Art historians, codicologists, and historians of the book have increasingly come to recognize that printed books, like other categories of book, such as codices, were ‘permeable’ rather than ‘fixed’ objects. Just as manuscripts were mutable, their material form and constituent parts manipulable, so too, printed books could be adapted to need or use, their format altered to fit a wide spectrum of functions, in response to contingent circumstances of all kinds. As bibliographers have amply documented, early modern printers and publishers often produced variable copies of the books they promulgated. Patrons and proprietors, either at the production stage, the time of purchase, or later in the life of the book, could intervene in the process of assembling or reassembling the book, thereby altering its format and function, manner and meaning. The kinds of variation we want to explore involve alterations to the physical structure of the book—through insertion or interpolation, subtraction or deletion, adjustments in the ordering of folios or quires, amendments of image or text. Although our primary interest is in printed books and print series bound like books, we shall also consider manuscripts since meaningful alterations made to incunabula and early printed books often followed the patterns such changes took in codices. Throughout Customized Books the emphasis will fall on the hermeneutic functions of the modifications made by makers and users to the structure of their manuscripts and books.

Thursday, October 14th
Opening Remarks: 9:30 – 9:45
Walter Melion, Emory University

Session 1: 10:00 – 11:30
Andrea van Leerdam, Utrecht University (Zoom)
A Medical Anthology Customized for the Consecration of the Sick in a Brussels Convent

Anna Blabacova, Universiteit Leiden (Zoom)
Compiled Compositions. Late Medieval Book Design in the Kattendijke Chronicle

Geert Warnar, Universiteit Leiden (Zoom)
Customizing the Multiple Options of 15th-century Religious Life: How and Why A Massicyns Was Personalized

Session 2: 12:30 – 2:00
Mara Wade, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Zoom)
More Than the Sum of its Parts: The Hybrid Emblem Book

Jason Rosenholtz-Witt, Emory University
Venice as a Musical Commodity in Early Modern Germany: A Frontispiece Collage, c. 1638

Walter Melion, Emory University
In Defense of the Faith: Interpolated Prints as Multifunctional Glosses in a Customized Copy of Franciscus Costerus’s Dutch New Testament (1614)

Friday, October 15th
Session 3: 10:00 – 11:30
Justyna Kilińska-Zięba, Uniwersytet Jagielloński (Zoom)
How Early Modern Books Crossed Boundaries: Books of Fortune-telling in Central Europe

Karl Enekel, Universität Münster (Zoom)
Unknown Emblematic Poems by a German Owner of a copy of Vaenius’s Emblemata Horatiana

Simon McKeown, Marlborough College (Zoom)
Vaenius in Ireland: Eighteenth-Century Adaptations of the Emblemata Horatiana

Session 4: 12:30 – 2:00
Brent Purkapple, University of Oklahoma
Anamorphic Perspectives: A Comparison of the Printed Works of Jean François Nicorn

Paul Gehl, Newberry Library
Tommaso Schifaldo in Several Contexts: A Humanist Miscellany from Sicily

Jakub Koguciuk, Yale University
What is Pastoral About a Customized Book? The 1495 Aldine Thesaurus

Co-organizers: Walter Melion (Emory University), Lia Markey (Newberry Library), and Mara R. Wade (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)