

Research Assignment:

The research assignment is a way for you (and the entire class) to get involved with the history of illustration. What makes some images more illustration and less fine art, or vice versa, is a question that is often unanswerable, at least it is if the quality of the illustration is very high. (Is the distinction bogus? There are heated arguments about this subject.) I think you will be intrigued and inspired by the work of the many artists that are available here.

I will be handing out slips of paper that have the name of an important artist/illustrator from the past 500 years, with their birth and death date, and the number in the chronology. This number will determine when you do your presentation. You will pick a name and in three weeks we will start each class with a presentation by a member of this class, starting (and proceeding) in chronological order. Almost all of these artists are in our text book *Illustration: A Visual History*. I want you to go into much greater depth and show many more images.

Of course there are far more than 30 important illustrators from 1450 to 1950. I have had to pare down the number of names to ones that I feel are the most important. There are many more I wish I could have included –but there are only so many days in the semester and so many students in the class. Since there are 20+ people in the class, and I have 30 names here, I will offer the last 10 names as incentive to anyone in the class who would like to get extra credit to boost up their grade a little. Speak to me after class if you are interested in this, or you can also decide to do this later if you wish –if there are names still available.

Your presentation will be in the form of a PowerPoint presentation to the class. (You can also use Apple's Keynote software, which in many ways is superior to PowerPoint and easier to use, but is not available on most University computers. You would have to own it yourself.) The presentation should be about 15 minutes long and list in the titles the artist's name, his dates, and you should give a thorough biography and why he or she is important. Please show as many examples of his or her work as possible and place them in social and artistic historical context. Please make sure that the images will be displayed so they are large and not grouped several to a page so they are tiny and hard to see.

If you want to exchange your chosen name with someone else in the classes' name, you may do so. Some of the artists on the list are known as both fine art painters *and* as illustrators. In such cases, I would like you to concentrate on their careers as illustrators and their graphic work rather than their fine art painting careers, though you can and should mention it, of course.

If you have never used PowerPoint, it is a presentation software that is part of the Microsoft Office suite or can be purchased alone. It is on every university computer. (If you prefer the ease of use of Apple products, Keynote is available as part of the iWork suite, and there is a student price if you buy it at the bookstore.) It is very useful to know how to use presentation software and you will use it many times in your career, so learning it will be rewarding. Training is available at the MLL if you need it.

On the day that you will give your presentation, please bring in your PowerPoint or Keynote file to me on a CD-R or on a flash drive, and I will load it onto the laptop so that you can give your presentation. If you want to use your own laptop, be sure to bring in the right video adaptor (should have come with your laptop) so that we can attach the video display cable to the digital projector.