



English 680: Introduction to Literary Research
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Graduate degrees in English signify your professional standing in the discipline, and that assumes that you know how to undertake literary research, which may involve studies of manuscript culture, history of the book, text editing, the expectations of writing about the

history of texts, bibliography, and other aspect of literary scholarship.

COURSE POLICIES



- Click [HERE](#) for current course policies statement. Please read carefully.

TEXTS

- James Harner's *Literary Research Guide: An Annotated Listing of Reference Sources in English Literary Studies* [REQUIRED]
- Benjamin Withers and Jon Wilcox's *Naked Before God: Uncovering the Body in Anglo Saxon England* [REQUIRED]
- Joseph Gibaldi's *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, 2nd. ed. [REQUIRED]
- [It will also be necessary to download and print some texts for use in class.]

SCHEDULE

Nota Bene: An electronic syllabus has the great advantage of allowing an instructor to develop the course more slowly and with the strengths and weaknesses of the class in This schedule will always be up to date at least one week before the meeting in question. You will need to check for online readings and other preparations that might be necessary a few days before class meets.

- **Jan. 9:** Intro to course; discussion on course content; discussion of [Collins](#) Challenge Project; resources demonstration in Conner's area
- **Jan. 16:** Abstracts & Proposals; Intro to the use of Harner; Intro to Internet Research. -- READINGS Gibaldi, 1-29; Harner 1-64 and a sub-area of interest to you; scan "[General Internet Resources](#)" on [Voice of the Shuttle](#).
- **Jan. 23:** ABSTRACT DUE. Subjects and research dimensions discussed; Conner gives sample presentation. --READINGS: Withers/Wilcox, 29-59 (Higley); Gary, "[Making Scholarly Presentations](#)."
- **Jan. 30:** What's a research plan? What's a bibliography? --READINGS: Withers/Wilcox, 275-309 (Wilcox); Pollak, Oliver B. "The Decline and Fall of Bottom Notes, etc.", [Journal of Scholarly Publishing](#) 38:1 [in [Project Muse](#)]
- **Feb. 6:** RESEARCH PLAN & BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE. Discussion topic: what you have to know before and what after you draft the work. --READINGS: G. Thomas Tanselle, "A Sample Bibliographical Description With Commentary," [Studies in Bibliography](#) 40:1 [Images of the original pages available online.] Withers/Wilcox, 162-180 (Kim).

- **Feb. 13:** SESSION CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER
- **Feb. 20:** Discussions topic I: Intro. to academic genres. READINGS: P. W. Conner, "Editing the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" a review essay of two new editions, *J.E.G.P. (Journal of English and Germanic Philology)* 103 (2004): 369-380 [to be distributed]; Wilcox/Withers, 1-14 (Withers); Wilcox/Withers, 15-28 (Lewis). [NOTE: please be prepared to talk about Susanne Lewis's academic career and her place in this book; you should be able to find her place in scholarship rather efficiently.] Discussions topic II: What's a text and how do you edit it? The following bibliography includes most of the basic works: [Key Works in the Theory of Textual Editing](#) --READINGS: W. W. Greg, "The Rationale of Copy-Text," [Studies in Bibliography](#) 3:19-36.
- **Feb. 27:** PRESENTATION SCRIPT DUE: 1st. presentation (Lisa Dorward). 2nd presentation (Laura Oliver). --READINGS: Continued from February 20: Jerome McGann, "[The Rationale of Hypertext](#)"; Peter L. Shillingsburg, "An Inquiry into the Social Status of Texts and Modes of Textual Criticism," [Studies in Bibliography](#) 42:55-79. You should be prepared to discuss all of the following person's contributions to editing theory, terms, and concepts: Karl Lachman, Joseph Bédier, Hans Walter Gabler, Peter Robinson, Jerome McGann, best-text theory, stemma, manuscript affiliations, archetype, eclectic texts, cladistics.
- **Mar. 6:** 3rd. presentation (James Holsinger). 4th presentation (none) -- READINGS: Familiarize yourselves with assigned readings we've not dealt with in class yet. Be prepared to discuss in particular the foundations of text editing. Note on Google Books.
- **Mar. 13:** 5th. presentation (Laura Poling). 6th presentation (Derwin Hampton). Discussion on writing a book review. --READINGS: --WORKING EXPERIENCE: "The Grand Indices" (MLA International Bibliography, ERIC, ABELL, *A Guide to Serial Bibliographies for Modern Literatures*, OCLC, *Humanities Index*, *Book Review Index*, *Dissertation Abstracts [Database/International]*)
- **Mar.20:** BOOK REVIEW DUE. 7th presentation (Joni Magnusson). 8th presentation (Timothy Appel). --WORKING EXPERIENCE: Evaluating online resources. Check out these links: [Michael Hall's Web Page](#) (see "Online Journals"); [DOAJ \(Directory of Open Access Journals\)](#); Selected [Humanities Computing Centers](#); [WVU CLC](#).
- **Apr.3: (Day of Special Concern - Passover)** . 9th presentation (Kim Tharp). 10th presentation (Justin Plansinis). --READINGS: A review by Donald Hall of [Victorian Prose Writers before . . . and Victorian Prose Writers after 1867 in the Dictionary of Literary Biography](#). --WORKING EXPERIENCE: "Researching Biography": See the American Library Association's website devoted to online databases for finding biographical material: [ALA | Internet Resources: Biography resources](#). Similarly, see the [Infoplease](#) site for [Biography](#) (be sure to look at the larger Infoplease site for a variety of online general references); biographical information may also be turned up on [Infomine](#). The best compendia, however, of biographical writing is not free, and needs to be searched through an approved link to the library or by using hard copy editions in the library. The best of these is the [Oxford Dictionary of National Biography](#) which has recently entered a new

edition in both electronic and hard copy formats; this edition displaces all of the outdated biographies in the earlier edition, and is the first place to look for information about important citizens of the British Isles. The [Biography Reference Bank](#) is a similar subscribed resource via our library with a larger scope than the DNB, but with perhaps less authoritative articles. [The Biography and Genealogy and Master Index](#) is a citation of biographical information for many thousands of people, living and dead. Locate the hard copy versions in Wise Library of the *Dictionary of National Biography* and its supplements and be prepared to discuss its scope and value to scholars, too. Similarly, be prepared to discuss the *Who's Who*.

- **Apr. 10:** . 11th presentation (Weslie Boyd). 12th presentation (Joy Greene). -- READINGS: Discussion of returned reviews. --WORKING EXPERIENCE: "Reviews and Related Contemporary Assessments": Please become familiar with [Books in Print](#); [Iter: Gateway to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance](#); [Literature Resource Center](#); Check out local material on [Appalachian Studies: Web Resources](#); review again for applicability here items we used March 13.
- **Apr. 17:** . 13th presentation (none). 14th presentation (Shainna Sticklen). -- READINGS: Review section U of Harner's *Literary Research Guide*; spend particular time on items 6120-6175 --WORKING EXPERIENCE: "Literary Theory & Theorists": The Wikipedia in fact offers a good starting point on critical theory under the rubric of [The Frankfurt School](#); of particular use in this essay is the schematic of contexts out of which the Frankfurt School arose, and which accounts for a great deal of post-structural cultural critique. More thorough is [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#); a good source for a panoply of major critical theorists is at [Contemporary Philosophy, Critical Theory, and Postmodern Thought](#). A good variety of links pertaining to gender, identity politics, and queer theory is to be found at [Queer Theory Links](#).
- **Apr. 24:** "PUBLISHABLE" RESEARCH ESSAY DUE. 15th presentation (Robert Johnson). --READINGS:

Collins Challenge Project: Julia C. Collins's serialized novel, *The Curse of the Caste; or The Slave Bride*, is declared by its most recent editors to be "the first novel by an African American woman," and occupies as such an important place in American literary history. It was serialized in the *The Christian Recorder* in the 1860's, but four issues of the journal have been lost and the edition is missing those installments. These are III, XII, XVII, and XXX. Whoever turns one of these up through careful research, sleuthing, and communications will receive a grade of A in the course, as long as all the other work is handed in and acceptable. As many as three people can gang up to share the grade, but no more than three may take on the challenge together. As soon as someone presents a missing installment and it is verified, that installment is no longer eligible as part of the challenge. A full report tracing the research path must be made in due course, and its size and complexity should increase with the number of people involved in the team. The value to a young scholar's professional profile of the connections such a project might engender is inestimable.

Deadlines of Projects Due: A small class like this is a learning community. Items are due on the

dates given. Projects that are received late will not get the attention they would if they were finished on time and this will affect both the student's grade and the quality of the whole course for everyone.

Grades: One should not have to chase after grades in a graduate class; on the other hand, the student is expected always to demonstrate due commitment to the material in the course and to his/her colleagues. I expect you to try hard and to be good.

Office Hours and Appointments: You may schedule a conference with me by calling my office (293-8400 x4500 or x4505) or e-mailing my assistant, Ms. Downey (fdowney2@wvu.edu), who handles my schedule. When working with Ms. Downey to set up an appointment, be sure to explain in your note that you are a student in my class, and indicate the nature of our business, if you can, so that I can be prepared to help you.