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**Final Project:
The Artist's Book
Reading as Generative Interaction
DUE: November 30**

The final project will provide each student with the opportunity to create an artist's book, integrating the skills acquired throughout the semester in support of a clear concept. The book can be one-of-a-kind or it can be produced as an edition, depending on the complexity of the ideas and the structure. If the book is produced as an edition, it can be done so traditionally (multiple, identical copies) or variably (multiple copies with variations between each copy).

Conceptually, the final project should engage the following observation by Holland Cotter, which he presents in the Introduction to Johanna Drucker's book, *The Century of Artists' Books*.

"Unlike paintings, or sculptures, or films, books are created for one-on-one interactions. They are, by nature, zones of privacy. There is no way, short of censorship, for an outside observer to monitor or control the intimate encounters they offer and the education they provide." (xii)

Your final project should use this unique potential, inherent to the book form, for one-on-one interaction with your reader. In support of this goal, you should also engage Maryanne Wolfe's conception of "the constructive dimension of reading," which she presents in the first chapter of her book, *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*. (16)

"We bring our entire store of meanings to whatever we read—or not. (9)
"Reading... reflects the reader's capacity to go beyond what is given by the text and the author." (15)

"Proust said most of this, if more obliquely, in a powerful description of the ability of reading to elicit our own thinking.

We feel quite truly that our wisdom begins where that of the author ends, and we would like to have him give us answers, while all he can do is give us desires. And these desires he can arouse in us only by making us contemplate the supreme beauty which the last effort of his art has permitted him to reach. But by... a law which perhaps signifies that we can receive truth from nobody, and that we must create it ourselves, that which is the end of their wisdom appears to us as but the beginning of ours.
(Proust, *On Reading*, p. 35)

Proust's understanding of the generative nature of reading contains a paradox: the goal of reading is to go beyond the author's ideas to thoughts that are increasingly autonomous, transformative, and ultimately independent of the written text". (17-18)

Depending on each student's chosen structure and concept, we will individually determine an appropriate edition size. Much of the second half of the semester will be committed to developing this final project. Students should have ideas prepared to discuss for the final project by Monday, November 2.

Media Workshop: Book Structures
ART 4923C 03 08010
MW 3:35-6:05pm
Fall 2009