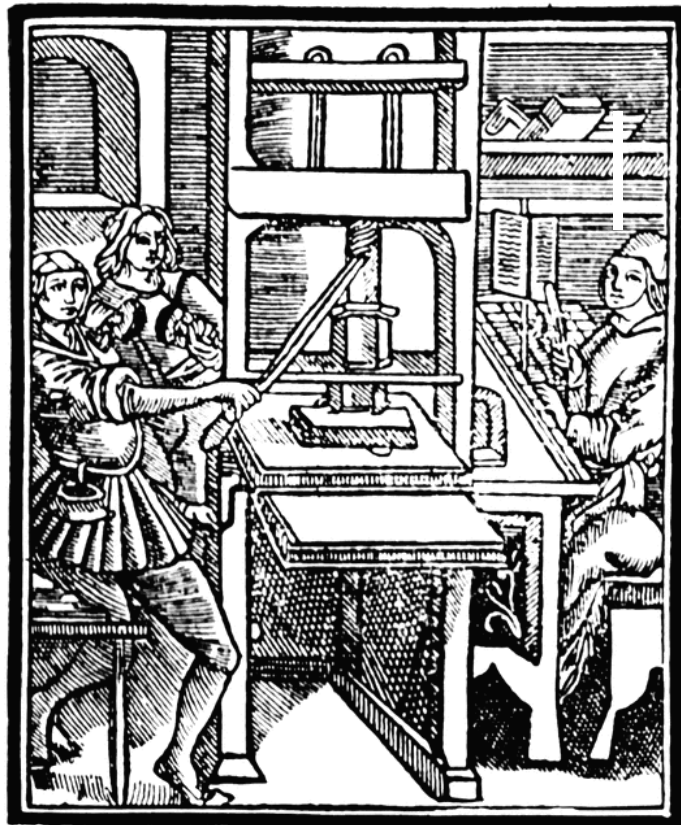


**VCA 200, The arts of independent publication,
Department of Art History and Visual Culture, 2018 Fall**



I Course information

Professor G.N.GEE

Office 15 North Campus

Office hours: Tuesdays 4-6pm, Fridays by appointment

ggee@fus.edu

location: Tuesday & Friday, 14.30-15.45 Kaletsch Campus 5

II Course description:

In an increasingly digital age, books have experienced a renaissance as a privileged channel of independent creative expression. This course takes this resurgence as a starting point to investigate the historical forms and contemporary opportunities offered by the book medium to artists, writers and activists. First, students will be introduced to the history of the printing revolution in Europe, the development of typography and their impact on intellectual and political history. Second, the course will look at the production of artists' books in the 19th and 20th century, in parallel with the advent of modernity, where numbered editions signalled a printing alternative to the rise of mass culture. Third, a strong emphasis is placed on exploring a range of models and opportunities offered by contemporary independent publishing. In that vein, the course will consider both material and virtual channels, taking into account the surge of digital technologies and their implications in both the return to the book as a physical object, and the connections the latter nurtures with its electronic parent. Students will look at the aesthetic, social and political remit of contemporary publishing practices, and will be asked to develop a personal publishing project.

III Course Goals:

The goals of this course include the following:

- to understand the chronology and the development of book and journal publishing
- to gain a sensibility to the different independent practices and positions in the publishing world, and their histories
- to be aware of the formal and intellectual frameworks in publishing
- to develop critical writing skills
- to practice critically synthesizing information from classroom discussions and readings
- to present this information in a variety of formats, including class discussions, oral presentation, and in short essays and more comprehensive written assignments

IV Student Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students should:

- have acquired literacy in order to analyse the formal and intellectual positioning of publications
- have gained an overview of the development of publishing since the Renaissance
- be familiar with the development of art publishing
- write and speak analytically and critically about publishing
- be able to use library and university resources to complete papers and presentations

V Course materials:

Selected readings will be provided weekly

VI Course organisation and evaluation criteria

Reading notes and participation 20%

Reading notes (10%) should be uploaded on moodle prior to corresponding class sessions. Reading notes should feature two sections: a summary part, identifying the key ideas and arguments outlined in the text, and a critical response, providing a personal reflection on the perspectives offered by the text.

Presence in class is equally considered in the overall assessment (10%).

Weekly journal 30%

You are asked to do a weekly research on independent publications, responding to the week's topic. Typically, you will be presenting in class a publication of your choice, highlighting characteristics, which echo and complement the course's discussion. A written document is to be handed in A before the mid-term B at the end of the semester, featuring data information on each of the chosen publication, and a paragraph summarizing your weekly response.

In class exam 20%

As series of questions covering topics discussed in class.

Final project: 15% + 15% = 30%

For your final project, you are asked on the one hand to produce a publication, using a simple standard design mirroring fanzines techniques; specific guidance regarding the overall form of the object will be provided. The content is for you to develop, responding to a general theme: 'collective histories'. On the other hand, a short paper (2000 words) is to accompany this publication, contextualising the choices made and the materials displayed.

VII Grading policies

What Grades Mean in VCA 200

A = Excellent: your work exhibits outstanding quality and exceptional follow through on the assignment. You have an excellent command of the material and the quality of the final product goes well beyond the good quality work in the B-level range. A-level work shows originality and depth of thought. This grade honors an exceptional work and recognizes significant effort on your part.

B = Good: your work is above-average quality and shows a thorough understanding of the assignment. B-level work shows some of the same good qualities as "A" level work, but not as

consistently, or to the same extent. There may be one weak area in an otherwise very good paper/project, or the overall work may simply lack the “polish” of an A. B means that you are doing an above average, all around good work.

C = Adequate: your work is acceptable at the university level. It follows the assignment, meets the basic standards of university-level work in terms of relevance, and/or accuracy, and/or logic. You reveal a sufficient understanding of the material, exhibit a satisfactory argument, have suitable organization and use standard English in terms of mechanics, punctuation, citation, and documentation (where required). This grade also applies to work that is excellent or good in some respects but significantly weaker in others. Originality of thought may not be always evident.

D = Inadequate: you do not meet the standards for acceptable university level work, but the text/presentation does exhibit some positive qualities, indicating that it deserves credit for having been done. Content and/or mechanics do not adequately meet basic expectations. Little or no originality of thought is evident, and the work may appear to be nothing more than a summary of other sources; or a last-minute “rush job” which does not do justice to the student’s intellectual or creative potential. A grade of "D" should be understood as a warning sign that something is wrong with your study habits and that you would be wise to seek advice on how to improve.

F = Fail: your work does not earn college-level credit. You may have not followed the assignment or the work submitted may reveal little or no understanding of the subject we are studying. You exhibit a lack of basic academic skills and/or incomprehensible writing with many mechanical errors and little understanding of the citation/documentation process. An F is the strongest indication from the professor that there may be serious concern about the degree of effort you are making to succeed in the class. All in all, your work is deemed completely unacceptable. A grade of F is also given if the work is not completed at all. You should immediately see me to discuss a course of action. It is always primarily the student’s responsibility to seek out the professor’s advice or help in such situations.

Overall Rubrics used in AHT 102

	Structure	Thesis and content	Evidence and Examples	References and bibliography	Oral presentation
A	Perfectly balanced essay, featuring a clear introduction, a development articulated in distinct parts and well-paced and appropriately divided paragraphs, providing the reader with a logical sequence to follow. A synthetic conclusion that highlights the key ideas discussed and opens up the topic ends the essay. Fluent use of appropriate vocabulary with rare grammatical errors, coherent and sophisticated style with excellent word choice.	The essay proposes an original and pertinent central controlling idea (thesis) appropriate to research assignment, which is logically and clearly developed throughout. The essay consistently uses content that fully supports and develops ideas presented in the thesis; appropriate, relevant and compelling material that illustrates mastery of subject and shapes the entire work.	The essay is based on numerous visual and textual examples, which are precisely identified. The examples are relevant to the thesis, and are significantly explored in the demonstration, providing a rich foundation from which key ideas are explored.	The essay makes numerous references to sources in appropriate publications. It shows excellent command of the material referred to; Correctly supplied citation, attribution and documentation; consistency of citing style.	The oral presentation is clear; it respects the timing guidelines; the visual material is extremely well presented in balanced slides providing essential visual support and key information.

B	A well balanced essay, with a clear introduction, development and conclusion. There may be one weak area in the overall development/ introduction/ conclusion. Each paragraph has one clear main point with supporting ideas; but flow or reflection could use polishing. May have several small mechanical, punctuation or stylistic errors. Good attention to audience but the overall structure may simply lack the "polish" of an A.	The essay proposes an interesting thesis, which is clearly defined and integral to essay but some parts of the paper may be vague or not fully developed. It may be that the thesis is good but perhaps not wholly original; or it might be that some aspects of it are not always fully developed.	The essay provides appropriate examples. It might be that while giving a sound material basis for the discussion, additional materials might have been added, or that the materials are not always thoroughly explored.	The essay makes a number of appropriate references. It may be that those are not always very clearly layered in the discussion, or that their contribution to the thesis lacks a little consistency here and there	The oral presentation is clear. It might be that it did not respect the timing guidelines perfectly, or that there were minor things to polish in the visual material.
C	A balanced essay, that might lack some clarity in the introduction development/conclusion; content appropriate, but does not always fully support thesis. Essay might have one major structural flaw; transitions between parts and paragraphs might need some reworking, might lack logical progression.	Follows purpose of research assignment with thesis but vague. Some aspects of the argument might not be explored; or the argument could be worked upon some more to make it more personal and original	The essay provides examples. It might need additional material referred to, lack precision in its identification, or simply should be explored more in depth.	The essay makes a number of references, but might need additional sources, or might have forgotten to mention a key text; it does not go sufficiently in depth in the sources, or they might not be always appropriately exploited and cited.	Oral presentation is satisfactory, but could gain on clarity; timing might be an issue (too long/too short), visual presentation is there but sketchy.
D	The essay is not well-balanced and poorly structured. It lacks clarity in exposure and development. It might have major issues of syntax.	The argument is poor or significantly lacks originality. It might also not be well developed, or in a fragmentary fashion.	The essay lacks adequate examples, which might also not be appropriately identified and explored.	The essay lacks adequate references which might also not be appropriately exploited.	The oral presentation is vague, or it significantly does not meet the timing requirements; the visual presentation is messy or inadequate.

XIII Attendance policy

Missing more than three classes during the semester can affect your grade. Should you miss more than five classes, you are liable to fail the class.

IX Late Assignments:

Please make sure your assignments are handed in on time. Failure to do so will be reflected in your grade

Moodle

We will work with Moodle to save paper and support the sustainability initiative on campus: you will have to check our course page regularly for announcements and assignments and will turn in all your assignments electronically.

- ⇒ Please upload all your assignments to our moodle website under the respective topics. Please submit in WORD format.

XI Academic integrity: statement on cheating and plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated, see the official Franklin's university statement on cheating and plagiarism

<http://www.fc.edu/pdf/AcademicCatalog2012-14.pdf>

In particular, all work submitted must be your own work, and in tests you are not allowed to use notes, cell phones, talk with other students, or copy their work. In case of violation you will get 0 points for the assignment and be reported to the dean of the college.

Tentative schedule

Week 1 August 28 – 31 **General introduction, the Book**

Susan Hawthorne: *Bibliodiversity. A manifesto for independent publishing*



Week 2 September 4 – 7 **Typography**

Readings: Lucien Febvre, Henri Jean Martin: *The coming of the book. The impact of printing 1400-1800* "The book: its visual appearance"
Extracts from Allan Haley, *Typography referenced: a comprehensive guide to the language, history and practice of typography*

Week 3 September 11 – 14 **the Book object**

Readings: Lucien Febvre, Henri Jean Martin: *The coming of the book. The impact of printing 1400-1800* "The book as commodity"
Extracts from *The British library guide to printing: history and techniques*

The insider's guide to independent publishing

Week 4 September 18 **Image - Text**

Readings: *Photomontage: a political weapon*

Week 5 September 25 – 28 **the Library**

Readings: Jorge Luis Borges, *The library of Babel*

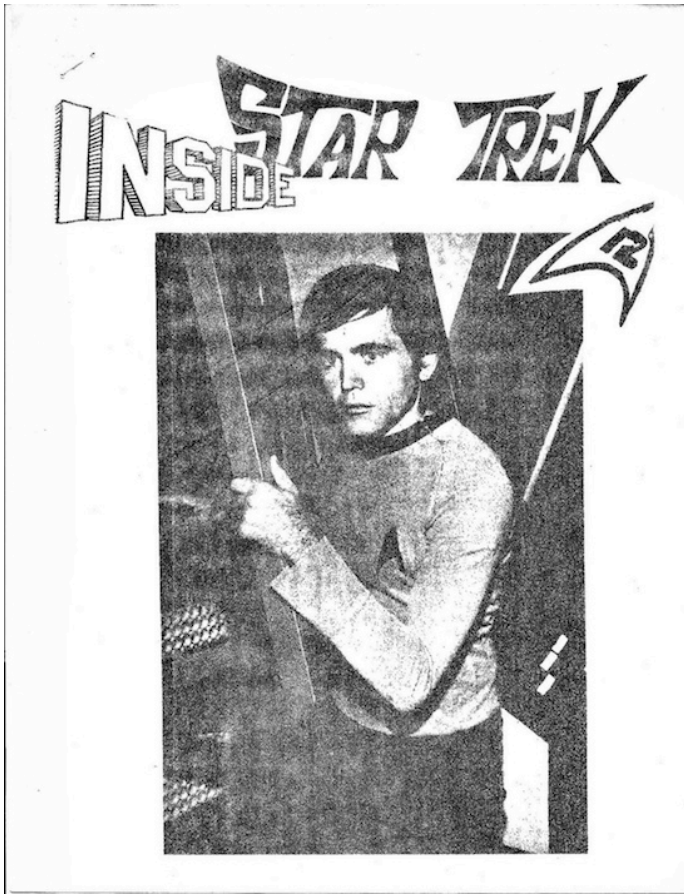
Week 6 October 2 – 5 **the art book / journal: modernisms**

Readings: *Artists books in the modern era 1870-2000*
Jerôme Dupeyrat, "Parallel dimensions, exhibited art, edited art"
Extracts from *The Oxford critical and cultural history of Modernists magazines*



Week 7 October 9 – 12 **science fiction and zines: self-publishing culture**

Readings: *Behind the zines: self-publishing cultures*



Week 8 October 16- 19 **Mid term week**

Academic travel

Enjoy your travels!

Week 10 November 6 – 9 the artists' magazine

Readings: Daniel Baumann, "Kiosk, Xerox and self-empowerment – an outline of the history of the artists' magazine"

Week 11 November 13 – 16 ***electronic interfaces: e-book***

Readings: *The insider's guide to independent publishing*

Week 12 November 20 ***electronic interfaces: alternate forms***

Readings: Gabriel Egan, *Electronic publishing: politics and pragmatics*

<24, 25, 26 November: Sprint Milan/ Volumes Zurich>

Week 13 November 27 – 30 ***the return of the book***

Readings: *Artists books in the modern era*
Jacques Derrida, *La dissémination*

Week 14 December 4 – 7 ***the lost book***

Readings: Shubigi Rao, *Pulp, a short biography of the banished book*

Week 15 Final Exams