Description

This course examines illustrated books, primarily manuscript but also printed, made in Western Europe between the 4th and 16th centuries. The chronological end points are provided by two technological changes in the production and presentation of the written word: at the beginning, the change from the roll to the codex and, at the end, the invention of printing with movable type (these two historical moments of transition take on even greater immediacy because we are currently living during the digital revolution, which is often seen as the third great technological change). Although the course proceeds in a rough chronological order, it will not attempt to be a comprehensive survey of medieval manuscripts or medieval art; rather, it will address in detail some problems raised by the illustrated book as a medium. These include: the two technological shifts noted above; the special importance of the book in Christianity; the various ways in which texts, both narrative and poetic, were illustrated; the implications of medieval reading practices for the study of medieval books; two unusual aspects of many medieval books, the decorated letter and marginal decoration; the book as a luxury object; and the problem of illusionistic images on the flat page of a book. Reed’s recently acquired and unstudied illuminated manuscript will be a major focus of our attention.

Readings

Readings will be from books and journal articles. The following books are available for purchase in the bookstore:

I. Illich, In the Vineyard of the Text (Chicago, 1993)

We will read all of Illich and significant sections of Camille and Clemens and Graham.

Copies of these books as well as of other books from which we will be reading sections are on 2-hour reserve in the Library. Most other readings are on electronic reserve. A few short readings will be handed out in class.

Reed owns a large number of facsimiles of medieval illuminated manuscripts. These are typically quite luxurious, complete photographic reproductions of medieval books. As such, they are excellent for giving the sense of the book as a whole and, in several cases, I have asked you to look at these facsimiles in advance of a particularly class or classes (we will also have access to the books in class). Because of their value, these books are mostly housed in the Library’s Special Collections. The regular hours of Special Collections are 10-12 and 1-4 M, W, Th; outside these times, it is possible to see Special Collections items between 8:00 and 4:30, M-F; to do so, email or phone Gay Walker or Mark Kuestner (x 7782, x7394). You should take
these hours into account in planning your reading.

Papers

There will be three papers. The first, of about 5 pages, due September 24th, will concern problems of illustration, and especially illustrating the Bible, through a consideration of one of R. Crumb’s Genesis illustrations, currently on display at the Portland Art Museum. The second, of about the same length, due October 29th, will examine the interaction of images on a page of your choice from a small group of early 13th-century French luxury books. The third paper, of about 10 pages, due December 13, will study one aspect of an early 16th-century manuscript recently acquired by the Reed College Library; this paper will form the basis for a brief presentation you will make to a seminar on that book we will hold in the last week of classes and an exhibition label you will write on your topic.

I will hand out more detailed versions of these assignments at a later date.

Syllabus

August 30 (M): Introduction: asking questions of manuscripts and how to handle manuscripts

Clemens and Graham, p. 74 (handout)

September 1 (W): The problem of illustration I: the Vatican Vergil

look at Vergilius Vaticanus: vollstandige Faksimile-Ausgabe im Originalformat des Codex Vaticanus Latinus 3225 der Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ed. D. Wright (Graz, 1984; Special Collections: PAQ6804.A73 V3 1980)
D. Wright, The Vatican Vergil: A Masterpiece of Late Antique Art (Berkeley, 1993), 1-2, 22-23, 58-59, 75-84 (handout and reserve)

September 6 (M): NO CLASS—LABOR DAY

September 8 (W): The problem of illustration II: the Quedlinburg Itala

look at plates in I. Levin, The Quedlinburg Itala (Leiden, 1985) (reserve)
"Instructions for a Painter of Miniatures" in C. Davis-Weyer, Early Medieval Art 300-1150, 23-25 (handout)
J. Lowden, “The Beginnings of Biblical Illustration,” Imaging the Early Medieval Bible, ed. J. Williams (University Park, 1999), pp. 40-43 only (handout)
I Samuel 10 and 15; I Kings 5 and 7 [= 1 Kings 10 and 15; 3 Kings 5 and 7] (handout)
Clemens and Graham, chaps. 8 and 11 (pp. 117-128; 181-191)
September 13 (M): From roll to codex; the problem of illustration III: the Vienna Genesis

O. Pächt, Book Illumination in the Middle Ages, Introduction (9-31) (reserve)
K. Weitzmann, Illustrations in Roll and Codex (Princeton, 1970), 69-97 (reserve and e-reserve)
J. Lowden, “The Beginnings of Biblical Illustration,” Imaging the Early Medieval Bible, ed. J. Williams (University Park, 1999), pp. 13-18 only (handout)
M. Levin, "Some Jewish Sources for the Vienna Genesis," Art Bulletin 54 (1972), 240-44 (JSTOR)
Clemens and Graham, chap. 16 (pp. 250-258)

September 15 (W): The manuscript as physical object; discussion of final paper topics

Clemens and Graham, chaps 1-2, 4, and introduction to part 2 (pp. 3-34, 49-70)
“Lot 95, Psalter and Prayerbook, in Latin and French,” Western Manuscripts and Miniatures, Sotheby’s, London, July 5, 2005 (handout)

September 20 (M): The decorated letter and the theology of books and writing I

Pächt, Book Illumination in the Middle Ages, chap. 1-2 (45-94) (reserve)
M. Brown, “In the beginning was the Word”: books and faith in the age of Bede. The Jarrow Lecture 2000 (e-reserve)
look at Codex Lindisfarnensis : Evangeliorum Quattor, Musei Britannici codex Cottonianus Nero D. IV, ed. T. D. Kendrick (Olten, 1960; Special Collections ND3359.L5 B52 1956)
look at Drogo-Sakramentar : manuscript latin 9428, Bibliotheque nationale, Paris (Graz, 1974; Special Collections: BX2037.A3 G73 1974 v. 1)

September 22 (W): The decorated letter and the theology of books and writing II


September 24 (F): PAPER I DUE

September 27 (M) and September 29 (W): NO CLASS; William at conference; work on paper
October 4 (M):  The problem of illustration IV:  the Utrecht Psalter

Pächt, Book Illumination in the Middle Ages, chap. 6 (167-72) (reserve)
look at Utrecht-Psalter : vollständige Faksimile-Ausgabe im Originalformat der Handschrift 32, aus dem Besitz der Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht (Graz, 1984; Special Collections: BX2033.A35 U86 1982)

October 6 (W)-October 11 (M):  The crisis of illustration I:  the Bible moralisée

S. Lipton, Images of intolerance:  The Representation of Jews and Judaism in the Bible moralisée  (Berkeley, 1999), Introduction (1-13) (reserve and e-reserve)
look at Die Bibel Ludwigs des Heiligen : vollständige Faksimile-Ausgabe im Originalformat von MS M.240 der Pierpont Morgan Library (Graz, 1995; Special Collections ND3361.R52 B43 1995)
look at Bible moralisée (Graz, 1973; Special Collections ND3355.B63 1973 v. 2)

Lipton, Images of intolerance:  The Representation of Jews and Judaism in the Bible moralisée  (Berkeley, 1999), chapter 3 (54-81) (reserve and e-reserve)

October 13 (W):  The crisis of illustration II:  the Morgan Picture Bible


FALL BREAK

October 25 (M):  Medieval reading practices I

Illich, In the Vineyard of the Text
Clemens and Graham, chap. 3 (35-48)

October 27 (W):  Medieval reading practices II:  visual implications


October 29 (F): Paper II DUE

November 1 (M): Medieval reading practices III: gender implications


Sand, A. “Vision, Devotion, and Difficulty in the Psalter Hours ‘of Yolande of Soissons,’” *Art Bulletin* 87 (2005), 6-23 (JSTOR)


November 3 (W)-November 8 (M): The Hours of Jeanne d’Evreux: marginal or canonical?

Camille, *Image on the Edge*, preface and chaps. 1, 4-5 (9-55; 99-152) look at F. Avril, *Manuscript Painting at the Court of France* (New York, 1978), commentary to pls. 3-12 (reserve)

Clemens and Graham, c. 13 (208-221)

L. Randall, "Games and Passion in Pucelle's Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux," *Speculum* 42 (1972), 246-57 (JSTOR)


November 10 (W): The manuscript as luxury object I: in the Middle Ages

look at Les très riches heures du duc de Berry: Die Monatsblätter des Kalenders = Les Feuilles du calendrier = The Calendar leaves (Special Collections ND3363.B5 M3 1994)


M. Camille, “‘For Our Devotion and Pleasure:’ The sexual objects of Jean, Duc de Berry,” *Art History* 24 (April, 2001), 169-194 (online access)
November 15 (M): The manuscript as luxury object II: today

M. Camille, "The Tres Riches Heures: An Illuminated Manuscript in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Critical Inquiry 17 (1990), 72-107 (JSTOR)


look at The Book of Kells (Lucerne: Faksimile-Verlag, 1990; Special Collections, ND3359.K4 B6524 1990)

November 17 (W)-November 22 (M): What killed the manuscript? Printing, illusionism, or something else?

E. Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe, 2nd edition (Cambridge, 2005), chaps. 1-3 (pp. 3-101; pagination, but not text, varies slightly in earlier editions, so feel free to use them as well) (reserve)

Pächt, Book Illumination in the Middle Ages, chapter 7 (173-202) (reserve)

Camille, Image on the Edge, chap. 6 (153-60)

Kendrick, Animating the Letter, Conclusion (207-216) (reserve and e-reserve)

November 24 (W): NO CLASS--THANKSGIVING

November 29 (M): the postmodern manuscript

The Secret of Kells (2009)—screening to be arranged

R. Zorach, “New Mediaeval Aesthetic,” Wired 2.01 (January, 1994); available at wired.com/wired/archive/2.01/mediaeval.html

December 1 (W)-December 6 (M): Seminar on manuscript in Reed College Library

December 13 (F) PAPER III DUE