HARVARD UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION
EXTENSION SCHOOL

HUMA E-105/W—Survey of Publishing: From Text to Hypertext

Fall, 2005
Mondays, 7:35–9:35 P.M.
Boylston Hall 105

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We now live in the early part of an age for which the meaning of print culture is becoming as alien as the meaning of manuscript culture was to the eighteenth century. “We are the primitives of a new culture,” said Boccioni the sculptor in 1911. Far from wishing to belittle the Gutenberg mechanical culture, it seems to me that we must now work very hard to retain its achieved values.


What have been the cultural and social impacts of writing, printing, and publishing through the ages? What changes are taking place in publishing today as a result of its digitalization and the intense competition with other media? Are we now experiencing the demise of literacy, or are we on the verge of a new era of revitalization through emerging technologies? What is the future of publishing? These are the central questions on which this course focuses as it traces, both historically and analytically, the intellectual, social, and cultural impacts of changing communications technologies. We put particular emphasis on the contextuality of communication and look at the cultural environments in which both orality and literacy have thrived. In so doing, we attempt to shed light on the many issues that people in publishing careers have faced, are facing, and will face as we move from the Gutenberg era through an age dominated more and more by electronic means of communication.
STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

All Gaul is divided into three parts.

—Caius Julius Caesar, Commentaries on the Gallic War, I

The course begins with the research of the humanist scholar Walter J. Ong, SJ, which is the cornerstone of the course. Ong’s thesis is that writing is itself a technology that restructures consciousness, quite apart from the individual technics by which it is conveyed, and that its dissemination has enabled profound social and cultural changes. This conclusion is reinforced by work of the classicist Eric A. Havelock on the social, cultural, and psychological changes wrought by the Greeks’ invention of the phonetic alphabet, and the resulting spread of literacy. This theme is extended into the age of manuscripts, where we see the conservationist impulse of Patristic culture change into scholasticism, an expansion of knowledge, the beginnings of empirical science, and eventually Renaissance humanism.

In the second part of the course, we focus on the impact of Gutenberg’s development of printing with movable type on the late-Renaissance spread of knowledge, science, and technology, with the rise of Protestantism, individualism, capitalism, and democracy. We examine the interacting roles played by education, economics, law, social dynamics, and technology in creating the basis for the media environment we know today. In the process we examine the social and psychological effects of print media upon our conceptions of knowledge and truth.

In the last part of the course we survey the historical development of newspapers and magazines, discuss the spillover effects of new media on book publishing, libraries, and educational institutions, and examine the political, social, legal, and economic issues raised by the growth of the World Wide Web. We discuss the potential of new forms of non-sequential information retrieval, involving not only text but also graphics, sound, and full-motion video to enhance the synesthetic qualities of the “global village” first described by Marshall McLuhan. In exploring these issues we engage the current debate on the future of literacy in a multimedia age.

READING

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.

—Francis Bacon, Essays, “Of Studies”

The course presents a challenging reading load and entails the embrace of a world view informed by reading. It is expected that those interested in publishing, whether as a vocation or as an intellectual interest, are avid readers and enjoy reading, so participation in the course assumes a significant commitment to the subject. Participants are expected to have completed the required readings for each class session, to come prepared to discuss their significance, and to ask appropriate questions.
The reading emphasizes the historical, sociological, economic, and psychological aspects of our topic, rather than focusing primarily on the purely operational aspects of publishing practices, so students should be prepared to contribute in the same vein. This is not a course in how to get into publishing, or how to be an editor or a published author. But good writing and responsible editing of one’s work are expected, particularly since the most notable role of publishing through the ages has been the faithful transmission of the best the culture can offer. This is a humanities course that explores the impact of publishing and other media on history and develops conceptual frameworks for analyzing the cultural impacts of evolving media.

All texts are available for purchase at the Harvard Cooperative Society in Harvard Square. You may find it cheaper and more convenient to order from an on-line bookseller, if you are so inclined. A good site for comparing prices of all on-line sellers for each title can be found at http://www.allbookstores.com/. If you want to get a price for all the texts from a single source, you may want to check http://www.barnesandnoble.com/textbooks/ or http://www.ecampus.com/. In accordance with Extension School policy, no required texts are on reserve.

Required readings (in order of use):


**Recommended reading:**


**Required references:**


Reserve readings (in Grossman Library):


**WRITING**

Technologies are not mere exterior aids but also interior transformations of consciousness, and never more than when they affect the word. Such transformations can be uplifting. Writing heightens consciousness.

—Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Orality and Literacy*, 81

The course requires a significant amount of writing, as it is one of the Extension School’s writing-intensive courses. The first piece of writing required is a 500-word personal statement covering your background, why you are in the course, and what you hope to learn in it. This statement serves both as a way of my getting to know you and as a baseline writing assessment. Students whose English proficiency is insufficient will be withdrawn from the course by the Registrar and advised to take appropriate courses in the Institute for English Language Program (see the Extension School catalogue for proficiency standards). The remaining work consists of two essays and a term paper. Each of the papers should correspond to its respective module of the course: Foundations of Literacy, The Gutenberg Revolution and Its Consequences, and From Modern to Postmodern. I will provide a list of possible topics for the essays; they will be broad enough to allow for creative thought and expression and still focus on the appropriate modular period. The two essays may be rewritten for improvement; all rewrites are due two class meetings after the graded originals are returned.
Schedule of writing assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date due</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Personal statement (500 words, by e-mail)</td>
<td>September 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. First essay (1,500 words)</td>
<td>October 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Second essay (1,500)</td>
<td>November 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Term paper (4,500 words)</td>
<td>January 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Assignments will count toward the final grade in relation to their timing and scope, and the quality of class participation will be factored into the final grade. A poor attendance record will count severely against the final grade. Final grades below B– do not count toward the Extension School’s graduate degrees and certificates. Throughout the course, we will emphasize rational discourse, both oral and written, and the connections between critical reading, critical thinking, and the clear and cogent expression of ideas.

Evaluation criteria

All written work will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- the presentation of an early thesis, point, or governing idea
- a well-organized structure of support
- logical, persuasive, and coherent use of concrete evidence
- accurate and responsible use of sources
- integral and well-developed paragraphs with clear topic sentences
- smooth transitions between sentences and paragraphs
- concise, grammatically constructed sentences
- use of concrete nouns and active verbs
- idiomatic expression and accurate word choices
- correct usage of verbal constructions, articles, adjectives, and adverbs
- standard punctuation, spelling, and mechanics
- consistent use of an appropriate citation format (see Formatting and References).

Term paper

The term paper should be a research-based paper or essay of at least 4,500 words. For this paper, the same criteria apply as for the shorter essays, with the added expectation that students will demonstrate the ability to critically and creatively relate research in the recommended or reserve readings or other relevant material to the information and ideas explored in the required readings. It should be sent to my home address via the U. S. Postal Service or courier to arrive by Monday, January 23. To receive your graded paper back with comments you should include an envelope addressed to yourself, prestamped with sufficient postage. If you do not provide one I will assume you do not wish to receive comments in return.

The most important goal of the final paper is that it be an opportunity for you to fulfill a task or ambition that connects as directly as possible with your motivations for taking the course. For some, particularly those on the Publishing Certificate track, this paper might in-
volve a project related to current or prospective employment. For others taking the course as a humanities degree elective, it might entail developing your research skills or writing an academic journal essay.

Formatting and references

ESSAYS and papers should be submitted in a standard, 12-pt typeface, double-spaced, on one side of a page, with 1-inch margins all around (ragged right), titled, with all pages numbered and securely stapled. Papers not in accordance with the standard format will be returned unread and subject to a grade penalty when resubmitted. In citing sources, you may use either Chicago Manual of Style (CMS) footnotes or endnotes, or in-text parenthetical citations in MLA or APA formats as presented in Writing with Sources (see pp. 35–58). Do not mix, combine, or confuse citation formats, but use the one you choose consistently. The required references—Writing with Sources, The Lively Art of Writing, and Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition (including its Handbook of Style in the back)—are the principal guides to writing both the essays and the final paper, and you are expected to apply them to your work. All work will be held to the high standards expected of publishing professionals, who are the gatekeepers for the culture regarding quality of thought and expression. After all, if we don’t get it right, who else will?

Attendance and class participation

ATTENDANCE at each class is expected, barring last-minute emergencies, in which case please inform me. Attendance will be taken. Graduate students will be held to higher standards of performance in all aspects of the course than will undergraduates. This includes being prepared to answer individually directed questions in class regarding the readings and initiating class discussion.

Grading policies

APERS will not be casually accepted after the due date. Extensions may be granted for good reason, but only if requested at least a week before the paper is due. The essays may be rewritten in the hope of earning a higher grade, but such resubmissions must be significant in scope: not just minor fixes of grammar, mechanics, and spelling (which should be correct in the first submission anyway), but true re–visions that clarify the thinking, enhance the support, and render the piece more cogent and persuasive. Unless this degree of improvement is achieved, no higher grade will be given.

If there are extenuating circumstances that will make it impossible for you to submit your term paper by the due date, you must submit a written request for my approval of an extension. Forms for such requests are available at 51 Brattle Street, Grossman Library, and on the Extension School Web site, www.extension.harvard.edu. You are responsible for submitting the completed Academic Services copy signed by me to 51 Brattle Street by the start of the examination period (Tuesday, January 10), so be sure to allow enough time for my decision. If I approve I will establish the due date on a case-by-case basis, but all EXT grades are due Friday, March 17. Term papers not submitted by the due date will assigned an E.
Grading guidelines of the Extension School

- **A, A–** represent work of superior quality that indicates a full mastery of the subject area and, in the case of A, work of extraordinary distinction. There is no grade of A+.

- **B+, B, B–** represent work of good to very good quality; however, it does not merit special distinction.

- **C+, C, C–** designate work that demonstrates an average command of the course materials.

- **D+, D, D–** indicate work that shows only a deficiency of knowledge of the material.

- **E** is a failing grade, assigned to students whose work deserves no academic credit.

- ***** is an interim grade notation, assigned to students suspected of academic misconduct.

- **EXT** is an interim grade that may be requested by credit students who, owing to extenuating circumstances, need additional time to submit work after a course is ended.

Academic Honesty

**IMPICITLY,** all written work submitted is entirely your own, and any ideas, uncommon knowledge, or assistance of any other kind from another party must be explicitly acknowledged in your text or notes. The policies of the Extension School regarding plagiarism, cheating, or abuse of computerized resources are clearly presented in the Catalog, as are the consequences of transgression. I need not overstress the point, but for clear guidelines regarding the use of secondary sources you need only refer to *Writing with Sources,* Chapter 3, “Misuse of Sources,” pp. 22–34. This chapter is particularly valuable in presenting advice about how to manage the writing process so as to avoid situations in which time pressure might encourage cutting corners. We will be discussing this issue in class, particularly as it addresses one of the major themes of the course—the role of the printing press in establishing the principles of unique authorship and copyright, and the ways in which digital forms of communication undermine or provide avenues to circumvent these particular “achieved values.”
SCHEDULE OF THE COURSE

Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.

—Francis Bacon, Essays, “Of Studies”

September 19 Introduction to the course

21 PERSONAL STATEMENT DUE

Foundations of Literacy

26 The natural orality of language
  Readings:
  Ong, Orality and Literacy
  Chapters 1–3
  Havelock, The Muse Learns to Write
  Chapters 2, 3, 5, 8

October 3 Some consequences of literacy
  Readings:
  Ong, Orality and Literacy
  Chapter 4, pp. 77–91
  Havelock, The Muse Learns to Write
  Chapters 1, 6, 7, 9–11

10 Columbus Day (holiday)

17 The age of manuscripts
  Readings:
  du Hamel, Scribes and Illuminators
  Ong, Orality and Literacy
  Chapter 4, pp. 92–114

FIRST ESSAY DUE

The Gutenberg Revolution and Its Consequences

24 The emergence of print culture
  Reading:
  Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe
  Chapters 1, 2
31 Social and cultural impacts of the book
   Readings:
   Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*
   Chapter 3
   Ong, *Orality and Literacy*
   Chapter 5

November 7 The expansion of humanism
   Reading:
   Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*
   Chapters 4, 5

14 Printing and the Reformation
   Reading:
   Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*
   Chapter 6

21 Printing and the Book of Nature
   Reading:
   Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*
   Chapters 7, 8

SECOND ESSAY DUE

From Modern to Postmodern

28 Journalism
   Reading:
   Schudson, *The Sociology of News*

December 5 Magazines
   Reading:
   Abrahamson, *Magazine-Made America*

12 Book publishing today and beyond
   Reading:
   Epstein, *Book Business*

19 Remediating print
   Reading:
   Bolter, *Writing Space*
   Chapters 1–5

26 Winter Vacation—No class
January 9 The Postmodern
   Reading:
   Bolter, Writing Space
   Chapters 6–10

16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (holiday)

23 TERM PAPER DUE