

English 521 Assignments

521.01 British Literature, 1660-1800—The Digital Eighteenth Century (Fall 2014)

BLOG

Starting Friday, September 19th, I will post a brief blog (often consisting of questions that come out of our class discussions) to the class website. Class members will be expected to post a contribution (a minimum of 10 sentences) by Tuesday morning at 11 am, I will not read nor give credit to any posting after 11 am. You can respond to my blog or write down your own reflections and insights on the assigned readings or course materials on which we are working. You should take some time after class on Tuesday evening or Wednesday to review that week's blog postings. Class members will be expected to respond to one of your classmate's postings (a minimum of 10 sentences) by Thursday morning at 11 am, I will not read nor give credit to any posting after 11 am. The class website not only stimulates class discussion but also engages those who feel they first express their thoughts better in writing than in collective discussion. I expect everyone to review the discussion board before each class. I will assign a letter grade for each posting. Your grade will be made available only to you. Your overall grade will be assessed from your 10 best postings.

LONG POEM ANNOTATION EXERCISE

Your assigned group will be responsible for preparing a long poem in Literature of the Revolutionary Period, 1770-1832, discussing the poem with me in person, and then complete an online analysis and annotation of the poem. This poem can later be the focus or one of the foci of your final research project. A sample annotation of a romantic poem can be found here <http://genius.com/William-wordsworth-elegiac-stanzas-suggested-by-a-picture-of-peeble-castle-in-a-storm-painted-by-sir-george-beaumont-annotated>

ECCO EXERCISE

The database, Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (ECCO), offers amazing opportunities for those engaged in research of the eighteenth century. To gain experience with this great resource, I will set a "search" exercise. I will discuss the format and expectations a number of weeks before the exercise is due.

Grading & Expectations:

You will complete this exercise with another student from the class. In this instance, you will both receive the same grade that is assigned to the exercise.

In those instances when you are asked to provide a title, your citation of full must be by MLA formatted. For assistance view this online video tutorial on MLA. Points will be deducted for incorrect citations.

NOTE: When citing books published before 1900, you can omit the name of the publisher/publishing house. e.g.: Harris, Ellend. *The Surmise of Poetry*. London, 1792.

Instructions:

1. Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* was not the only book to respond to Richard Price's *Discourse on the Love of Country* (the sermon at the Dissenting House at the Old Jewry mentioned in Burke's essay). Find William Coxe's 1790 reply, give its full title, and after skimming through it, give a general assessment of its tone. Does Coxe support Price's actions and positions? Or is he, like Burke, criticizing Price? Provide two paragraphs that support your position. Can you find any other printed responses to Price's *Discourse*? If so, provide the titles to these responses.

2. Find the particular version of Richard Price's *Discourse on the Love of Country*, which has the notorious address to the French National Assembly appended. Print out that address and include/attach it to your exercise.

3. Search and review book titles containing "Ballad" or "Ballads" published between 1750 and 1800. Providing evidence through the citation of the titles of the collections and individual poems, draw some conclusions about the time/place/conventions with which the ballad form was associated. Now review how many books of poetry between 1750 and 1800, apart from Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, had the word "Lyrical" in the title. Building on what you have learned about "Ballads" and "lyrical" from these searches, draw some tentative conclusions about the nature of Wordsworth and Coleridge's intervention in genre.

4. How many novels between 1760 and 1800 have "sentimental novel" in their title? Write a list of all the titles.

5. How many pamphlets can you find with the one or more of the phrases "free press," "freedom of the press," or "free discussion" in the title between 1700 and 1770? Provide the full title for any instances. How many pamphlets can you find with one or more of the phrases "free press," "freedom of the press," or "free discussion" in the title between 1770 and 1800? Provide the full title for any instances. Draw some conclusions.

6. Imagine you are preparing an essay on the use of the phrase "universal empire" to describe the French revolutionary government between 1790 and 1800. List all the different books or pamphlets you find that employs the phrase to describe France.

7. Look at Hannah More's writings between 1790-1800. Write a two-paragraph overview of her output, describing the different types of text she wrote (prose, dialogues, poetry, letters, etc). By reviewing relevant titles, describe her basic political position on the French Revolution.

8. Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is generally understood to have inaugurated the wildly popular genre of literary gothic. For fascinating reasons, the "invention" of this literary mode coincides with a broader reevaluation of gothic architecture. List 5 texts which include the phrase "gothic architecture" in their titles between 1764 and 1800. From a quick review of any illustrations in these texts, identify the key feature or features that writers associated with the gothic during this period. Provide a sample illustration to support your point.

9. Provide the full title of 5 texts published between 1764 and 1800 that are gothic novels or narratives.

10. Review the titles that include the word/phrase "slave," "slavery," or "slave trade" in their titles between 1700 and 1750. How many texts are dealing with the African slave trade or the conditions of slaves in the American colonies and South America/ Review the titles that include the word/phrase "slave," "slavery," or "slave trade" in their titles between 1750 and 1785? Provide a number. How many texts are dealing with the African slave trade or the conditions of slaves in the American colonies and South America. What happens between 1785 and 1791? Draw some conclusions. Can you find one particularly poignant illustration of the cruelty of the slave trade? If so, include it in your submission.

WORD ANALYSIS EXERCISES

A variety of digital tools ranging from Voyant to Wordhoard offer researchers ways of performing new kinds of historical, cultural, and literary analysis. You will complete a series of exercises on a number of these words analysis tools. I will discuss the format and expectations a number of weeks before the exercise is due.

Voyant Exercise

You will complete this exercise with another student from the class. In this instance, you will both receive the same grade that is assigned to the exercise.

Instructions:

A.) Read Hannah More's *Slavery, A Poem*.

1. Discuss the tone of the poem. How does the tone shift throughout the poem? (5-10 sentences). What words stand out to you as being repeated a significant amount of times?

2. Enter the whole poem into Voyant.

- Do the frequently repeated words revealed by Voyant correlate with the words you thought were repeated frequently? If not, why do you think those words stood out to you while reading the poem?
- Do the frequently repeated words revealed by Voyant tell you something about the poem you didn't get when reading it once?

3. Now enter a passage you think exemplifies the tone of the poem.

- Do the frequently repeated words reflect the tone? If so, how?
- Are there frequently words that contradict the tone?
- Does the timing of the frequency of the words say anything about how More utilized language to create tone in this passage?

B.) Now enter Anna Barbauld's "Epistle to William Wilberforce" into Voyant. DO NOT read this poem before you enter it into the tool.

1. What are the ten most frequently repeated words?

2. Do any of these words overlap with More's ten most frequently repeated words?

3. By looking at the word cloud, can you tell the tone of the poem? Or any themes that might come up in the poem?

C.) Compare the word clouds of the full texts of both poems.

1. Might they offer us any provisional information British abolitionist poetry of the 1780s/1790?

2. If so, what? If not, why not?

D.) Now reflect on these exercises:

- Which poem do you feel you know and understand better?
- Did you run into any challenges trying to compare both poems after having read one and not the other?
- How well did Voyant allow you to understand the poem you didn't read? Now think about a critical literary paper you have written for another class.

- Could Voyant have helped you?
- Are there any other ways Voyant could help you read or do research?

WORDHOARD EXERCISE

You will complete this exercise with another student from the class. In this instance, you will both receive the same grade that is assigned to the exercise.

EXERCISE:

Before beginning you must download and install Wordhoard on your computer. If you have any trouble, please email Melanie. Try to capture the issues you are dealing with via screenshots and send them to her. A troubleshooting page has been started. More issues/solutions will be added as they arise.

1. Using the **“Windows”** option on the menu, click on **“Shakespeare Lexicon”** and select **SHOW: “Nouns”** and **ORDER BY: Count/Lemma** in order to view the most frequently used **NOUNS** in Shakespeare’s lexicon.

- Make some observations about a selection of the **30 most frequently used NOUNS**.
- Selecting **5 NOUNS** that interest you. Selecting each noun that interests and then using the **“Get Info”** command in the **“File”** menu (Command-I), find more information about your chosen nouns. Include these dialog boxes in your answer. Out of these 5 nouns, choose 1 noun and using the **“Get Concordance for”** option, identify a play that deals with this word a lot. List the Acts and Scenes within this play where this word appears.

2. Using the **“Find”** option on the menu, then clicking on **“Find Words,”** and then choosing **“Shakespeare”** as your Corpus, explore the use and frequency of these **NOUNS** in Shakespeare:

- Revenge (**noun**)
- Mercy (**noun**)
- Forgiveness (**noun**)

Explore their frequency by **DATE**. Note any **“hotspots”** and **“patterns.”** If you were going to write a paper on the tension between **“Revenge,” “mercy,”** and **“forgiveness”** in Shakespeare, what play(s) would you look at first?

3. Now pick your own **three related NOUNS** (e.g. Love/Hate/Desire, etc) and explore the interaction of these nouns across time. Explore the frequency of the use of these words by **“Speaker Gender.”** Explore the frequency of the use of these words in terms of a chosen speaker in a specific play (i.e. **“Hamlet”** or **“Cordelia”**).

4. The noun **“love”** is only mentioned 6 times in The Tempest. Using the **“Find”** option, find the 6 passages that use the **NOUN “love.”** How many times is the **VERB “love”** used

in the “The Tempest”? Does anything significant show up when you compare the passages that use the **NOUN** and the **VERB** “love”?

TIMEMAPPER EXERCISE

We will use timemapper, an online platform which allows you to design interactive timelines, to build a number of time maps relevant to the literary, political, and cultural life of our period.

Final Research Project

This course will culminate in the class designing a website, the goal of which will be to introduce and orientate an online audience to the dynamic literary culture of Great Britain between the years 1750 and 1850. Drawing on the tools and exercises that we have been working on all semester, we will try to develop a website that allows its audience to imagine its way into late eighteenth and early nineteenth century British cultural life. Emulating the public museum and exhibition that comes of age during the eighteenth century, our final project will be a multimedia exhibit of cultural and literary life during this period.

FINAL PROJECT

FINAL PROJECT OPTIONS (Choose one):

Video Introduction/Presentation:

The content of this introduction falls under four broad categories:

- Talking about digital humanities
- Talking about the relationships between the eighteenth century and our own present moment
- Talking about the ways in which DH might change and transform the way we teach English
- Talking about the projects featured on the webpage

The first part of this project will involve thinking about the form and content of your presentation. In terms of researching the form of your presentation, you should look at how other sites/institutions introduce academic material generally and DH in particular. You may also want to consider what technology you will use to make and edit your presentation (do you want to go guerrilla and use I-phones; do you want to use real cameras). You need to think about setting and props, etc. You also need to think about audience.

In terms of content, you will need to return to our early discussions of DH and the texts that we read that attempted to define and describe the field (our website is full of great articles and resources for this). To get a sense of the connections between our moment and the 18th C, you will want to reread Siskin and Warner's Introduction to "This is Enlightenment" as well as consult some of the articles I posted via our twitter that drew interesting connections between 18th C media practices and today. Finally, you will need to develop an informed grasp of the various tools we have been using: Voyant; WordHoard; TimeMapper; ECCO. Look at how the sites that feature these tools describe the tools. You can even start doing some of this research now.

As well as researching, writing, and uploading your presentation, you will write a 1000-1500 word paper that reflects on the process (what did you learn in the course of this project? What were the criteria that guided your decisions about the form and content of the presentation? How does a "video presentation" teach you about your chosen subject?). Your essay would reflect on the decisions you made regarding the formal and technical aspects of the exhibit as well as your decisions regarding content. You would post this as a blog and you would include images and clips where appropriate.

A Digital Exhibit:

Our webpage will feature several digital exhibits that will discuss the areas of eighteenth-century literature and culture covered by our class:

- The Enlightenment and the print revolution
- Sentimental literature
- Abolitionist literature
- Pastoralism and pastoral literature

Alternatively, you can build an exhibit on a specific writer, poem, theme, or motif that we discussed at length in this class. If you want to go this route, you need to get approval from me. You will have the option of using Flickr to assemble your exhibit.

Here is a Flickr online example from the University of Maryland

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/digitalcollections/sets/72157624970856879/>

You can work on a project by yourself as part of a group. If you work as part of a group, you can elect to have your work graded as part of a group (a group grade) OR you can elect to be responsible for specific parts of the project and be graded individually on those parts. If you go the latter route, your group will need to figure out how to divide up the workload fairly. I would certainly be happy to facilitate that discussion, if you want to go that route. I think either route works and neither route affects in any way the fact that you are working together on a team project.

As well as researching, writing, and uploading your presentation, each student will write a 1000-1500 word paper that reflects on the process (What did you learn in the course of this project? What were the criteria that guided your decisions about the form and

content of the exhibit? How does a “digital exhibit” teach you about your chosen subject). Your essay would reflect on the decisions you made regarding the formal and technical aspects of the exhibit as well as your decisions regarding content. You would post this as a blog and you would include images and clips where appropriate.

See Digital Exhibit Resources (includes Flickr instructions)

A “Digital” Research Essay:

You can elect to write a research essay on an eighteenth-century author/poem/theme/motif that we discussed at length in our class that incorporates one or more of the following:

- Voyant
- ECCO
- TimeMapper

[I will consider a Shakespeare proposal that incorporates WordHoard, if you can demonstrate that the WordHoard will be an integral part of your research]. Your essay will be between 3000-3500 words and can include images (frontispieces, graphs, word clouds, etc). Essays will be posted on Tumblr. Sign-in information will be provided. In addition to incorporating at least one of the digital tools that we have used in class, I will be looking for ways in which your essay exploits the affordances of the digital format. Think about ways you can use a hypertext academically: you can link to relevant images and OED definitions. You should use opportunities to embed images, music, and video into your blog: If you discuss locus amoenus, link to an academic discussion of the term and provide an image that embodies this pastoral motif. This video clip from Walt Disney’s Fantasia incorporates pastoral motifs that we discussed in class in a fascinating manner:

As discussed in class, Fleet Foxes, White Winter Hymnal incorporates important elements of the pastoral into not only the song’s form (a round) and content, but also the video.

DEADLINES:

December 4: Our final class session will be devoted to discussing progress on our final research projects and troubleshooting any issues that have arrived.

DECEMBER 9TH, 2-4 PM: In lieu of a final exam, we will gather in WHH 118 (library classroom) to review these final research projects. By this deadline, you need to have a rough cut of your video ready for viewing, a rough draft of your digital exhibit available for viewing on flickr, or a rough draft of your digital essay available for review. As a class, we will review this material and offer feedback. You will have an opportunity to make changes during class time.

DECEMBER 12th, Noon:

Part A:

If you wrote a digital essay, your final version should be available to be read on our Tumblr pages.

If you prepared a digital exhibit, your final version should be available on our class flick page.

If you prepared a video, this video should be posted on youtube.

Part B:

In addition to submitting your final project, those who prepared a digital exhibit or video will post 1500 word reflection on the process to our class blog. Details of this reflective posting can be found in the instructions above.