

You must always respect Library policies and staff. Failure to adhere to Library regulations could mean losing your Reader's Card.

succeeding in this course.

You must come to each and every class prepared for that day's discussion. Missing even one session will stand in the way of your developing the knowledge about early modern books necessary for

to talk to me in advance of the deadline itself.

Late papers will not be accepted. Should you

anticipate a problem in meeting a deadline, you need to talk to me in advance of the deadline itself.

COURSE POLICIES

The final section of our course will consider opposite approaches to focusing exclusively on the book as a material object, this (and shape) texts by studying how books transmit (and shape) texts behind modern editing and some of the theories of modern editions of early texts.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Preface

- 8/31: course introduction
- 9/7: What is book history?
- 9/14: Incunabula

Volume 1: Books as Physical Objects

- 9/21: Making Books
- 9/28: What we learn from physical bibliography

10/1: Your book's description due

Volume 2: Books and Culture

- 10/5: Stationers and the book trade
- 10/12: Authors

10/15: Your book's makers paper due

- 10/19: Case Study: Bibles
- 10/26: Readers and Users

11/5: Your book's users paper due

- 11/9: Case Study: Shakespeare
- 11/16: Case Study: Digital tools for material books
- 11/23: no class—Thanksgiving

Volume 3: Books as Vehicles for Text

- 11/30: Editing books
- 12/7: Annotating books
- 12/14: Your book's biography due**

2) We will move on to examine **the role that books played in early modern culture** and the processes by which they were made available, focusing on the relationships between printers (or “stationers”), book sellers, authors, and readers. We will look at the economic forces driving the book trade, consider what authorship meant during the early modern period, and explore the uses that readers made of books.

We will begin with an exploration of **books as physical objects**: how they were made and what we can learn from their physical presence. By studying the physical labor that went into making books, we will learn to recognize the material traces that can lead us to a new understanding of how a particular book was used, what its impact might have been, and how it shapes the text it contains.

The study of book history can be divided into three approaches that we will draw on all three during the semester.

COURSE THEMES



Folger-GW Undergraduate Research Seminar

BOOKS AND EARLY MODERN CULTURE

Fall 2012

Fridays, 9:30-12:00

Folger Shakespeare Library
Deck A Seminar Room

There will also be a number of shorter exercises due during the course of the semester that will make up the remaining 10% of your final grade. These are designed as hands-on exercises to illustrate specific archival research skills and will be able to be completed in a few hours' work.

production and shape the reception of any book.

The culmination of your research, this will give you a sense of the myriad factors that go into the

long history of its text and its other incarnations.

on the life story of your physical object and on the

creation up to the present day. You will focus both

4) Your book's biography (3500-4000 words; 50%):

and later periods.

about the market for your book in the early modern

who owned this book? This will help you think

audience? Were there later collectors or institutions

they signs of an individual reader or of a projected

Where are there signs of reader(s) in your book? Are

3) Your book's users (1500-2000 words; 15%):

These 4 papers will collectively make up 90% of your final grade. You will use an early modern book of your

choice, using the same book for all assignments or

switching after the first one. Done properly, your

research into your book's makers and users will be

incorporated into writing the book's biography.

1) Your book's description (1000-1500 words; 10%):

How would you describe your book as a physical

object? What size is your book? How is it bound?

What kinds of typefaces are used? Are there

illustrations? This will teach you to look carefully at

your book and to begin to learn the terms used to

describe books.

2) Your book's makers (1500-2000 words; 15%):

How does your book identify and construct its

author(s) and printer(s)? Is there a name on the title

page? Is the author identified through prefatory

materials or the use of the first person in the text?

Who was responsible for getting the book in print?

What other types of texts did he or she

print/publish/sell? This will help you situate your

book in the early modern book trade.

Welcome to “Books and Early Modern Culture”

This brochure is the teaser for the full course syllabus, which can be found online at the site listed on the previous page.

Keep this as a quick reference guide to the course site and to other important information.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the history of books by focusing on books and early modern culture. By learning about how books were made and how books were used, students will gain a clearer appreciation of how early modern culture was shaped by and was a shaping force in the development of print culture. The archival skills students learn in conducting this research will serve them in future research projects, and their understanding of the sociology of books will refine their understanding of the early modern period and the roles that books played in later periods.

Monday and Thursday
You can make an advance appointment or have someone at the circulation desk call my office extension; you can also email questions to me and I will respond within 24 hours.

office hours:

Monday and Thursday

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Dr Sarah Werner

course website:

<http://sarahwerner.net/FolgerBooks>

