

Introduction to Literary Publishing

English 6953

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In this web-based asynchronous course we will survey the landscape of current literary publishing in the United States. We will consider publishing models and the various roles played by publishing professionals. We will look at literary periodicals, both print and on-line. We will describe the skill-sets needed by publishers, producers, writers, editors and agents, and the challenges they face. We will discuss editorial vision and styles. We'll discuss funding, budgets, book design, and production. We will review organizations, programs, and the role of academia. We will offer an overview of the historical, cultural, political, and sociological roots of literary publishing. We will consider the publisher as writer. We will include screenwriting, film making, and Spoken Word. Finally, we will speculate—and even theorize—on the future of this dynamic industry.

Requirements

You will be asked to read a number of current articles and to view videos by publishing professionals. Each week, you will complete an “issue post” of at least 200 words for the discussion board, and you will respond with one comment of at least 100 words to an issue post of one of your classmates, offering questions, suggestions, encouragement, and criticism. You will also choose from a menu (see below) to make a video and/or written presentation. All presentations are due at the beginning of Week 15. Finally, you will expand one of your issue posts into a publishable article or essay, and you will research journals and periodicals to find the best place to submit the essay for publication.

Topics for Class Presentation

Conceive and pitch a literary journal.
Research grants for a non-profit press.
Conceive and pitch an idea for a literary anthology.
Report on the profiles of five presses specializing in a particular genre or demographic.
Research and evaluate book contests in a particular genre or demographic.
Design a literary blog.
Write two book reviews on new or forthcoming books, and propose venues to submit.
Create a submission policy. Include three sample submissions.
Research five ways to enhance your economic life to increase writing time and/or skills.
Conceive a cover design for a book.
Make a marketing plan for a book.

Final Essay (Due Monday of Week 15)

Choose the issue post that most interests you and expand it into an article of at least 10 pages (12 point font, double spaced) to submit to a journal or periodical you've discovered this term. Make sure the length, style, and subject matter are appropriate to the journal. Write a cover letter to go along with the article. Propose five possible places to submit your essay, saying why you chose each.

Schedule

This Spring, YSU has substituted Spring Break Week with individual days spread over the semester. Since this is an online, asynchronous course, we'll follow a straight 15 week semester, which will end one week before April 30, the official end of the semester. In Week 15 (April 19-23) Issue Posts and Issue Post Responses will follow their normal Thursday and following Monday deadlines, and Publishing Project is due on Monday, April 19. However, you will have an extra week to turn in your Final Essay, which will be due Friday, April 30 at 5:00 PM. All dates listed here are final.

Required Texts and Material

"Publishing Course Packet" (provided as pdf)

All readings and video are available by links in the curriculum.

Grading

Issue Posts: 40%

Response Posts: 10%

Final Essay: 30%

Publishing Project: 20%

Grading Criteria for Final Essay

Since this is a course in literary publishing, the criteria for grading the final essay reflect the standards of that industry. Publishing is competitive. Journals and presses typically accept fewer than 5% of unsolicited submissions. Etruscan, for example, accepts less than 1%. In order to introduce students to this element of competition, only the top 40% of final essays will receive "A." However, it is not necessary to receive an "A" on the final essay to earn an "A" for the course. If you earn full credit for Issue Posts (40% of final grade), Response Posts (10%), and Publishing Project (20%) and also receive a "B" on the final essay (25%) you will still accumulate 95 of 100 points, and be eligible for an "A" as your grade for the course.

An "A" essay

- 1) Addresses an issue in the publishing field, offering a new, original perspective.
- 2) Demonstrates familiarity with the issue and with the professionals and/or organizations involved.
- 3) Demonstrates professional writing skills.
- 4) Is appropriate to its subject and journal expectations in terms of length (minimum 10 pages)
- 5) Is professionally copy-edited and proofed.

- 6) Demonstrates familiarity with the style and requirements of the journals where it will be submitted.
- 7) Is accompanied by a professional cover letter.
- 8) Is judged in the top 40% of submissions.

How to Track Your Grades

The grades for the Final Essay are qualitative. However, grades for Issue and Response Posts and the Publishing Project are quantitative, and can be tracked throughout the term.

Each of the 15 issue posts of 200 words, submitted on time, is worth 2.75% of your final grade (bank error in your favor). No credit for late issue posts. If I see that your post does not make a good faith effort to address the issue prompt, no credit will be allotted for that post, and I will let you know within one week. No make-ups are permitted.

15 Issue Post responses of 100 words are required, totaling 10% of your final grade. You receive .33% of your final grade for each Issue Post response submitted on-time to the discussion board. No credit for late entries or issue posts responses under 100 words. If I see that your response has not made a good faith effort to respond to the issue post or poem, no credit will be allotted, and I will let you know within one week. No make-ups are permitted.

Class Presentations make up 20% of your final grade. You may choose to present a video (10 minute limit) or a power-point presentation, or a document, depending on your choice of subject. The deadline is Monday of Week 15, April 19. Post your presentation to the Issue Post Discussion Board, with heading "Presentation," followed by ...your subject"

To earn full credit a presentation must

1. Be approved as a presentation subject by the end of Week 2.
2. Convey accurate and up-to-date information on the subject.
3. Organize material cogently.
4. Make appropriate use of graphics, if indicated.

Recommended Material

A portable USB drive may come in handy if you don't favor email or cloud storage of files.

Late Work Policy

No credit will be awarded for late work. In the case of Issue Posts, you must submit the Assignment for the week by Thursday at 5:00 PM and Reply to a Classmate by the following Monday at 5:00. This policy is not meant to be punitive, but rather to facilitate discussion.

Policies on Technology, Software, and Personal Responsibility

If you experience any technical glitches with Blackboard, contact the [YSU Tech Desk](#). They can be reached by phone at 330.941.3244 or by email at IDDC@ysu.edu for tech assistance.

You will need regular access to a high-speed internet connection and a computer to participate in this course. If you do not have access to any of the above, plan well ahead of time to locate and

work within a campus computer lab. You are responsible for carefully following all instructions for uploading assignments to our course Blackboard.

Academic Dishonesty

All assignments completed must be the product of your own thought, inquiry, and artistry.

Plagiarism means presenting words, ideas, or information found in works written by others as if they were your own. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, all forms of cheating, as well as receiving inappropriate assistance from others in completing an assignment.

The penalty for plagiarism ranges from failing the assignment to receiving an NC in the course. For more information, please see [the YSU Student Code of Conduct](#).

Incompletes

An incomplete grade will only be given in accordance with University policy. For more information on guidelines and procedures for incompletes, [view the relevant university policies and procedures page here](#).

Additional Recommendations for Success

- Writing is a process. Save your all drafts carefully. Back up your files on a hard drive or in cloud storage. If you write notes or drafts by hand prior to typing your post, carefully store and secure all hard copy materials you work with.
- Adhere to a spirit of compassion and civility in your writing on our course Blackboard, particularly when responding to the thoughts of others. Anyone who disrupts our online learning environment will be referred to YSU Student Conduct.

Campus Resources

- The [YSU Writing Center](#) is an invaluable resource. Student consultants are available to help you with any stage of the writing process in this or any class. For our purposes, consultants can help especially with understanding this syllabus and assignment prompts, drafting ideas, and revising. To register and schedule a free appointment, visit the Writing Center website or call 330.941.3055.
- [Student Counseling Services](#) is available to provide high-quality, short term, confidential mental health counseling, consultation, outreach (educational training), and referral services to all currently enrolled YSU students. Contact them by phone at 330.941.3737.
- The [Center for Student Progress](#) offers academic coaching, tutoring, and many other services and programs to YSU students. Visit them at their location near Dunkin Donuts. Contact them by phone at 330.941.3538.
- For help with Blackboard, the YSU Distance Education Office Help Desk e-mail is IDDC@ysu.edu. Phone is 330-941-3244.
- [Click here](#) to learn about additional free campus resources available to all registered students.

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with University procedures, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course; please contact me privately to discuss

your specific needs. You must be registered with the Center for Student Progress Disability Services, located at 275 Fifth Avenue, and provide a letter of accommodation to coordinate reasonable accommodations. You can reach CSP Disability Services at 330.941.1372.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

Youngstown State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, disability, age, religion or veteran/military status in its programs or activities. Please visit [YSU's page on accessibility compliance](#) for contact information for persons designated to handle questions about this policy.

Week 1
Monday, January 11-Friday, January 15

Introduce Yourself

[Introductory Lecture](#)

[Ohio Governor's Award Video](#)

[National Book Award Ceremony 2012](#)

Local Resources

www.etruscanpress.org

[YSU Poetry Center](#)

[Lit Youngstown](#)

[Penguin Review](#)

[Jenny Magazine](#)

Issue Post #1

Tell us about your experience in publishing. Have you ever submitted work for publication? Have you interacted with book or journal publishers? Do you have a favorite magazine or literary blog? Who are the publishers who produce books in your favorite genre? How would you describe production values and style? Now, interact with one of the organizations listed in "local resources." Check out their website; if possible, attend a sponsored event. Touch base with an officer or participant. Give us your impression.

Week 2
Monday, January 12-Friday, January 22

Publishing Models

80% of book sales in the U.S. are rung up by corporate publishers, but most of the titles published in 2019 came from independent publishers or were self-published. The publishing landscape is moving at galactic speed. This week we will consider the tradition models: corporate, independent for profit, independent nonprofit, university, and single-author, and engage in speculation about their future.

[Introductory Lecture](#)

Reading

[John Winters, “I’m a Self-Publishing Failure”](#)

[Hugh Howey, “Self-publishing is the Future, and Great for Writers”](#)

[Facts and Figures about Self-Publishing](#)

[The Inde Publishing Truth](#)

[What the Big Five Financial Reports Reveal](#)

[Penguin Random House to Buy Simon & Schuster](#)

[Why Authors Walk Away from Good Big Five Publishers](#)

[How Amazon’s Ugly Fight with a Publisher Actually Started](#)

[Amazon and Hachette: The Dispute in 13 Steps](#)

[Interview with Phil Brady on *Best American Poetry Blog*](#)

[Philip Brady, Publisher’s Spotlight, Kenyon Review](#)

Videos

[The Publishing Process at Penguin](#)

[Johnny Temple and Ibrahim Ahmad, Akashic Books](#)

[Scot Danforth, University of Tennessee Press](#)

[Mike Lennon, Norman Mailer's Biographer](#)

[Bill Schneider, Etruscan Managing Editor](#)

Questions

What are the differences between the five publishing models? What purpose does each serve? How and why do they exist? How and why have they changed in the last 10 years?

Issue Post #2

Based on the essays on self-publishing, and the interviews with our five guests, representing independent non-profits, independent for profits, major commercial, and university presses, discuss the different roles and approaches each model plays. How has publishing changed in the past 20 years? Where do you think it will be in 10 years.

Week 3
Monday, January 25-Friday, January 29
Behind the Scenes

There are many different yet interactive roles in the publishing world. Editors come at all levels—from executive editors who make decisions about the direction of the press, to acquisition editors who solicit, pitch and select new projects, to slush-pile readers who...well, read the slush pile. At small presses, one or two people might do all those things. And there are consultants, like [Tom Woll](#), [Siena Oristaglio](#), [Kristina Marie Darling](#), [Molly Pisani](#), and [Jean Casella](#), who offer their experience in a variety of ways to help writers and independent presses. There are professional grant writers, and distributors, and sales people, and book designers and copy-editors. And of course there are agents. As you think about your own agenda, consider the ways your interests and talents would fit in these various roles.

Video

[Introduction to Week 3](#)

[Albert Lafarge: the role of the agent](#)

[Chris Tomasino: agent and editor](#)

[Siena Oristaglio, Void Academy](#)

[Molly Pisani, Starsplitter Editorial Services](#)

[Janine Dubik and Karley Stasko, Free Lance Editors](#)

Questions

How do the various roles involved in publishing interact? What kind of skills and interests characterize each role? How does one “get in the door” in any of these positions? What are the opportunities for advancement?

Issue Post #3

After viewing the videos for this unit, choose an area and write a job description for your dream job in publishing. Require specific skills, challenges, and responsibilities.

Week 4
Monday, February 1-Friday, February 5

Journals: Print & Online

Each month, thousands of writers submit their stories, poems, chapters, essays and reviews to thousands of literary journals. Typically, the journal editors troll through the ‘slush’ piles in search of work that represents their aesthetic. And typically, they publish between 2-10% of unsolicited material. Together with work solicited from established writers, colleagues, friends, and contributing editors, they go about the arduous work of assembling an issue. These journals range from the very prestigious, like [*Poetry*](#), [*The Paris Review*](#), [*Pleiades*](#), [*American Poetry Review*](#) and [*Bomb*](#) to regional, local or issue-based journals, to upstarts that last only a year, or even an issue. But however long-lasting or meteoric, literary journals represent the front line of contemporary literature. It’s here that tastes are formed, feuds conducted, new writers vetted and encouraged, movements advanced, and editors tutored.

On-line platform journals have come a long way in a short time. When the phenomenon of on-line publishing began, selectivity and marketing were spotty, and the readership small. One problem was that there were no problems: virtually no cost and no space limitations. So neither readers nor writers knew what to make of the phenomenon. Writers didn’t think of it as a valid publication credit. Readers didn’t know which on-line venue to visit, and they weren’t accustomed to spending concentrated reading time in an environment that averages 17 seconds between clicks. Another problem was that readers weren’t used to receiving literature on-line. And finally, there was the paucity of literary editors with web-savvy skills. On-line editors are addressing all of these issues. By releasing new content on a more regular basis than a print journal can hope to, on-line journals keep readers coming back. By branding their journals with selective content, they establish identity and set more rigorous standards. Many journals use the multi media and interactivity which are hallmarks of the internet. On-line journals use search engines and social media to attract new audiences. And now some print journals are also offering on-line content, either selected from or in addition to their regular issues.

[Week 4 Introduction](#)

Reading

[Poets & Writers: Literary Magazines](#)

Nestor & Black, [“Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: The Lifespan of a Literary Journal”](#)

[“Best On-Line Literary Magazines](#)

Video

[Wayne Benson on his Basement Poetry Podcast](#)

[Basement Poetry Podcast Episode](#)

[Donna Talarico, Hippocampus](#)

[Amanda Cino, The Start](#)

Questions

What purposes do literary journals serve? How do they impact the literary scene? How long do they last? How long *should* they last? What do the best literary journals, in your opinion, share? What are the most original concepts in print journals?

Issue Post #4

Research examples of three kinds of literary journals (national, regional, issue-based). What is their mission? Why is there a need for their journal? What is their submission base and policy? How do they attract a readership?

Or

Check out 5 of the 15 on-line literary magazines listed in “Best On-Line Literary Magazines.” Review their content and media. List five ways that they use the medium of the internet to expand what a literary journal can do. Choose your favorite on-line journal, and offer 3 suggestions for new directions it might take.

Week 5
Monday, February 8-Friday February 12

Book Reviews and Interviews

The fastest way to get published is to write book reviews. Print journals, on line journals, blogs and platforms like Amazon, audible, and goodreads need content. Writing reviews hones your critical sensibility, forges connections with writers, readers, and publishers, pads your CV, and contributes to good literary citizenship.

[Introduction to Week 5](#)

Reading

Chapters 3 and 4 in Publishing Course Packet

Video

[Scene from *Cloud Atlas*](#)

[Kristina Marie Darling, Penelope Consulting](#)

[How to Write A Book Review](#)

Questions

What are the various kinds and styles of book reviews? What does the reviewer need in order to write an effective review. How do you place a book review for publication?

Issue Post #5

Write the introduction or “hook” to a book review and suggest a venue for publication. Choose a new title in a sub-genre where you have expertise.

Week 6
Monday, February 15-Friday, February 19

Organizations, Conferences, Festivals, Reading Series, Events

Despite (or because of) the fact that writing is a lonely endeavor, writers, publishers, and editors have formed a number of national organizations. In addition, many regional or interest-group-based organizations have emerged. Some of the most important organizations are the Associated Writers Program ([AWP](#)), Poets & Writers ([PW](#)), [The Poets' House](#), the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses ([CLMP](#)), [Vida: Women in the Literary Arts](#), the Association of American Publishers ([AAP](#)), the Book Industry Study Group (BISG), the Association of American University Presses ([AAUP](#)), [Cave Canem](#), The [Small Press Center](#), [Small Press Distribution](#), [Consortium Distribution](#), and the [Independent Book Publishers Association](#). Some of these organizations hold annual conferences, like the Associated Writers Program Conference, or festivals like [Book Expo America](#) and [The Dodge Poetry Festival](#), where you can parley with publishers and see the newest lists of titles on display. Many cities, such as [Boston](#), [Brooklyn](#), and [Los Angeles](#), host major book festivals. There are also local festivals like [Hippocamp](#) and Lit Youngstown's [Fall Literary Festival](#). Conferences and festivals offer opportunities to survey the publishing world, discover the latest trends, and network with fellow editors, agents, writers and publishers. In addition to one-time or yearly gatherings, there are reading series. Thousands of venues around the country host regular readings, usually sorted by genre, school, region, or prestige. For instance, the [92nd Street Y](#) offers readings and classes by poets, writers, and artists from around the world. [The Nuyorican Cafe](#) and the [Bowery Poetry Club](#) bring Spoken Word to the stage. Open mics, readings in café's and bars like [KGB](#), regular performances in parks and outdoor venues like [Bryant Park](#), proliferate in cities and towns around the country.

[Introduction to Week 6](#)

Video

[Dr. Bonnie Culver on the Associated Writers' Program](#)

[Monique Lewis on "At the Inkwell"](#)

Issue Post #6

Choose one of the following:

- 1) Write a proposal for a publishing panel for the next Associated Writers Program Conference. Check out their website to see what information you will need to gather to make a successful proposal.
- 2) If you have already attended a conference or festival, use issue post #5 to report on what you saw and learned.
- 3) Visit or call the headquarters of a publishing or writers organization. Speak with the staff. Report back on what you find. What resources are available? What did you discover?
- 4) Select one non-profit and one for-profit press and find out what organizations they belong to. What kind of support do they receive from these organizations? What obligations do they undertake?

Week 7
Monday, February 22-Friday, February 26

How We Got Here: Historical Overview of Publishing

Writers don't make books. They make sentences, paragraphs, lines, stanzas, stories, songs and novels. Seanachies, guslars and griots made them and passed them from generation to generation long, long before the advent of publishing. Books? That's what we make: Publishers. In this unit we consider the impact of our presence and our technology on western civilization. We'll read theories about the transition from oral to literate culture, innovations from Homer through Gutenberg to the post-print contemporary world. We will place our 3000 years of Western printing in a broader, 50,000 year context of story and song making.

[Introduction to Week 7](#)

Reading

[Leonard Shlain: *The Alphabet vs. The Goddess* Preface & Chapter 1](#)

[Walter Ong: *On the Differences between Orality and Literacy*](#)

Jerome Rothenberg, [Pre-Face to *Technicians of the Sacred*](#)

[Eric Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, Chapter 1](#)

[Eric Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write* Chapters 1-2](#)

[Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales* Introduction](#)

Video

[Philip Brady, Chapter on Publishing from *To Banquet with the Ethiopians: A Memoir of Life Before the Alphabet*](#)

Questions

What impact has the spread of literacy had on the human psyche? On western culture? On politics? Economics? Do you agree with the arguments of Ong, Shlain, Havelock and Rothenberg about the cataclysmic shifts in culture and identity caused by literacy? What landmarks in the history of print, in your view, are the most important? The most promising? The most troubling? In what ways does the post-print 21st century landscape hearken back to the pre-Homeric world? How do these questions affect your notion of what it means to "publish."

Issue Posts #7a & #7b

Do *both* of the following.

A. Pick up a book. Open to random page. Read twice. Then close the book and speak the page out loud. Don't summarize. Improvise. Riff. Make it up. Then re-read. How has your version departed from the written version? What does this say about the relationship between the printed and uttered word? What does it say about the transition from orality to literacy? Your written response will make issue post #7a

B. Genres and sub-genres are, in a literate world, defined by their print iterations. Print does not merely record, but complicates and reifies the practices and conventions of genre. How would genres perhaps be different without print? Create different categories, imagining that the only standard came from what you heard, rather than read. Instead of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, drama, there might be...what? Describe the characteristics of your genre. Give three examples of each genre from currently printed books, for issue post #7b..

Week 8
Monday, March 1-Friday, March 5

Publishing, Culture, and Capitalism

Not long ago, publishing was a “Gentlemanly” business. Centered in Manhattan, it was male, white, and tweedy. While women, African-Americans, Asian Americans, and other minorities have made inroads as authors, many cultural theorists argue that the publishing business itself remains predominantly monochrome. However, other cultural and economic factors have changed the nature of the business. Conglomerates have taken over and consolidated what were once large ‘family’ style businesses. The internet and desktop publishing have allowed a wider variety of participation. So it seems that consolidation, role re-evaluation, and expansion are happening at the same time.

This week we will delve into the way that the business of making and selling books has passed from the hands of ‘gentlemanly’ editors to international conglomerates. Through mergers, takeovers, and resource-sharing, many small or mid-size houses have become ‘imprints’ of fewer and larger houses, many of whom have interests and resources far beyond book publishing. At the same time, corporations have put many independent book stores out of business, and on-line sales have consolidated in Amazon. On the other hand, with digital design and printing and e-books, it is easier than ever to start a publishing company. If you have a laptop you’re good to go.

[Introduction to Week 8](#)

Reading

[To Achieve Diversity In Publishing](#)

[Deborah Kogan, My So-Called Post-Feminist Life in Arts and Letters](#)

Scott Timberg, [“Book Publishing Crisis: Capitalism Kills Culture”](#)

Eric Pfanner & Amy Chozick [“Random House and Penguin Merger Creates Global Giant”](#)

Scott Turow, [The Slow Death of the American Author,](#)

Adam Davidson, [“How Dead Is the Book Business?”](#))

[Why is Publishing So White](#)

[Publishing Saw Upheaval in 2020](#)

Video

[Dr. Laurie Carter on Publishing](#)

[Johnny Temple on Diversity in Publishing](#)

Questions

Are all points of view being adequately represented in today's publishing world? If not, why not? If representation is inadequate, what are the consequences? Should publishing consider 'affirmative action'? How is the landscape changing? What cultural forces are in play? What is your attitude toward these issues? How is the relationship between business and art changing the publishing industry? What are the major causes of these changes? How do they relate to trends in other businesses? How do they affect the writing and selling of books? What about small presses and single author presses: how can they compete in this market? What about the on-line and digital world?

Issue Post #8

Research statistics on the ratio of female-male; minority-caucasian; and young-old in the publishing communities. What are your findings? Did they surprise you? Why?

Or

You are the agent for a famous dead author. Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Joyce, Virginia Wolff, Melville, etc. You may choose your client. "Pitch" an iconic classic novel to a corporate house. Now pitch it to an indie press. How are these sales pitches different?

Week 9
Monday, March 8-Friday, March 12

Production, Distribution, Marketing, Grants

Technology has made it easier than ever to produce a codex. While achieving high production values takes skill and experience, an indie publisher can design the interior of a book from their laptop; a graphic artist can design the cover; [ISBN](#)'s are cheap and easy to acquire. Companies like [Bookmobile](#) and [Lightning Source](#) can produce units in very small numbers cheaply using print-on-demand technology. E-books require no print costs at all. Even so, producing the book is only the first step. How do you get that book to the public? While over 1 million ISBN's were issued in 2019, most of those books do not have any distribution beyond an Amazon web page. Distributors like [Consortium](#) play a key role for independent presses, competing with the big five by bundling together seasons from stable, well-known inde's to present titles to big box stores, libraries, and online stores. There are also opportunities in Grant-Writing. For instance, the [Foundation Center](#) lists grants for non-profits. Independent presses also offer opportunities for Graphic Designers and copy editors.

[Introduction to Week 9](#)

Reading

[How Book Distribution and Fulfillment Function](#)

Pamela Turchin,

[“Everything You Wanted to Know about Working for Etruscan Press But Were Afraid to Ask”](#)

[Consortium Distributors 2020 Catalog](#)

Marketing Plan for *Bestiality of the Involved* (Course Packet)

[Study Guide for Bruce Bond's *Scar*](#)

[Copyediting vs. Proofreading](#)

[Grant Opportunities for Writers](#)

[Grant Opportunities for Non-Profits](#)

[What a Book Cover Can Do](#)

[The Best Book Covers of 2020](#)

[How to Design a Great Book Cover](#)

Video

[Lisa Reynolds on Book Design](#)

[Pamela Turchin on Book Production](#)

[Janine Dubik & Karley Stasko on copyediting](#)

[Kristin Weller and April Bogle on organization for KJB Books](#)

[Fran Reilly on Grantwriting](#)

Questions

What are the most important issues in producing, financing, and distributing books? What possible problems must be surmounted? What areas of production, design, editing and fundraising interest you the most? Why?

Issue Post #9

Choose one of the following:

Design three book covers for one unpublished manuscript. Write about how you made the design, which one you would choose, and why.

Make a marketing plans for a title that's already published.

Present and summarize three grant opportunities that you might be eligible for.

Make a study guide for a book of your choice.

Resurrect one of your undergraduate essay and copyedit page 1.

Week 10
Monday, March 15-Friday, March 19

Developing an Editorial Vision

People gravitate to publishing for all sorts of reasons. Some are bibliophiles, or graphomaniacs, or even shrewd business people trolling for a break. But I think that the most powerful pull toward publishing is advocacy. You want to see something—something particular—in print. Sometimes the catalyst is a book. For Johnny Temple, it was a novel called *The Fuck Up*. For me, it was a book chronicling American writers' responses to 9/11. But usually, behind the object is an idea. Something, to paraphrase Jerome Rothenberg, you have not found elsewhere but for whose existence you feel a deep need.

[Introduction to Week 10](#)

Reading

Philip Brady ["This is Heyen Speaking,"](#)

Philip Brady ["Ginsberg in Ballydehob"](#)

Video

[Bob Mooney, Etruscan Press](#)

[David Poyer & Lenore Hart, Northampton House](#)

[Kaylie Jones, Publisher of Kaylie Jones Books](#)

[Larry Moore, Broadstone Books](#)

Questions

What makes a good editor? How does an editor shape the vision of a publishing company? How would you describe your editorial vision? How has your own writing and reading changed your editorial vision?

Issue Post #10

Choose three publishers with different models and missions and review their mission statements. Then take a look at one title from each publisher. How does the book reflect the mission statement?

Week 11
Monday, March 22-Friday, March 26

Developing an Editorial Style

This unit will consider ways in which editors make and support their editorial selections, and how they work with the books they have selected.

[Introduction to Week 11](#)

Reading

Philip Brady, “On Becoming a Poetry Editor” (Chap 6 Course Packet)

Sample Submissions in Chap 6 Course Packet

[C.Michael Curtis, Interview on Publishing](#)

Video

[Tim Seibles, On Making a Book of Poetry](#)

Questions

How do editors make choices? Do they rely on ‘objective’ standards? Do they focus on particular genres, styles, or subject matters? Do they rely on their own taste? How do they develop this taste? Do they follow trends? Do they prefer ‘finished’ books or projects which seem to have the most potential? To what extent do they follow—or shape—the flow of the book market?

Issue Post #11

This exercise will simulate an editorial meeting. Choose one of the four submissions in Chapter 6 of the course packet from each genre (poetry, fiction, non-fiction) Base your decision on your own aesthetic vision. After you’ve chosen one work of poetry, one of fiction, and one non-fiction, write a mission statement which explains your choice, and how your choice will determine future decisions.

Week 12
Monday, March 29-Friday April 2

Movies, Plays, Screenwriting, Spoken Word

In this course, we take the broadest view of publication to include films, plays, and Spoken Word. While these genres have their own traditions and practices, it's interesting to see the many parallels are shared with the print publishing world. Common issues include production, distribution, marketing, acquisition and networking.

[Week 12 Introduction](#)

Reading

[What do Movie Producers Do?](#)

[What do Movie Directors Do?](#)

[What Does a Screenwriter Do?](#)

David Browne, [Pop Star Poetics](#)

Videos

[On Producing from TV series, "Get Shorty"](#)

[Ross Klavan on Screenwriting](#)

[Susan Cartsonis on Film Production](#)

[Jean Klein on Script Publishing](#)

[Sean Hatten on Independent Filmmaking](#)

[Gregory Fletcher, Play Direction, Play Writing, Stage Management](#)

[Angelique Palmer on Spoken Word](#)

Questions

Film-producing, screenwriting, theatre production, script publication and Spoken Word have diverse relationships with economics. How do economic factors influence these art forms? How do these art forms differ in acquisition, production, and distribution from literary publications?

Issue Post #12

Ross Klavan talks about a meeting between scriptwriter and producer. Schedule such a meeting and pitch your project to Susan Cartsonis.

Or

Attend (or watch on youtube) a slam contest. Judge the contest and explain and justify your scores.

Week 13
Monday, April 5-Friday, April 9

The Publisher as Writer

Many publishers are writers, and certainly all publishers participate vitally and intimately in the act of creativity—through editing, writing copy, and title acquisition. Being a writer/editor presents many challenges: it's sometimes difficult to sit down in front of a blank page after rejecting finished work of a high quality from someone else. But it also presents great opportunity: by dipping into the flow of contemporary literature, you have the chance to see patterns and tendencies that are not clear to those who read only published works. You have the chance to hone your own truly original voice. You read fresh: without a context. And when you do finish your work, you will have a high standard by which to judge it. So this unit will focus on ways that your role as editor and publisher can enhance your role as writer.

[Week 13 Introduction](#)

Reading

Johnny Temple, ["An Argument for Writers Taking Charge"](#) (*Poets & Writers*, April 22, 2005)

Philip Brady, "The Book I Almost Wrote" (in course packet)

Chapter 7 Course Packet

Questions

How has the work you've done this term enhanced your writing? How has it inhibited your creative efforts? How has it changed the direction of your writing? How has it affected your casual reading? How should writers 'take charge'? How does being an editor change your perspective on writing?

Issue Post #13

Split yourself in two: one part of you is the writer, and the other the editor. Give the parts different names, stories, identities, ethnicities, genders, etc. Now submit a recent work by the "writer" to the "editor". Issue post # 13 will be the "editor's" comments and critiques—and ultimately, his/her decision to publish or not.

Week 14
Monday, April 12-Friday, April 16

University Programs

Since the first MFA workshops at the University of Iowa in the 1950's, Creative Writing has proliferated as a university discipline. Today, there are approximately 220 universities offering the MFA; while many schools offer a BFA as well. Meanwhile, enrollment in traditional English Departments has declined.

[Week 14 Introduction](#)

Readings

[MFA vs. NYC](#)

[MFA vs. NYC: A Reading List](#)

[5 Bad Reasons to Pursue an MFA](#)

Chapter 8 in Course Packet

Video

[David Hicks, Director of the Wilkes Creative Writing Program](#)

[Maggie Anderson, Co-Founder of the NEOMFA](#)

[Barb Taylor, Novelist and MFA graduate](#)

Issue Post #14

After reviewing the AWP guidelines, and hearing MFA directors Maggie Anderson and David Hicks and MFA graduate Barb Taylor, write a proposal to inaugurate an MFA program. Describe

your mission. What genres will you feature? Outline your requirements? Include at least one experimental feature in your proposal.

Or

Write a letter to an emerging writer urging them not to enroll in an MFA program. Give your reasons. Offer alternatives which would better nurture and sustain their writing careers.

Week 15
Monday, April 19-Friday, April 23

[Valedictory Lecture](#)

Class Presentations & Final Essay Due on Monday

Post your Presentations on the Discussion Board by Monday. You may make a video presentation, or a power point, or word doc, or combination. There will be a dropbox for the final essay. All responses must be posted by Friday.

Issue Post #15

Write the mission statement for the literary press, film company, journal, or event series you would like to start.

Interviews

[Ibrahim Ahmad and Johnny Temple](#), Publishers
[Maggie Anderson](#), Poet and MFA Program Director
[Wayne Benson](#), Poet and Podcaster
[April Bogle](#) and [Kristin Weller](#), Editors
[Susan Cartsonis](#), Film Producer
[Amanda Cino](#), On-line Publisher
[Bonnie Culver](#), Playwright and MFA Program Director
[Scot Danforth](#), Editor
[Kristina Darling](#), Literary Consultant
[Janine Dubik](#) and [Karley Stasko](#), Copyeditors
[Gregory Fletcher](#), Playwright, Director, and Stage Manager
[Lenore Hart](#) and [David Poyer](#), Novelists and Publishers
[Shawn Hatten](#), Independent Film Maker
[David Hicks](#), Novelist and MFA Program Director
[Kaylie Jones](#), Novelist and Publisher
[Ross Klavan](#), Scriptwriter and Novelist
[Jean Klein](#), Publisher and Playwright
[Albert Lafarge](#), Literary Agent
[Mike Lennon](#), Biographer and Professor
[Monique Lewis](#), Writer and Literary Organizer
[Robert Mooney](#), Novelist and Editor
[Larry Moore](#), Publisher
[Siena Oristaglio](#), Consultant
[Angelique Palmer](#), Spoken Word Artist
[Molly Pisani](#), Independent Editor
[Fran Reilly](#), Grantwriter
[Lisa Reynolds](#), Book Designer
[Bill Schneider](#), Fiction Writer and Editor
[Tim Seibles](#), Poet and Professor
[Donna Talarico](#), On-line Publisher and Consultant
[Barb Taylor](#), Novelist
[Chris Tomasino](#), Literary Agent
[Pamela Turchin](#), Production Editor

