

CC300CX/HIST492BX
Media Revolution in Early Modern Europe

Fall 2008
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:20 p.m.–2:35 p.m.
Mueller 113

Instructor _____ Prof. Matthew Lundin
Office _____ Linwood 113
Phone _____ 464-6494
Email _____ Matthew.Lundin@valpo.edu
Office Hours _____ Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:45–4:00 p.m.
Course Website _____ <http://faculty.valpo.edu/mlundin/mediarevolution>

Course Description

When the printing press was invented in the fifteenth century, many contemporary observers saw it simply as a cheap way to reproduce ecclesiastical manuscripts. Yet in less than three hundred years, technologies of print had transformed almost every aspect of European life. Newspapers, encyclopedias, scientific research, paper money, political revolutions, government surveillance, new forms of religious thought and practice—all of these were made possible by print and the proliferation of writing and communication it spawned. Indeed, our identities as modern individuals are supported by a vast infrastructure of written communication. While it remains to be seen how radically digital media will transform the traditional institutions of print culture, our lives remain indelibly shaped by Europe's first great media revolution.

This course will examine the social, cultural, religious, and political effects of the print revolution between 1450 and 1800, with particular emphasis on the tumultuous first century and a half of the new technology. How did Europeans experience the transition from manuscript to print? How did individual authors handle a flood of new and often disorienting information? How did new media transform conceptions of selfhood and individual identity? One goal of asking such questions is to gain greater perspective on the current digital revolution and its effects on our everyday lives.

Course Objectives

- To gain an understanding of the print revolution and its effects on European thought, culture, and society.

- To gain greater insight into the historical relationship between the material culture of print and the systems of thought, communication, and exchange it has supported.
- To gain historical perspective on today’s digital revolution.
- To reflect on the unique characteristics of print culture through the use of a variety of media in course assignments.

Responsibilities and Expectations

1. Course Participation _____40%

- Attendance and participation in class discussions.
- Regular contributions to the course wiki.
 - We are using a wiki¹ as a forum for generating discussion questions, communicating with each other outside of class, sharing resources and insights, and reflecting on the relationship between new and “traditional” media.
 - On each day we have assigned reading, you are required to post two discussion questions to the wiki by 12:00 p.m.
 - To follow up on issues raised in class discussions, the instructor may create additional wiki assignments.
 - *Further instructions will be provided in class.*

2. Literature Review _____20%

- An annotated bibliography and review of historical literature on a particular aspect of early modern print culture (4–6 pages).
 - **Deadline: Tuesday, November 18, beginning of class.**

3. Paper and Presentation _____40%

- A 12–15 page research paper. Topic to be chosen in consultation with the instructor.
 - **Deadline: Thursday, December 18, 5:00 p.m.**
- A brief, in-class presentation on the results of your research.

In all your work for the course, you are expected to abide by the Valparaiso University Honor Code. If you have any questions about what constitutes “unauthorized aid” or how to cite sources, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor.

¹<http://faculty.valpo.edu/mlundin/mediarevolution>

Required Readings

- Finkelstein, David and Alistair McCleery, eds. *The Book History Reader*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge, 2006. ISBN: 978-0415226585
- Febvre, Lucien and Henri-Jean Martin. *The Coming of the Book*. Translated by David Gerard. London: Verso, 1997. ISBN: 978-1859841082
- Montaigne, Michel de. *The Essays: A Selection*. London: Penguin Classics, 2004. ISBN: 978-0140446029
- Ginzburg, Carlo. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1992. ISBN: 978-0801843877

All texts are available for purchase at the Valparaiso University Book Center.

A number of additional readings are on electronic reserve; they are designated by the marker “†” in the course schedule. These readings are accessible as PDF files on CourseVU (under “Documents”).

If a reading is on electronic reserve, it is your responsibility to print the assigned document, read it, and bring it to class. Being able to look at your own copy of the text is crucial to classroom discussions.

The instructor reserves the right to change or update this syllabus during the semester.

Abbreviations

BHR	<i>The Book History Reader</i>
CB	<i>The Coming of the Book</i>

Course Schedule

Introduction

WEEK ONE

- August 26: Introduction
- August 28: Media Revolution Redux
 - Plato, Excerpt from the *Phaedrus*†
 - Nicholas Carr, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?,” *Atlantic Monthly*, July/August 2008 — available at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200807/google>†
 - *In class: Introduction to course wiki*

The Prehistory of Print

WEEK TWO: MEDIA REVOLUTIONS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- September 2: Print Culture in Perspective
 - Harold Love, “Early Modern Print Culture,” in **BHR**, 74–86
 - Robert Darnton, “The Library in the New Age,” *The New York Review of Books*, June 10, 2008. — available at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/21514>
- September 4: Orality and Literacy
 - Walter Ong, “Orality and Literacy,” **BHR**, 134–146
 - Jack Goody, “The Construction of a Ritual Text: The Shift from Oral to Written Contexts,” †

WEEK THREE: MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS

- September 9: Medieval Writing
 - Henri Jean Martin, “The Death and Resurrection of Written Culture”†

- September 11: Manuscript Culture
 - Marcel Thomas, “Manuscripts” (Ch. 12), **BHR**, 147–158
 - Michael T. Clanchy, “Looking Back from the Invention of Printing”†
 - Hugh of St. Victor, “The Three Best Memory Aids for Learning History” and Thomas Bradwardine, “On Acquiring a Trained Memory.”†

The Arrival of Print

WEEK FOUR: THE INVENTION OF PRINTING

- Sept 16: The Technology
 - **CB**, chs. 1–3
- Sept 18: The New World of Print
 - **CB**, chs. 5–7

Early Adopters

WEEK FIVE: THE RENAISSANCE IN PRINT

- September 23: Humanist Publishing
 - “Humanism and the Book,” **CB**, 262–287
 - Erasmus, “Catalogue of His Works”†
- September 25: Print and Historical Consciousness
 - Elizabeth Eisenstein, “The Permanent Renaissance: Mutation of a Classical Revival”†
 - Anthony Grafton, “The Importance of Being Printed”†

WEEK SIX: THE REFORMATION IN PRINT

- September 30: “God hath opened the press to preach”
 - “The Book and the Reformation,” **CB**, 287–319
 - John Foxe, “The Benefit and Invention of Printing”†
- October 2: The First Mass Media Movement?
 - Mark Edwards, “Propaganda in the Early Decades of the Reformation”†

- Robert Scribner, "Print and Propaganda in the German Reformation"†

WEEK SEVEN: EARLY PRINT CULTURE

- October 7: A Revolution?
 - "From Manuscript to Printed Book," **CB**, 248–261
 - Elizabeth Eisenstein, "Defining the Initial Shift," in **BHR**, 232–254
 - Roger Chartier, "The Practical Impact of Writing," in **BHR**, 157–181
- October 9: Early Books
 - Jan-Dirk Müller, "The Body of the Book," **BHR**, 182–89
 - *In-class: Visit to the Christopher Center special collections.*

The Effects of Print

WEEK EIGHT: PRINT AND POPULAR CULTURE

- October 14
 - Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, 1–86
- October 16
 - Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, 86–128

WEEK NINE: GOOD MANNERS

- October 21: Learning to be Civil
 - Erasmus, "On Good Manners"†
 - Revel, "The Uses of Civility"†
- October 23: No Class (Fall Break)

WEEK TEN: THE "DISCOVERY" OF THE SELF

- October 28: Montaigne's Essays
 - Montaigne, *The Essays* ("Introduction," "To the Reader," and "On the Affection of Fathers for their Children," "On the Resemblance of Children to their Fathers")

- October 30: Public Intimacy
 - Montaigne, *The Essays* (“On Three Kinds of Social Intercourse,” “On Some Lines by Virgil,” “On the Lame,” “On Experience”)

WEEK ELEVEN: RELIGIONS OF THE WORD

- November 4: “Impressing” the Word
 - Luther, “Small Catechism”†
 - Gawthrop and Strauss, “Protestantism and Literacy in Early Modern Germany” (available on JSTOR)†
- November 6: Typographical Piety
 - John Bossy, “The Father, The Word, and the Spirit”†
 - John Bunyan, “Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners” (excerpts)†

WEEK TWELVE: AUTHORS AND READERS

- November 11: Readers
 - Chartier, “Labourers and Voyagers,” **BHR**, 87–98
 - Altick, “The English Common Reader,” **BHR**, 440–449
- November 13: Authors
 - Michel Foucault, “What is an Author?,” **BHR**, 281–291
 - Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (excerpt)†

Print, Information, and Modernity

WEEK THIRTEEN: THE EXPANDING UNIVERSE OF PRINT

- November 18: Politics and Censorship
 - No assigned reading
 - **Literature review due at the beginning of class.**
- November 20: News and Public Opinion
 - Jürgen Habermas, “On the Genesis of the Public Sphere”†

Thanksgiving Break
November 22 – November 30

WEEK FOURTEEN: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

- December 2: The Scientific Revolution
 - Johns, "The Book of Nature and the Nature of the Book," **BHR**, 255-272.
- December 4: Too Much Information?
 - Thomas Fuller, "On Books"†
 - Ann Blair, "Reading Strategies for Coping with Information Overload in Early Modern Europe"†

WEEK FIFTEEN: THE DECLINE OF PRINT?

- December 9: Standardization
 - "Printing and Language," **CB**, 319-331
- December 11: The End of Print Culture?
 - Paul Duguid, "Material Matters: The Past and Futurology of the Book," **BHR**, 494-508
 - Geoffrey Nunberg, "Farewell to the Information Age," **BHR**, 509-525

FINAL PAPER

- **Deadline: Thursday, December 18, 5:00 p.m.**