CENSORSHIP FROM THE INQUISITION TO THE PRESENT

Autumn Quarter 2017   Dr. Stuart McManus (SIFK)
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Location: SCRC (Regenstein Library 133)   Office Hours: Thurs 10-12
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Collaborative research seminar on the history of censorship and information control, with a focus on the history of books and information technologies. The class will meet in Special Collections, and students will work with instructors to prepare an exhibit, "The History of Censorship," to be held in the Special Collections exhibit space in Autumn 2018. Students will work with rare books and archival materials, design exhibit cases, write exhibit labels, and contribute to the exhibit catalog. Half the course will focus on censorship in early modern Europe, Latin America and Iberian Asia, including the Inquisition, the printing press, and clandestine literature in the Renaissance and Enlightenment. Special focus on the effects of censorship on classical literature, both newly rediscovered works like Lucretius and lost books of Plato, and authors like Pliny the Elder and Seneca who had been available in the Middle Ages but became newly controversial in the Renaissance. The other half of the course will look at modern and contemporary issues, from wartime censorship, to comic books, to digital-rights management, to free speech on our own campus. Students may choose whether to focus their own research and exhibit cases on classical, early modern, modern, or contemporary censorship.

EXHIBIT PROCESS:

As a team, we are preparing a museum exhibit, which will take place in the Special Collections Research Center's museum space in Regenstein library, in Autumn 2018. The exhibit will also have a published catalog. Everyone in the class will create some part of the exhibit, and contribute to the published catalog. Preparing an exhibit is the opposite of writing a paper in many ways, since in a paper you have lots of length and sources, and usually the more ambitious the topic the more length you have. And, with a paper, usually a shorter first draft is expanded into a longer final form. Exhibits are the opposite: studies show that visitors become exhausted after 200-250 words, so you must make a powerful and historically significant argument using only a few sources (the ones that fit in the case), and very few words. Thus your earlier proposals and preliminary object lists will be much longer than the final exhibit text you submit at the end of the term. Your final contributions on average will consist of several short texts which add up to no more than 1,000 words. Concise writing, which packs lots of information into a minimum of words, is a master-level writing skill, invaluable in the world of professional publishing, and you must work hard on your final text to make certain it is absolutely the best it can be.

Your contribution to the exhibit may take one of five forms:

1) Exhibit Case:

There are eight free-standing exhibit cases in the museum space. Each can display between six and twelve items on average, depending on the size of the items and how they are displayed. Many items will be books, but some may be single pages, letters, prints, or art objects, which can sometimes be displayed vertically on the back panel of the case. Each case will be curated by a team of two or three students, who will choose a topic for the case, select the items for it, and write the item labels and overall case text. Each item label must be between 50 and 100 words, and the overall case text—introducing the case and its themes—must be between 200 and 250 words. Cases come in two sizes (large and small) and sometimes large cases can be divided in half to treat two different topics.

2) Contribution to the Ando Case:

In the back of the exhibit space is one very large case, called the "Ando Case" after its architect. It can hold around 30 to 50 items, depending on the size and display method, and it has space for hanging a number of prints, paintings, drawings, pages, or signs in the rear. This case will be curated by a large team, focusing on one overarching theme, with each team member curating a small subsection of the case. The case may have one, two, or three 200-250 word explanatory text panels, and smaller "focus panels" in each subsection ~150 words in length, in addition to labels for each item of 50-100 words each. We will choose the theme for the Ando case as a group, though the Inquisition could be a very appropriate theme for it, leaving the other cases to treat other topics. The case could also be a chronological overview of some kind.

3) Infographic/Poster (+ Pedestal Case):

Some of you may prefer to study forms of censorship and information control which are not represented well in our library's collections. These may be areas that do not have relevant material objects—such as digital media—or materials our library happens not to own. Such students can create a poster with images, graphs, and information, which will hang on the walls in our exhibit alongside the physical cases. You do not have to do the layout for the poster—our exhibit designer will do that—but you need to write text, select and obtain images, and create graphs or timelines if you want them. Posters should contain no more than 400 words of text in blocks no longer than 250 words at the most (so, for example, one 250 word introduction and three 75 word labels on graphics), and may contain any number of appropriate images. Posters may be solo projects or completed in teams. The library also has three pedestal cases, capable of displaying only a single item, so up to three posters may accompany a single displayed item.

4) The Banned Bookcase:

Part of our exhibit will be a large open bookcase (i.e. set of bookshelves) against one wall of the exhibit, which we will fill with books (from the library stacks) which have at some point been banned, censored, restricted etc. Seats nearby will encourage visitors to sit and read. We will write a short explanation of the censorship history of each book (~100 words), and print these on bookmark-like slips, which will be inserted into each book, so visitors can learn about their many histories. A team of students will select books, write the slips and oversee other aspects of this interactive exhibit. Other students are welcome to suggest books for our Banned Bookcase, and to supply the label text for books relevant to their research.

5) Team Support:

Some students, instead of curating a section themselves, may contribute to our team effort by aiding others and the overall project. For example, the Smart Museum of Art has many art objects relevant to our project, and lends objects to the library for exhibits. The addition of a piece of visual art—a statuette, a bowl, a painting—can help give visual structure to cases which are otherwise a sea of books. We will probably have one student assigned to help all teams by searching through the Smart Museum gallery holdings to find appropriate objects for us to borrow, and who will help fill out the long and complicated paperwork necessary to borrow them. Other students may help with the overall editorial process, oversee teams such as the Ando Case team, or serve as a liaison between the posters and cases, or cases and Banned Bookcase.

GRADING AND REQUIREMENTS:

20% Participation and Reading: You must come prepared and contribute to discussion.
5%   Written Assignment 1: Three suggestions for the exhibit/catalog (October 5th)
10% Written Assignment 2: Formal proposal for your contribution to the exhibit. (Oct. 19th)
10% Written Assignment 3: Preliminary object lists & appropriate reports. (Oct. 26th)
10% Written Assignment 4: Final object lists and reports due. (November 2nd)
15% Written Assignment 5: Complete first draft of exhibit content. (November 9th)
10% Written Assignment 5: Peer critique of three classmates' drafts. (November 16th)
20% Final contribution to the exhibit (November 28th).

Optional Extra Credit Writing Exercises: Writing well is invaluable, but also challenging. Up to three times per semester (any time before the last class session), you may complete one of the extra credit assignments described below and receive a bonus equivalent to up to 5% of the course grade. These are exercises are based on those used in professional creative writing workshops and journalism training programs. They are designed to teach you how to improve your writing skills on your own time, which should in turn improve your grades on future writing assignments (in this class and others), not to mention giving you writing skills which will be valuable lifelong. You may do each assignment once, or repeat them, doing the same one up to three times. If you choose to do more than three extra credit assignments, only the best three will be counted. If you are interested in further opportunities to work on writing, talk to me.

- **Extra-Credit Assignment #1: Wikipedia Page:** Choose a figure, text, issue, place etc. that we have discussed, and contribute substantially to its Wikipedia article. You must discuss this with the instructors in advance—we have a teaching portal set up within Wikipedia to let us guide and monitor your additions to the Wikipedia page. More substantial edits may count as double or triple extra credit. This is a wonderful way to put your research permanently at the service of the public.
- **Extra-Credit Assignment #2: "Half and Half Again":** Take a paper, of at least four pages in length, which you have written for a different class (either in college or in High School) and rewrite it to make exactly the same arguments in half as many words. You must hand in both the original paper and the shortened version.
  - **To do more** wait a week and then reduce the SAME paper by half AGAIN to one quarter of its original length. This is the ultimate exercise in mastering concision.

BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT THE SEMINARY CO-OP BOOKSTORE:

We encourage you to buy books at the Seminary Co-op (not Amazon) to support independent bookstores. If buying books is a financial burden, speak to an instructor about borrowing copies.

1. *The Inquisition in New Spain, 1536–1820*, ed. John F. Chuchiak IV.
2. John Milton, *Areopagitica.*
3. Robert Darnton, *Censors at Work.*

READING:

We are reading excerpts from these, available on e-reserve, but you may want to read more for your research. They are on reserve for our course in Regenstein, and accessible through Canvas:

1. Martin Nesvig, *Ideology and Inquisition: the World of the Censors in Early Mexico.*
2. Cory Doctorow, *Information Doesn't Want to be Free: Laws for the Internet Age*.
3. Cory Doctorow, *Content: Selected Essays on Technology, Creativity, Copyright, and the Future of the Future.*
4. Adrian Johns, *Piracy: The Intellectual Property Wars from Gutenberg to Gates.*
5. Liebman, *The Jews in New Spain: Faith, Flame, and the Inquisition.*
6. Robert Darnton, *Censors at Work.*
7. Christopher Black, *The Roman Inquisition.*
8. Priolkar, *The Goa Inquisition*.
9. Lynn Hunt ed., *The Invention of Pornography.*

Other books you may find useful:

10. Michael Hunter and David Wootton eds*., Atheism from the Reformation to the Enlightenment* (especially the chapters by David Wootton and Nicholas Davidson).
11. Anton M. Matytsin, *The Specter of Skepticism in the Age of Enlightenment.*
12. Alan C. Kors, *Atheism in France,* and its two following volumes *Epicureans and Atheists in France¸* and *Naturalism and Unbelief in France*.
13. Kenneth Shepard, *Anti-Atheism in Early Modern England 1580-1720.*
14. Michael Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*.
15. The Penn State "Magic in History" series.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings will be discussed on the day they are listed, so the readings listed as 1b (Jan 5th) should be read before that day, and will be discussed on Jan 5th.

1. Introduction: What are Censorship and Information Control?
    a. **September 26th:** Introduction
        i. No assignment for this class
    b. **Sept 28:** The Breadth of These Issues
        i. Robert Darnton, *Censors at Work,* pages 13-37.
        ii. E-reserves: (these are short, equivalent to about 65 pages all together)
            1. Lorraine Boissoneault, "A Brief History of Book Burning, from the Printing Press to Internet Archives," (Smithsonian.com)
            2. George Orwell, "The Prevention of Literature," in Irving Howe ed., *Orwell's 1984*, (original essay 1946)
            3. George Orwell, *1984,* chapters 1, 4, and excerpts from 5. (This is the longest reading this week, by a longshot.)
            4. American Library Association Office of Intellectual Freedom, "Top 100 Banned/Challenged Books: 2000-2009."
            5. Neil Gaiman, "Why Defend Freedom of Icky Speech?" (blog post)
            6. Agostino Vesucci to Niccolò Machiavelli reporting on a pirated edition of Machiavelli's *Histories.*
            7. Book Proposal: "Human Censors" a proposal for <u>our</u> book.

2. The Roman Inquisition and its Infrastructure
    a. **Oct 3:** Inquisitors at Work
        i. E-reserves:
            1. Christopher Black, *The Roman Inquisition,* ch 7 "Censorship."
            2. Nicholas Davidson, "The Strange Case of the Roman Inquisition."
            3. Hannah Marcus, "Creating Censored Objects" book chapter.
            4. Hannah Marcus, "Bibliography and Book Bureaucracy: Reading Licenses and the Circulation of Prohibited Books in Counter-Reformation Italy."
            5. Paula Findlen and Hannah Marcus, "Science under Inquisition, Heresy and Knowledge in the Catholic Reformation in Rome," review of Ugo Baldini and Leen Spruit, *The Catholic Church and Modern Science: Documents from the Archives of the Roman Congregations of the Holy Office and the Index.*
    b. **Oct 5:**
        i. **Written Assignment 1:** Turn in three suggestions for the exhibit/catalog. Each should be described in a couple sentences or one brief – you should spend no more than half a single-spaced page discussing each. These must be turned in in print in class **and** posted on the course discussion page so others can look at them over the weekend. If you have one or two favorites you may post only your favorites and omit those you are less excited by, but you must turn in three in written form.

ii. E-reserves (Like the sources we read for Thursday of Week 1, these brief readings offer more examples of the range of material we might examine and questions we might ask in our exhibit; **read these before you write up your exhibit suggestions**; they will give you more ideas):
1. "A History of Comics Censorship, Part One," Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, (CBLDF.com).
2. Adrian Johns, *Piracy: the Intellectual Property Wars from Gutenberg to Gates,* chapter 1 (A General History of the Pirates).
3. Cory Doctorow, "Lockdown: the Coming War on General-Purpose Computing." (Boingboing.com)
4. Lynn Hunt ed., *The Invention of Pornography*, Introduction: Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500-1800.

3. Spanish Empire 1: Peninsular Spain and New Spain
    a. **Oct 10:**
        i. *The Inquisition in New Spain, 1536*–1820, 1-54 ("introduction"), 113-114 (on peyote), 114-116 (on prohibited books), 165-177 (auto-da-fe);
        ii. E-reserves:
            1. Martin Nesvig, "Medieval and Early Modern Precedents," *Ideology and Inquisition*, 30-64.
            2. Richard Greenleaf, "Persistence of Native Values: the Inquisition and Indians of Colonial Mexico," *The Americas* 50, no. 3 (1994): 351-76.
        iii. Start reading your classmates' case proposals and preparing for Thursday
    b. **Oct 12:** Group discussion of case proposals, assignment of teams and cases.
        i. No written assignment, but you must read your classmates' case proposals on the course website, and be prepared with suggestions for teams and collaborations. Get in contact with potential collaborators in advance by e-mail, or through discussion on the course website. Ideally many of you will come to this session with clear ideas and collaborators in mind.

4. Spanish Empire 2: New Spain and Goa
    a. **Oct 17: New Spain**
        i. *The Inquisition in New Spain, 1536–1820*, 318-342 (book censorship), 205-218 (blasphemy), 237-240 (crypto-Jews); Nesvig, "Failures of Book censorship," 226-246.
        ii. E-reserves: Dellon, *An Account of the Inquisition at Goa* (skim for today, but we will actually discuss it on Thursday).

    b. **Oct 19: Goa**
        i. **Written Assignment 2:** Formal proposal for exhibit case (or Bookcase contribution, or poster) due, including topic, who is involved, etc. For cases, you should mention and explain a minimum of five proposed objects to go in the case—these do not have to be final. For a poster, you must describe your area of interest and explain why it cannot be done as a case, and what kinds of images or graphics you might use. For the

bookcase, you should have a plan for what range of books you will include, and the tasks each team member will take on. If you want to fulfill a supporting roll working with other teams, you must explain how you will contribute, which teams you will work with, and include some examples of helpful work you have already started on.

5. Censorship in the Enlightenment, Copyright as Censorship
   a. **Oct 24:** Continental vs. British Censorship Practices
      i. John Milton, *Areopagitica* (complete).
      ii. Robert Darnton, *Censors at Work*, Part One, Bourbon France (note, you already read the beginning of this but should re-skim it.)
      iii. E-reserves:
         1. Adrian Johns, *Piracy: the Intellectual Property Wars from Gutenberg to Gates,* chapter 2 (The Invention of Piracy), and chapter 6 (Of Epics and Orreries) (full text online).
         2. Cory Doctorow, "The DRM Sausage Factory" in *Content: Selected Essays on Technology, Creativity, Copyright, and the Future of the Future*.
   b. **Oct 26:**
      i. **Written Assignment 3:** Preliminary object lists due. Contributors to cases must submit lists of five to ten objects you might want to include in your exhibit (i.e. 10-20 objects for a team of two), with a sentence or two explaining why each is an appropriate choice. The Ando case team will present a joint proposal, discussing the overall themes and text, with individual subsections including 5-10 objects suggested by each member. Those working on the Banned Bookcase must submit a preliminary list of suggested books, including an estimate of how many books the case will fit (you must discuss this with the Exhibit Designer and find out the specs of the bookcase). Those serving the exhibit in other ways must turn in appropriate reports on your activities.

6. Censorship in Modernity
   a. **Oct 31:**
      i. Robert Darnton, *Censors at Work*, Parts Two and Three
      ii. George Orwell, *1984* "Appendix On the Principles of Newspeak."
   b. **November 2:**
      i. **Written Assignment 4:** Final object lists and proposals due. Those curating cases must have narrowed the options down to your final selections, with a few backup selections in case some of the items you selected cannot be used. The Ando case team must submit a complete group proposal, including all items and the subjects of the focus panels and text panels. Poster creators must submit reports with primary and secondary source bibliographies. The Banned Bookcase team must submit a complete list of books you plan to include (with about 15 extras in case something goes wrong). Overall facilitators must submit reports on their activities.

Pornography, Manga and "Icky Speech"

    c. **Nov 7:**
        i. *Idiot's Guide to Tokyo's Harmful Books Regulation.*
        ii. *Seduction of the Innocent* (excerpt TBD)
        iii. Further readings TBD
    d. **Nov 9:**
        i. **Written Assignment 5:** Complete first draft of all exhibit content. Must be uploaded to course website as well, so that peers can read it and critique it, and you can read others' drafts in order to polish yours to better tie in to others.

7. Exhibit Preparation Discussion
    a. **Nov 14:**
        i. Readings to be suggested by the class.
    b. **Nov 16:**
        i. **Written Assignment 6:** Peer critique due on three classmates' exhibit contribution drafts (so you each receive three classmates' suggestions).

8. Exhibit Preparation Discussion
    a. **Nov 21:**
        i. Readings to be suggested by the class.
    b. **Nov 23:** No class. Enjoy THANKSGIVING!

9. Final Session
    a. **Nov 28:** Final overview discussion
        i. **Final Exhibit Material Due:** Final drafts of exhibit content due

No Final Exam. Maybe final party (optional).

If you are doing extra credit assignments, especially the Wikipedia assignment, they are due December 4th.

Major Observations:

- Many forms of information control are not conceived of as deliberate censorship by those who undertake them, but nonetheless have the effect of limiting information. For example, forms of copyright and their enforcement mechanisms have often been turned—unconsciously or consciously—into means to silence opponents or restrict activity.

- Often censoring organizations and information control policies do not begin as well-organized policies with coherent plans, but as hastily improvised responses to a particular perceived threat.

- Many acts of censorship are undertaken by individuals at home, either on their own, or at the instruction of organizations which thus effectively *crowd-source* censorship.

- Most censorship targets things many people consider to be of little value, such as pornography and other forms of "icky speech," unpopular political discourse, or the language, expression and culture of marginalized populations. When information is perceived as inferior, filthy, or worthless, those in power are less likely to defend it.

- Censoring bodies are limited in their activities by their financial needs, staff needs, and ability to secure funding and support (from governments or publics).

- Often the goal of censorship is less to destroy information than to control who has access to what information, creating categories of readers with more or less privileged access.

- Another common goal of censorship is to label controversial or transgressive material, rather than destroying or restricting it, so that everyone has access to it, but all readers are actively reminded during the act of reading that this material is transgressive.

- Often censorship aims to be visible and conspicuous, rather than invisible and insidious, intentionally reminding the reader of the censoring body's presence and power.

- While we think of censorship, the Inquisition especially, as targeting radical thinkers, reformers, scientists, skeptics, and atheists, in fact the radical and modernizing ideas have often been of only peripheral concern to censoring bodies, which tend to focus on ideas almost but not quite like their own, i.e. splinter versions of their own orthodoxies which they fear may mislead the orthodox, rather than radical heterodoxies which they assume will have no power to persuade anyone except those who already deviate from orthodoxy.

- From Plato to Thomas Paine, many figures we think of as major innovators in the progress of human thought supported certain forms of censorship or information control.

Major Questions:

- Are there patterns in how domestic censorship (such as the Roman Inquisition) differs from colonial or occupation censorship (such as the Inquisition in New Spain)?

- How are new information technologies and new censorship movements interrelated?

- Have exclusively modern forms of censorship developed in our era?