



Birds & Whistles: Making a Literary & Arts Magazine



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Course Description

Birds & Whistles is Cornish College’s literary and arts magazine, an annual periodical of work by and for students. Students enrolled in this course (along with the Instructor) act as its Editorial Board. By creating *Birds & Whistles 2009*, you will learn about the workings of magazine publication:

- ❖ developing editorial policy and selection criteria,
- ❖ soliciting literary & artistic submissions,
- ❖ reviewing, critiquing and selecting amongst them,
- ❖ composing letters of acceptance, rejection and requests for revision
- ❖ and, finally, producing print-ready galleys to hand off to a production team.

That production team is the Fall 2009 *Birds & Whistles* class, offered through the Design Department. Students who wish to follow the magazine through the design & production process can enroll in the spring class as well.

Examining a variety of small literary and arts journals and reading about the history of small cooperatively edited publications will be central to learning the editorial aspects of this process. Considering various writers’ and artists’ reflections on their creative process, their publication experiences and what they consider “good” literature or art, will be central to developing a vocabulary to discuss critique and selection. Finally, engaging in critical, creative and reflective writing exercises will help students develop an awareness of both the artist/writer and the critic/editor they carry within themselves, in order to grow as artists and judges of others’ art.

Learning Objectives and Experiences



Objectives:

- To apply critical and creative thinking to a student-directed hands-on publishing process;
- To identify personal aesthetics and to develop and articulate a larger conception of “quality”;
- To develop communication and collaboration skills including active listening, observational phrasing, and compromise, as well as “showing up and doing your part”;
- To practice writing, critique & editing and having your own work critiqued & edited; and
- To envision your own and your fellow students’ work as publishable, and map a route to achieving that vision.

To achieve those objectives, this course heavily emphasizes participation, collaborative decision making, initiative and responsibility. Students participate in a variety of group decision-making processes and must work together to make sure that the magazine is of highest quality and that each stage is completed on time, so that the content is production ready by the end of the term. Learning experiences will include in and out of class exercises, guest speakers, field trips & research excursions, and presentations to this class, to other classes, or elsewhere for solicitation and publicity purposes.



Required Texts/Materials

Please bookmark these two sites on whatever computer(s) you use most:

http://facweb.northseattle.edu/cadler/resources_writing/Birds_and_Whistles/

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

There will also be a short photocopy packet which you will need to buy from Perfect Copy and Print on Broadway in Capital Hill. I'll let you know when it's ready.

Reading materials for this class will include:	Where to find them:
literary journals and lit and arts magazines (including other college/university publications)	Each student will buy 1 during our Elliot Bay field trip; others will be provided for use in class.
essays about the history of small presses, creative process and personal experiences in publishing	Online: pdf's are cached at the http://facweb... site listed above. URL's for further readings are listed in the course schedule – or you can link them from the “Links to Other Readings” file at that same site
reflections on what makes “good” writing and “good” art by writers and artists	The photocopy packet
explanations of editing rules and of grammar, punctuation and mechanics	copy packet and OWL site listed above.

Overview of Assignments

Below is an overview of the type of assignments I believe will support the educational objectives of the course and move the publication project along. As the course and our project take shape, assignments may change. The individual projects listed below are not likely to change significantly. The groups ones are more tentative. Though these may not, in fact, turn out to be the precise assignments that you will be given, this list will give you a sense of both the amount and kind of work that will be required to complete the course.

Individual Projects

Weekly Journal: The journal will include your thoughts on the reading assignments, reflections on the current process in the project (planning, selection, editing, etc.) and sometimes responses to questions. It **must** be handed in on time. Late entries will receive ½ credit, up till one week after due, then none. I will respond to and return your journal at midterm and again near the end of the semester.

2 Short Essays of about 2 pages each. There will be ~4 options distributed across semester, of which you'll complete 2. They will probably include:

- A review of 1 literary/arts magazine or journal
- Proposed selection criteria
- A constructive critique of a “maybe” submission, to encourage the writer/artist to revise and resubmit
- An aesthetics manifesto.

Original Work: All class participants will be asked to make at least 1 literary submission and 1 in their own art form (these could be combined). We will decide, as an editorial board, how we would like to handle this, for example whether to require or merely invite “in house” submissions and how to judge them.

Several short (1 paragraph) “reader reports” recommending acceptance or rejection of submitted pieces and explaining why.

Team Projects*

Each student will participate in ~ 2-3 small group projects, some of which will be more intensive than others – thus the different number. These will develop as we go along. They are likely to include:

- Drafting acceptance and rejection letters
- Publicity/Outreach materials: posters, flyers, newspaper and/or radio ads,
- Design, organize and carry out a publicity &/or submission event
- Table of contents
- Entry and organization of different pieces or sections
- Visual archiving?
- Sound recording?

*Because students' schedules are tight and varied, meetings for Team and Whole-Class projects will take place during class time. However, the solicitation and publicity events that result from them will need to take place outside of class time.

Whole Class Projects*

The whole class will participate in some projects, including the following. We may decide to “committee out” pieces of them, creating more team projects.

- Determining '07-08 Issue character: What to include? themes?
- Determining Editorial Policies
- Submission criteria, selection criteria and privacy policy
- Organization of Contents
- Foreword



Demonstration of Learning and Evaluation

PLEASE KEEP ALL OF YOUR WRITTEN WORK TO RESUBMIT NEAR THE END OF THE TERM

**with my comments and
organized by project within the following Sections:**

Individual projects

Team projects

My contributions to whole class projects

with pieces of each project in chronological order.

Final Grades will be based on this portfolio as well as class attendance, participation, and completing assignments promptly and to the best of your ability. Because this is a deadline driven project, keeping up with deadlines will figure prominently in grading criteria. Because this is a collaborative project, so will responsible participation in group projects (including out-of-class ones).

Important note on Extensions: Because the work you are assigned must be completed for the next steps to occur, extensions will rarely be possible. If you fall behind, it will not usually be possible to catch up. It may be possible to make up for that work by doing something else, but not repeatedly. If you miss any deadlines, talk to me right away. E-mail may be best.

Evaluation of Group Work: In order to foster collaboration, I will not assign grades to team projects, however I will create opportunities for self evaluation during them, which you should include in your final portfolio. All of the work you do in the class, individual and group, will be reflected in that portfolio and will contribute to your final grade. If you are concerned (or just curious) about your grade, please come talk to me (in private, of course) and bring your notebook (with your work so far) with you.

School-wide grading standards (e.g. how to interpret the numbers) can be found in the Cornish Student Handbook.

Humanities & Sciences Department Practice and Policy

Arrive on time
Cell phones off
No headphone use during class time

No checking e-mail, text messaging or surfing the web during class
Respectful participation in discussion is expected

Attendance: The learning experience cannot be duplicated outside of class and depends on the participation of all classroom community members. Students are expected to attend all classes. Missing more than three class sessions adversely affects your evaluation and jeopardizes the granting of credit.*

* Cornish policy *includes* “home department” commitments -- such as charette, rehearsals and performances – in these hours! (In other words, this includes “excused” and “unexcused” absences.) Explanation: The 3-classes rule does not represent what your teacher believes you “deserve” to miss, but rather the amount of time that the faculty & administration of Cornish, collectively, consider too much missed instruction for a student to achieve the educational purpose of a course.



Course Policies

All written work must be typed, double spaced, and stapled (except in-class assignments).

Assignments are due in class on the due date. The student is responsible for assuring that I have received all his/her work on time and that it warrants credit. Unless you request and are granted an extension in advance of the due date, you cannot be certain late work will receive credit. I will not credit e-mail or mailbox work as “on time” unless I receive it on time. Never turn in your only copy of anything except in-class exercises.

Students are responsible for all lecture and discussion material, assignments and syllabus changes made on days they were absent. I’m happy to give you assignments and syllabus changes if you e-mail me. Please understand, though, that I can neither repeat a 90 minute lesson for each absentee, nor sum up what you needed to learn from it in ten minutes. Please establish a relationship with another student early in the quarter who will take notes for you when you miss class and spend time going over them – in exchange for you doing the same.

Students will be held accountable for plagiarism. You can get a detailed explanation of what plagiarism is at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/> If you are at all uncertain about the appropriateness of the help you received on an assignment, or the extent to which you have used or borrowed from others’ work or ideas, talk to me about it when you hand it in or before.



Support Services

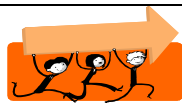
(College-Survival Resources)

Student Affairs: Student Affairs is dedicated to enhancing and complementing students’ educational experience through programs, services and opportunities that aid in their personal development. Student Affairs is committed to community building, co-curricular learning, and student support. If you are a student with a documented disability and you need accommodations, please make an appointment with the staff in Student Affairs, located in **room 301** at the Main Campus Center. You can call **206-726-5098** to reach them.

Counseling: The mission of the Counseling Offices at Cornish College of the Arts is to assist students with their academic and artistic pursuits by providing supportive counseling, referrals and outreach programs that promote students' mental health and emotional well being. To schedule an appointment, call a Counselor at **206-726-5027** or **206-726-5047**. If they are not available, please leave a message on their voicemail and they will return your call as soon as possible. The Counseling Offices are located in **MCC rooms 308 A & B**.

Writing Center: The Writing Center is a free resource for all Cornish students, faculty and staff who are interested in developing their writing and reading. Located in **MCC room 311**, the Writing Center is a place where students come to work on their writing and receive individual guidance at any phase of the writing process, regardless of their level of development. Drop-ins are welcome during posted hours. Contact Amanda Hill at ahill@cornish.edu or 206-726-5166 for appointments and information.

Library: The Library's mission is to support and enhance the college curriculum, to play an integral role in academic life at Cornish College of the Arts and to do so in a manner that promotes information literacy and encourages lifelong learning. In addition to books, periodicals, and media available on site, the library website has online resources that may be accessed from home with your last name and Cornish ID number. Databases include many full-text resources and digital images. If you need assistance finding information, Librarians are available at the reference desk during business hours. MCC Room 205. (206)726-5145. libraryref@cornish.edu. http://www.cornish.edu/cornish_library/



Course and Project Schedule

- Please download on-line readings (when possible), and add them to the notebook you bring to class each day. Keep bringing past readings, too (including your chosen magazine). These are our (growing) “textbook.”
- Readings are listed here by unit (not due date). I’ll give specific due dates (within the unit) as we get there.
- You are required to complete **2 of the 4 essays** listed here (in this font).
- You will participate in organizing **1 of the events** listed here (in this font).
- You may skip 2 journal entries/ semester.

Stage 1: Solicitation

Week 1 **What is a Literary and Arts Magazine? What is *Birds & Whistles*?**

Monday Jan 12, 2009 Course Intro

for Wednesday Jan 14 read: CLMP (Council of Literary Magazines and Presses), “A Guide for New Literary Publishers” <http://www.clmp.org/resources/guide.html> + “So You Want to Start a Literary Magazine?” <http://www.pw.org/mag/litmag.htm>. Write **Journal 1:** *Birds and Whistles* is a Literary and Arts magazine. It is also a *student run* magazine of student work. How would you alter or add to the advice given in the first two reading selections to account for those differences in character?

In class Team Projects: first general Call for Solicitations, Submission Form, collection boxes

Week 2 **History**

Monday Jan 19 – no class Martin Luther King Jr holiday

for Wednesday Jan 21 read: Gayle Feldman, “Independent Presses and ‘Little’ Magazines in American Culture: A Forty-Year Retrospective” http://www.clmp.org/indie_publishing/feldman.html

Write **Journal 2:** How do you believe *Birds and Whistles* fits within the history traced in Feldman’s article? How does it differ from the magazines she describes?

In class Team Projects: targeted Solicitation activities

Stage 2: Visioning

Week 3 **Issue Character**

Monday Jan 26: **Field Trip** Class will meet at the **Elliott Bay Bookstore** in the Literary/Art Journals section (to the left of the staircase as you enter). To allow for travel time, I’ll expect you to be there by 6:20 and will dismiss class 15 minutes early.

101 S Main St
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 624-6600 -- www.elliottbaybook.com

Here is a link to maps and directions:

<http://maps.google.com/maps?ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&q=eliot+bay+book&near=Seattle,+WA&ll=47.600040,-122.334173&iwstate1=dir:to&iwloc=A&f=d&daddr=101+S+Main+St,+Seattle,+WA+98104>

for Wednesday Jan 28 read the magazine you selected on our field trip and write **Journal 3:** Why did you choose this one? How do you see it as a model for *Birds & Whistles*?

In class Whole Group Project: Vision for *Birds & Whistles 2009* (Issue character, what to include, themes? “Slant”? special topics or sections?)

Friday Jan 30 Due: Essay Option 1 – Review of your Literary/Arts magazine (see assignment description)

Week 4 Communicating a Vision

for Monday Feb 2 read “What is Sulfur [Magazine]?” : http://webdelsol.com/Sulfur/Sulfur%20_Intro.htm
+ Swivel’s “About” Page: <http://www.swivelmag.com/about/index.html>
+ “The Left Hand of Capitalism” by Jack Trantner (his vision for Jacket Magazine)
<http://jacketmagazine.com/lefthand.html> and write **Journal 4**: open response.

In class Whole Group Project: Guidelines for soliciting individually. **Team Projects:** plans for soliciting individually, first publicity materials.

for Wednesday Feb 4 explore *52 Projects* (an online arts publication): www.52projects.com (click around!) + read “Zines Are Not Blogs” by Jenna Freedman (www.barnard.edu/library/zines/zinesnotblogs.htm). Write **Journal 5**: How is B&W like and unlike a Zine? possibilities suggested by 52 projects? Also: Look for descriptions of vision/character in your chosen magazine .

Individual Project due: Draft “About” page for *Birds & Whistles 2009*

In class Team Projects: Final “About” page, online B&W brainstorming, more solicitation activities.

Friday Feb 6 Due: Essay Option 2 – Aesthetics manifesto (see assignment description)

Stage 3: Structure

Week 5 Parts of a Magazine

for Monday Feb 9 review the following aspects of the magazine you selected on our field trip: table of contents, submission guidelines, editorial policies, contributor notes. Also read *Jacket Magazine’s* Author Notes (<http://jacketmagazine.com/bio/index.shtml>) + “More Information about Authors Published by McSweeney’s” (<http://mcsweeneys.net/authorpages/index.html>). Write **Journal 6**: Are any possibilities for B&W suggested by your magazine – for example elements to include, ways to organize it or how to present it to potential submitters or readers?

for Wednesday Feb 11 read Sample Submission Guidelines from *Seattle Review* and *McSweeney’s*
<http://depts.washington.edu/seaview/submission.html> <http://mcsweeneys.net/submit/print.html>
<http://mcsweeneys.net/submit/web.html>.

Individual Project due: Draft Submission Guidelines for *Birds&Whistles 2009*

In class Team Projects: final Submission Guidelines, Contributor Notes template, editorial policies.

Friday Feb 13 Due (all students): Design Organize & carry out a submission event – individually or with another student.

Stage 4: Selection

From *Tin Louse* magazine’s FAQ page: “Who decides what goes in the magazine?”

It’s a democratic process that starts with a small group of readers ... who read everything and pass on the most appropriate work to the editors in both offices. After much discussion, the editors vote to either run the story, hold it, or pass on it. In general, majority rules, but passion counts for a lot.”

Week 6 Selection Criteria

Monday Feb 16 – no school – Presidents Day holiday

for Wednesday Feb 18 read CLMP transcript “Selection Ethics” and CLMP monograph, “Reader Surveys” (http://facweb.northseattle.edu/cadler/resources_writing/Birds_and_Whistles/). Write **Journal 7**: Which of the Selection Process concerns discussed here does *Birds & Whistles* share and what other concerns must we take into account? Be sure to consider ethical, logistical and aesthetic issues.

In class Team/Whole Group Project: procedures for collection, organization and review of submissions.

Week 7 Selection Criteria continued

for Monday Feb 23 read two of the essays by writers on (great) writing from the copy packet (selections from *Teaching a Stone to Talk* by Annie Dillard, *Writing with Power* by Peter Elbow, *Light Up the Cave* by Denise Levertov, and *Writing to Change the World* by Mary Pipher.) Write **Journal 8**: what makes great ____ [fill in name of your artform, ie great acting, great interior design...]?

In class Team/Whole Group Projects: Selection Criteria for *Birds & Whistles 2009*.

Wednesday Feb 25

Due: Essay Option 3 – Model one of the assigned essays to create your own.

At this point, this schedule changes format. I've listed the assignments, activities, readings and projects to be completed during each of the following stages. I'll give you the exact schedule for each week the week before. This is to keep our project flexible and responsive to the pace of submissions received. Also, we will see as we go along which aspects of the process need more attention. For example, if we've received a lot of submissions by this point, we will need to give the bulk of our time to review and critique. If not, we will need to give more attention to solicitation.

Weeks 8 through 10 (March 2-27)– Selection continued

Readings: Submissions!

Activities: Begin review process. Continue solicitation process. Solidify procedures for managing manuscripts.

Group Projects: Drafting acceptance and rejection letter templates, review & critique sessions.

Assignments: Several short (1 paragraph) Reader Reports
class participants' literary &/or art submissions
Essay Option 4: A constructive Critique of a "maybe" submission, to encourage the writer/artist to revise and resubmit.

Stage 5: Editing

Weeks 11 and 12 (March 30-April 10)

Readings: more submissions!

Jacket Magazine's Editorial Conventions and Layout Conventions (this link will take you to the Style Guide contents page: <http://jacketmagazine.com/oo/styleguide.shtml>. Scroll down to "Jacket's Editorial Conventions." You'll need to click on them one at a time to read).
Readings from OWL and more – to be assigned according to needs of student-editors and submitters.

Activities: Continue review (and solicitation?) of submissions. Begin editing process with literary pieces accepted. Proofreading, Editing. Grammar & punctuation stories/games.

Group Projects: Writing & sending acceptance and rejection letters, more review & critique sessions.

Assignments: more reviews!, Journal Entries 9 & 10
Each student will read one Selection from one of these books and make a presentation to the class about technical editing issues:

Between You and I: A Little Book of Bad Grammar,
Grammar Snobs Are Great Big Meanies,
A Dash of Style: The Art and Mastery of Punctuation,
Eats, Shoots and Leaves,
The New Well-Tempered Sentence: a Punctuation Handbook for the Innocent, the Eager and the Doomed

Stage 6: Presentation

Weeks 13 and 14 (April 13-24)

Readings: more submissions?

CLMP monographs: "Marketing Copy" & "Publicity"
(http://facweb.northseattle.edu/cadler/resources_writing/Birds_and_Whistles/)

Activities: finish reviewing submissions, writing & sending acceptance and rejection letters, and editing process with pieces accepted. Finalize "framing" sections of 2008 issue (introductory or final essays, contributor bios, etc.). Create publicity and marketing materials.

Group Projects: Forward, Table of Contents, and Contributor Bios. Visual and Sound entry/organization
Publicity/Outreach materials: posters, flyers, newspaper and/or radio ads.

Assignments: last reviews. Journal 11.

Design, organize and carry out a publicity event

Stage 7: Hand Off

Week 15 (April 27-May 1)

- Readings: CLMP monographs: "Production" and "Succession Issues"
(http://facweb.northseattle.edu/cadler/resources_writing/Birds_and_Whistles/)
- Activities: Tie up loose ends. Meeting with Fall 2009 Production class
- Assignments: make-up Journal (12)
Student Portfolios and Reflections

Have a great summer!

☺ *Cori*