussions about the readings and ask questions or make comments about bibliographical concepts and terms. In every class we will review case studies, complete brief activities or participate in conversations about book history, print culture, bibliography, and other disciplines/methods relevant to the study of books. While learning together, these class discussions also aim to foster a dynamic and collegial class environment. The key idea behind active learning is that instructors and students share the responsibilities of the overall learning process. Therefore, the participation mark will be based on the students' *active* contributions to the overall learning experience in the course.

Missed assignments/exercises: Students who miss a test or assignment without a notice to the instructor will be given a mark of zero. However, students may request special consideration for missed tests or assignments due to reasons beyond their control. An alternative date for the exercise or assignment will be scheduled with an accommodation request via the iSchool Student Services or Accessibility Services or via Absence Declaration Tool.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the University is temporarily suspending the need for a doctor's note or medical certificate for absences from academic participation; students should use the [Absence Declaration Tool on ACORN](#) to declare an absence if they require consideration for missed academic work; students are responsible for contacting the instructor to request the academic consideration they are seeking; students should record each day of their absence as soon as it begins, up until the day before they return to classes or other academic activities.

Basic iSchool Policy Guidelines:

Academic integrity: As a student in this course, you have certain rights and responsibilities, some of which are outlined in the following statement of [academic integrity](#) written by the University of Toronto's Centre for Teaching Support and Innovation. The Faculty of Information has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I.1.(d) of the University's Code of Behaviour

on Academic Matters. You should acquaint yourself with the [Code](#). Please review the material in Cite it Right and if you require further clarification, consult the site [How Not to Plagiarize](#). Cite it Right covers relevant parts of the U of T [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters \(1995\)](#). It is expected that all iSchool students take the Cite it Right workshop and the online quiz. Completion of the online Cite it Right quiz should be made prior to the second week of classes. To review and complete the workshop, visit the [orientation](#) portion of the iSkills site.

Grading: Please consult the iSchool's:

- Grade Interpretation Guidelines: <https://ischool.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/grade-interpretation.pdf>
- The University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policy/s/PDF/grading.pdf> (note if nothing will be handed back before the final date to drop without penalty, that should be stated in the syllabus.)
- The Guidelines on the Use of INC, SDF, & WDR: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/facultyandstaff/Pages/INC-SDF-WDR.aspx>

These documents will form the basis for grading in the course.

Writing Support: As stated in the iSchool's Grade Interpretation Guidelines, "work that is not well written and grammatically correct will not generally be considered eligible for a grade in the A range, regardless of its quality in other respects." With this in mind, please make use of the writing support provided to graduate students by the SGS Graduate Centre for Academic Communication. The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers and all programs are free. Please consult the current workshop schedule <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Current-Years-Courses.aspx> for more information.

Accommodations: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please contact Student Services and/or the Accessibility Services Office <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as> as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Health & Wellness: The School of Graduate Studies and the Office of Student Life offer a range of services tailored to the challenges presented by graduate-level university life. Please visit their website for more information: <http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Graduate-Counselling-Services.aspx>

Statement of Acknowledgement of Traditional Land: I would like to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today this

meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land. See also, the Faculty of Information's Commitment to the [Findings and Call for Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) (approved at the Feb. 4, 2016 Faculty Council).

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

Online

In person

Week I (September 13)	COURSE OVERVIEW
2:00-3:00	Introduction to the course, overview of activities and assignments.
3:15-4:00	Class discussion.
4:15-5:00	Case studies: Book parts.

Week II (September 20)	HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE BOOK
2:00-3:00	What is book history?
3:15-4:00	The making of book history: bibliography and other disciplines/methods.
4:15-5:00	Case studies: The medium of the book.

Week III: (September 27)	A WORLD OF MANUSCRIPTS
2:00-3:00	Manuscript studies, paleography, codicology, and the manuscript book.
3:30-4:30	Class discussion (book selections).
4:30-5:00	Case studies: Comparative book history.

Week IV: (October 4)	PRINTED BOOKS BEFORE 1800 (PART I)
2:00-3:30	Incunabula and early printed books beyond Europe.
4:00-5:00	Case studies: Typography (book selections).

Week V: (October 18)	PRINTED BOOKS BEFORE 1800: BIBLIOGRAPHY (PART II)
2:00-3:30 (group A)	Early printed books and their description (printing & typographical evidence).
3:30-5:00 (group B)	Early printed books and their description (printing & typographical evidence).

Week VI (October 25)	PRINTED BOOKS FROM 1800
2:00-2:30	Review of evidence exercises.
2:30-3:30	Printed books from 1800 (technologies of printing).
4:00-5:00	Case studies (book selections): New technologies, new books.

Week VII (November 1)	BOOKS AND PRINTS: BIBLIOGRAPHY AND THE STUDY OF VISUAL CULTURES.
2:00-3:30	Introduction to book illustration and visual culture.
4:00-5:00	Case studies (book selections): Illustrated books, book objects, and prints in context.

Week VIII (November 15)	IDENTIFYING PRINTS
2:00-3:30 (group A)	Book illustration evidence.
3:30-5:00 (group B)	Book illustration evidence.

Week IX (November 22)	BOOK HISTORY LABOUR
2:00-3:30 (group A)	Book makers in focus (publishing, reading, and provenance evidence).
3:30-5:00 (group B)	Book makers in focus (publishing, reading, and provenance evidence).

Week X (November 29)	DIGITAL BOOK HISTORY: BORN-DIGITAL BOOKS
2:00-3:30	Guest lecture, Alan Galey.
4:00-5:00	Case studies (book selections): Modern book design and publishing

Week XI (December 6)	BOOKS, LIBRARIES, AND ARCHIVES
2:00-3:30	Book history and the cultural record.
4:00-5:00	Case studies (book selections): What makes a book rare?

Week XII (December 13)	COURSE REVIEW
2:00-3:30	Class discussion.
4:00-5:00	Case studies (book selections): TBD.

READINGS AND REFERENCE SOURCES:

Reference sources:

- Michael F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen. *The Oxford Companion to the Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Available [here](#).
- Michael F. Suarez and H.R. Woudhuysen. *The Book: A Global History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Available [here](#).
- Sidney E. Berger. *The Dictionary of the Book: A Glossary for Book Collectors, Booksellers, Librarians, and others*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016. Available via [Ebook Central](#).
- John Carter. *ABC for Book Collectors*. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll, 2016. Available online [here](#).
- Sarah Werner. *Studying Early Printed Books 1450-1800: A Practical Guide*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2019. Available [here](#).
- James Raven. *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. Available [here](#).

Weekly readings:

Week I: Course overview

September 13

- Dennis Duncan and Adam Smyth, 'Introduction', in *Book Parts*, edited by Dennis Duncan & Adam Smyth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).
- Bibliographical terms (see handout). Sidney E. Berger. *The Dictionary of the Book: A Glossary for Book Collectors, Booksellers, Librarians, and others*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Week II: Historiography of the Book

September 20

- James Raven, 'Introduction', in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Michelle Levy & Tom Wolfe, 'Introduction', 'Chapter 1', in *The Broadview Introduction to Book History* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2017), xiii-xx, 1-22.
- Robert Darnton, 'What Is the History of Books?' *Daedalus* 111, no. 3 (1982): 65–83
- D.F. McKenzie, 'The Sociology of a Text: Oral Culture, Literacy, and Print in Early New Zealand,' in *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 77–128.

Week III: A World of Manuscripts

September 27

- 'Writing Systems' and 'The Manuscript after the Coming of Print', in *The Book: A Global History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

- Michelle P. Brown, ‘The Triumph of the Codex, the Manuscript Book Before 1100’, in *A Companion to the history of the book*, edited by Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2007).
- Visit the following online resources: *Islamic Manuscripts Basics*, [here](#); and *Glossary Terms for Islamic Manuscripts*, [here](#); and *Spanish Paleography Tool*, [here](#); *French Renaissance Paleography*, [here](#).

Week IV: Printed Books before 1800 (part I)

October 4

- William Proctor Williams and Craig S. Abbott, ‘Introduction’, ‘Analytical Bibliography’, and ‘Descriptive Bibliography’, in *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies* (New York: Modern Language Association, 2009).
- Sydney Shep, ‘Books in Global Perspectives,’ in *The Cambridge Companion to the History of the Book*, ed. Leslie Howsam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 53–70.
- Hortensia Calvo, ‘The Politics of Print: The Historiography of the Book in Early Spanish America’, *Book History* 6 (2003).
- Visit the following digital exhibition: *Gutenberg & After Europe’s First Printers, 1450-1470*, [here](#).

Week V: Printed Books before 1800 (part II)

October 18

- Bibliographical and printing terms (see handout). Sarah Werner. *Studying Early Printed Books 1450-1800: A Practical Guide*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2019.

Week VI: Printed Books from 1800

October 25

- Simone Murray, ‘Introduction’ and ‘Part I’, in *Introduction to Contemporary Print Culture: Books as Media* (New York: Routledge, 2021).
- Kate Ozment, ‘Rationale for Feminist Bibliography’, *Textual Cultures* 13:1 (2020).
- See the following resource: *Women in Book History Bibliography*, [here](#).

Week VII: Books and Prints: Bibliography and the Study of Visual Cultures

November 1

- Michael Gaudio, ‘Introduction’, in *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).
- Paul Goldman, “The history of illustration and its technologies”, in *The Oxford Companion to the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- Antony Griffiths. *Prints and Printmaking: An Introduction to the History and Techniques* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

Week XIII: Identifying Prints

November 15

- See handout for terms and exercises.
- Visit the following resource: MET Museum, *The Printed Image in the West*: woodcut, engraving, etching, aquatint, mezzotint, drypoint, lithography in the nineteenth century, and the print in the nineteenth century. Available here.

Week IX: Book History Labour

November 22

- See handout for readings and exercises.

Week X: Digital Book History: Born-digital Books

- Alan Galey, 'The Enkindling Reciter: E-Books in the Bibliographical Imagination.' *Book History* 15 (2012).
- Simone Murray, 'Part III', in *Introduction to Contemporary Print Culture: Books as Media* (New York: Routledge, 2021).

Week XI: Books, Libraries, and Archives

December 6

- Melissa Adler, 'Introduction', in *Cruising the Library: Perversities in the Organization of Knowledge* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017).
- David McKitterick, 'Inventio', 'Books as Objects', 'Survival and Selection', in *The Invention of Rare Books* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Week XII: Course Review

December 13

- See handout for readings and case studies.