

English 333
Restoration & Early Eighteenth-Century Drama
Instructor: Howe

Term Assignment: Individual and Collaborative Archives

Project Overview

During the next twelve weeks, we will work both individually and collaboratively to create a web archive of original research and primary materials. The individual component of this project will be completed in conjunction with your final essay, drawing from the archive of materials you put together. The collaborative component of the project will be completed in a group I select, based on significant relationships between your individual essay topics. From the individual to the collaborative project, groups will be required to cull relevant materials into a new, online archive, compose an introduction for it, and add each group member's essay. The introduction to this collaborative archive will derive, in part, from your individual essay, but as a collaborative project, it should coherently represent the work of all students in your group.

What Is an Archive?

Broadly speaking, an archive is a collection of materials, usually primary, amassed for the purposes of preservation and study. Special Collections in Leyburn Library is home to several archives—for instance, the Farrar Collection of Historical Newspapers. The archives we will be putting together in this class are much like conventional archives, but they are intended to serve as the pool of material from which you begin to craft your long essay. One way of looking at your archive is as an expression of your essay topic. As you have discovered in other English classes, **your topic is not your argument**. Your argument will be fully developed in your essay. Thus, your archive can include playtexts, cast lists, biographical essays, images, music scores, and audio recordings, film excerpts, scholarly articles, and even annotations of tangentially-related materials. It is important to note that you have a wide range of possibilities here.

Approaching Your Archive

We will talk about this project in more detail during the upcoming weeks, but as we read, you should begin thinking about your archive topic. You have free rein with your topic; the only requirement is that it be capable of informing the substantial critical argument you will make in your essay. **In order to develop an effective archive, that is, you must also begin to think about your essay.** Potentially, you could end up with a huge subset of materials in your archive; part of your job, therefore, is to decide what goes in and what stays out. Be selective!

Some archival topics might include the body of the Restoration actress in *The Rover*; the figure of the rake in *The Country Wife* and *The Beggar's Opera*; licensing and the politics of the theatre in the reception of *The Relapse*; the changing nature of "honor" or "wit" during our period; the list is endless. If you have trouble developing an idea for your topic, come see me—it's what I'm here for!

Places to Start

Visit the Instructional Technology Laboratory in Leyburn Library for any technical questions you have: how to scan articles into PDF format; how to scan images; how to extract video or sound; how to upload your materials.

<http://www.nwe.ufl.edu/~pcraddoc/lonthe1.html>

Student web project led by Patricia Craddock, “The World of London Theatre 1660-1800.” This is an unfinished archive on a much broader topic; yours should be more specific and as complete as your essay requires it to be.

<http://home.wlu.edu/~howet/>

My sample archive on the theatrical use of traditional music in *The Beggar’s Opera*, specifically the way Gay reimagines “Greensleeves.”

<http://www.umich.edu/~ece>

Collected student projects from upper-level 18th century literature courses by David Porter, University of Michigan: “Eighteenth-Century England”