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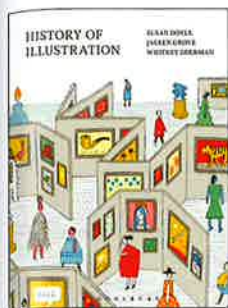
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Cover: Detail of Nicolas Jenson's roman type from a page in his *Quintilian* (1471). Courtesy Verona, Biblioteca Civica (enlarged to 220%).

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Unless otherwise noted all books are hardback*



Susan Doyle, *editor*, Jaleen Grove and Whitney Sherman, *associate editors*. *History of illustration*. New York: Fairchild Books, 2018. 305 x 229 mm. Pp. xxxvii, 554. ISBN 978-1-5013-4211-0 (hbk); 978-1-5013-4210-3 (pbk). £190.00 (hbk), £72.00 (pbk). 950 color illustrations.

Aimed at undergraduate illustration and design students, *History of illustration* is an introductory survey covering a wide range of international illustration traditions, theories of the visual, and both print and on-line reference material, to provide a well-grounded foundation for further research and study. Designed as a classroom textbook and written primarily by college and university faculty members, this hefty volume includes entries by fifty authors, along with thirty or more others providing peer-reviews, under the editorial direction of Susan Doyle, head of the Illustration Department at the Rhode Island School of Design, along with associate editors Jaleen Grove, an independent scholar and member of the Visual Literacy Foundation of Canada, and Whitney Sherman, director of the graduate program in Illustration Practice at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

Nearly six years in the making, the book had its genesis at a gathering of academic and industry professionals where a demand was voiced for a comprehensive and authoritative text covering illustration in its many forms. 'Our hope', states Grove, 'is that this will legitimize illustration as a field with a long history of its own ... placing illustration at the core rather than the periphery of visual communication'.

With an index that begins with '3-D modeling' and ends with modern 'Zoology', the book's nearly 600 pages reflect the illustration of printed media from the first handprint in a cave to digital technology. Doyle defines illustration as 'visual communication through pictorial means', created to serve four purposes – to document, to narrate, to persuade, and/or to ornament. Limited discussion is wasted trying to distinguish the history of illustration from the history of art since,

according to the editors, most printed images before the advent of modern mass communication qualify as illustration by this definition.

The textbook is divided into five sections (subdivided into twenty-nine chapters) entitled 'Illustrative traditions in Europe, Asia and Africa', 'Images as knowledge, ideas as power', 'The advent of mass media', 'Diverging paths in 20th century American and European illustration' and 'The evolution of illustration in an electronic age'. Each chapter is limited to approximately eighteen pages incorporating as many as thirty-seven small images (each with their own description and annotations), a list of key terms, at least one theme-box with a single concept or technology further discussed, and a brief conclusion. The emphasis is on the visual, relying on the illustrations to augment and enrich what is introduced with each concise albeit limited essay.

The book's first section provides eight breathless chapters highlighting major developments in visual communication from prehistoric times to 1900 in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe. Senior scholars in narrow disciplines will grimace but their grandsons and granddaughters reading the latest issue of the tablet-based magazine *Adam* will be delighted to discover its origins in sixteenth-century Italy. And in turn, those scholars uninformed in contemporary media archeology will be fascinated by twenty-first-century developments in interactive and multimedia illustration. Most of all, readers will gain a sense of belonging to a tradition and a field with ancient roots as well as contemporary social relevance.

Section two focuses on the expansion of European print culture and section three narrows the coverage to the United States and Great Britain when discussing the advent of mass media production. Sections four and five deal with a broad range of specific topics and genres, such as propaganda posters, comics *versus* comix, children's picture books, fashion and medical illustration, and so on. The overwhelming emphasis of these chapters is on American popular culture and commercial publishing, happily ending once again with an international scope thanks to on-line and born-digital publications. The editors admit a North American emphasis, while making a significant attempt to include

global examples and information that give the undergraduate an understanding and appreciation for major forms of visual and pictorial communication.

Beyond situating illustrations in a time and place as material objects, the book offers practical research methodologies for evaluating visual images, encouraging students to develop the critical skills necessary to bring intellectual rigor to current illustration production. This will also be useful for teachers seeking pedagogical techniques to assist in the classroom. To this end, a website is available to registered and approved instructors providing a guide to lesson plans, supplementary assignments and lecture notes, sample test questions and PowerPoint presentations with images from the book.

Not all chapter authors have chosen to suggest further reading, and their lists are easily confused with the bibliographies combined at the back of the volume, again covering only some chapters and not others. This leaves topics such as 'Illustrative traditions in the Muslim context', without any outside sources to augment the author's brief introduction. The glossary, on the other hand, is especially helpful to beginners and those outside the discipline given the colloquialisms and product names included throughout the texts.

Finally, *History of illustration* takes a significant leap into the early twenty-first century, noting 'while illustrators and audiences continue to value the physical artifact and the agency of the individual maker, computer technologies have fundamentally changed the creation, distribution, and reception of images'. Current copyright laws pose a significant roadblock for the study and dissemination of images both for the creator and the student. Image viewing in a digital world, where every screen may offer a slightly different view, brings into question the permanence of authorship and artifact. These and many other questions are addressed in the *History of illustration*, opening its readers to a larger and ever-changing global dialogue while still grounding them in the fundamentals of international visual culture.

*Julie Mellby*



Lotte Hellinga, *Incunabula in transit: people and trade*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018. *Library of the written word* 62. *The handpress world* 47. Pp. xiv, 519 + [8] pages of colour plates, illustrated. ISBN 978-90-04-34035-0 (hard-back), price €185.00; 978-90-04-34046-7 (e-book), price €168.00.

This is a companion to Dr Hellinga's *Texts in transit*, published in the same series in 2014 and reviewed by me in these pages in 2016 (*PHS Journal*, new series 24, pp. 92–94). A good many of the comments and assessments of both book and author made in that review apply equally to the present volume. My remarks about the author's status as one of the most respected and influential writers on incunabula of this or any other age can be repeated without qualification. Like the earlier book, *Incunabula in transit* is a gathering of essays, the majority previously published in various collections, *Festschriften* and journals, but overhauled for their appearance here. Two of the essays are entirely new. The essays here are more varied in length, focus and quality, and the overall mass is greater; some of the essays are long indeed, some are complex, some are both, and the general theme is not so much incunabula 'in transit' as incunabula in all their aspects – their editing, printing, publishing, advertising, sale and collecting.

After a brief general introduction, chapter one is 'Book auctions in the fifteenth century', a relatively brief but fascinating account of five sales (not all auctions), held between 1429 and 1489, for which manuscript records survive. The following chapter is also brief, and discusses 'Advertising and selling books in the fifteenth century', with an appendix of known fifteenth-century advertisements and catalogues. Hellinga presents evidence for a procedure of selling books at inns and other public buildings, with printed or manuscript lists being circulated before the sale, and of printer-publishers selling books printed by other presses among their own stock from the earliest days for which documentation survives. While the discussion of advertisements is solid, some of the author's assertions are questionable; for example she notes that Gutenberg and Fust were able to sell their Bible 'without the help of advertising' (p. 23) and that this pattern was repeated for other books printed before the late 1460s (p. 24); certainly no advertising matter from this period has yet