

Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:00pm-6:15pm

Class Location: T.B.D.

Instructor: Roblyn Powley (ropfaa@rit.edu)

Office Hours: **By appointment** (in-person or on Zoom), and I am generally flexible before and after class for impromptu questions and feedback.

Required Course Materials:

- Sketchbook and pencil/pen/marker
- MyCourses for readings, quizzes, assignments outlines, and uploading work.

Course Description

This course will center on the contributions which women have made to the history of graphic design. We will examine design items and readings from various sources and learn about historical, cultural, social, and political contexts in order to better understand the challenges these designers faced as women. We will reconsider the traditional nature of design history education through the lenses of cultural critique. The course will involve lectures, readings, videos, participatory exercises and discussions, and hands-on making activities.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Enhance knowledge and awareness of marginalized voices in design.
- Evaluate design critically with relations to its historical, cultural and technological contexts.
- Apply knowledge to future courses.

Communication

All course content will be posted in MyCourses.

Class wide announcements will be posted in MyCourses. Individual correspondence will be via R.I.T. email. I try to respond to emails within 36 hours M-F.

Be sure to check your RIT Email and log-in to MyCourses every day.

About This Class

This course will examine a variety of women who have made contributions to the long history of graphic design. We will consider them within a framework of topics related to issues faced by these women and others.

Work assigned will include readings from first and secondary sources, paired with a brief quiz or discussion point activity. These are due before class and ensure you are ready to participate. Our class time will be spent in a variety of ways, including lectures, hands-on and/or group activities, and discussions.

Our hands-on activities will include making workshops, which will allow us to consider the process of design creation through history, and to respond creatively to the content of the readings and lectures. These activities are graded based on participation and thoughtful process and outcome, over technical design perfection.

Attendance

Attendance is important to the success of this course. Therefore, each unexcused absence after two will result in the lowering of your final grade by a third of a grade (ex. a "B" becomes a "B-"). Excused absences, such as those for documented illness, family tragedy, religious observations, or travel for intercollegiate activities will not affect your grade. Five unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.

Grade Calculation will be based on the following distribution:**Completion of quizzes and class assignments 40%**

- You will read articles and watch videos as homework.
- You will then complete a short quiz or exercise and submit it on myCourses before the beginning of class. This will ensure you are prepared to actively learn and participate in class.

Class Participation 30%

- Contributing actively during class discussions and group activities.
- Participation, engagement and progress during hands-on activities.
- Communicating professionally during the semester.

Final assignment 30%

- You will create an analog design project that responds to one of the designers or topics featured during our semester.

RIT Grading

Grade	Description	Quality Points
A	Excellent	4.00
A-		3.67
B+		3.33
B	Above Average	3.00
B-		2.67
C+		2.33
C	Satisfactory	2.00
C-		1.67
D	Minimum Passing	1.00
F	Failure	0.00

Designers and Readings

In our work we will discuss designers and readings including, but not limited to those listed below:

Select Featured Artists/Designers	Select Readings
Angel De Cora	Essence of Visual Analysis
Alice Paul	"Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" Linda Nochlin
Margaret Calvert	Angel De Cora (1871–1919) "Her Greatest Work Lay in Decorative Design"
Cipe Pineles	Are Women the Natural Enemies of Books?
Edna Beilenson	Notes on New Womanhood
Lillian Bassman	The Power of Community: On the Radical History of Women's Magazines
Estelle Ellis Rubinstein	Cipe Pineles: The Prototype
Muriel Cooper	Hesse Antiqua Review
Anni Albers	Jacqueline Casey Science and Design
Jacqueline Casey	The Quiet Confidence of Tomoko Miho
Tomoko Miho	Elaine Lustig Cohen: Modernism Reimagined
Gudrun Zapf-von Hesse	Edna Beilesen Men in Printing
Barbara Kruger	Audre Lorde, The Master's Tools
Faith Ringgold	Made in Patriarchy: Toward a Feminist Analysis of Women and Design

Pioneering Women In Design GRDE 322 Schedule Outline (Subject to Change)

Week	Topics	Date	Work Due Today
1	Course Intro + Framing: Women in Design History	1/13/26	—
		1/15/26	Reading and Reading Quiz 1
2	Exclusion and Industrialization	1/20/26	—
		1/22/26	Reading and Prepare Discussion Points
3	Suffrage & Graphic Activism	1/27/26	Reading and Reading Quiz 2
		1/29/26	—
4	The New Woman	2/3/26	Reading and Prepare Discussion Points
	Magazines, Publishing, Editorial Authority, and Invisible Labor	2/5/26	Reading and Reading Quiz 4
5		2/10/26	Reading and Reading Quiz 5
		2/12/26	Reading and Prepare Discussion Points
6	In Class Making-Activity	2/17/26	—
	Modernism and the Bauhaus	2/19/26	Reading and Reading Quiz 6
7		2/24/26	—
		2/26/26	—
8	Corporate & Institutional Design	3/3/26	Reading and Prepare Discussion Points
	Type, Authority, Modernism	3/5/26	Reading and Reading Quiz 7

9	Spring Break	3/10/26	Spring Break
		3/12/26	
10	Gender Representation and Intersectional Critique	3/17/26	—
		3/19/26	Reading and Prepare discussion points
11			3/24/26
	3/26/26		—
12	Media, Archives, Power and Absence	3/31/26	Reading and Reading Quiz 9
		4/2/26	—
13	How do we rewrite the record?	4/7/26	Reading and Reading Quiz 10
		4/9/26	—
14	In-Class Project Work Session	4/14/26	Bring Work In Progress
	Elaine Lustig Cohen	4/16/26	Reading and Prepare discussion points
15	Course Wrap-Up	4/21/26	—
		4/23/26	Final Collage Presentations
16 (Finals)		4/29–5/6	Final Reflection Due

Discussion Code of Conduct

These are guidelines that will provide a common ground for everyone during discussions. They may be modified during the semester according to class needs.

- Listen respectfully, without interrupting.
- Listen actively and with an ear to understanding other views. Don't think about what you are going to say while someone else is speaking.
- Criticize ideas, not individuals. We can all learn something from each other, even if our views don't necessarily align.
- Avoid blame, speculation, and inflammatory language.
- Allow everyone the chance to speak.
- Avoid assumptions about any member of the class or generalizations about social groups.
- Do not ask individuals to speak for their perceived social group.
- We are accountable for our words and their impact.
- Personal information that comes up in the conversation should be kept confidential.

Academic Integrity

As an institution of higher learning, RIT expects students to behave honestly and ethically at all times, especially when submitting work for evaluation in conjunction with any course or degree requirement. The College of Art and Design encourages all students to become familiar with the RIT Honor Code and with RIT's Academic Integrity Policy RIT Honor Code. Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own. It includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or unacknowledged paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. For an overview of what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, see: library.rit.edu/liv/7.

Academic Accommodations

RIT is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request accommodations such as special seating or testing modifications due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Office. It is located in the Student Alumni Union, Room 1150; the website is www.rit.edu/dso. After you receive accommodation approval, it is imperative that you see your professor for whatever arrangement is necessary.

Title IX

RIT is committed to investigate complaints of sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault and other sexual misconduct, and to ensure that appropriate action is taken to stop the behavior, prevent its recurrence and remedy its effects. Please view the Title IX Rights & Resources at RIT.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect

RIT has put forth the Policy P05.0 Diversity Statement for all community member. RIT is responsible for building an inclusive environment where membership in the community allows for faculty, staff and students to reach their fullest potential, both professionally and personally.

Course Copyright Policy

All course materials students receive or to which students have online access are protected by copyright laws. Students may use course materials and make copies for their own use as needed, but unauthorized distribution and/or uploading of materials without the instructor's express permission is strictly prohibited. RIT Policy C03.2 Copyright Policy addresses this issue. Students who engage in the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted materials may be held in violation of the University's Code of Conduct, and/or liable under Federal and State laws.