(Formerly known as the Georgia Conference on Information Literacy)

Sep 25th, 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM

What Can a Wiki Do? Exploring History, Identity and Literacy in a Digital World

John Vanecek
University of Central Florida

Recommended Citation

Vanecek, John, "What Can a Wiki Do? Exploring History, Identity and Literacy in a Digital World" (2009). *Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy*. 76.
https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gaintlit/2009/2009/76

Shakespeare 2.0
Exploring History, Identity & Literacy in a Digital Environment

John Venecek

University of Central Florida Libraries

2009 Georgia Conference on Information Literacy

Miranda - Shakespeare's Ideal

Miranda by JW Waterhouse

    "Miranda" in Latin means "wondering" or "admirable."   While Shakespeare desires to present her as an ideal woman, Miranda's character in *The Tempest* is also the embodiment of childlike innocence. Upon seeing her for the first time, Ferdinand exclaims "O you wonder" (*The Tempest* 1.2.430). Miranda is generous but refuses to deny her own desires. She is naïve, but her innocence allows her to see the "brave new world" (*The Tempest*, 5.1.186). She is a perfect combination of goodness and determination. There is only one problem – this ideal woman can only exist in her secluded paradise, far away from the rest of the world.

# Shakespeare's Olivia - "The Confused Courtier"

Twelfth Night

OLIVIA

O Sir, I will not be so hard-hearted. I will give out divers schedules of my beauty. It shall be inventoried and every particle and utensil labelled to my will, as, *item*, two lips, indifferent red; *item*, two grey eyes, with lids to them; *item*, one neck, one chin, and so forth. Were you sent hither to praise me?
(*Twelfth Night* 1.5.214-18)

These words were spoken by Olivia. With these words Olivia spoke volumes about herself. Unlike the classic Petrarchan lady, Olivia was beautiful, yet did not wish to hear of it. She was not hard-hearted, but she was quick-minded. She was noble, yet she was not afraid to advocate for herself and for others. She had an air of mystery, of unreachability. She also held a heavy hand over the play *Twelfth Night*.

Olivia was a courtier. Courtiers were expected to be well-educated, well-mannered, wealthy members of noble families. They needed skills in the arts of poetry, dance, and music. They followed the ideals of "courtly love" and the code of conduct for the realm. While all of these aspects affect Olivia, we are most interested in those ideals of courtly love. Who, why, and how did Olivia love? What did this love do to her? What did it do to her

JULIET

A Star Crossed Lover
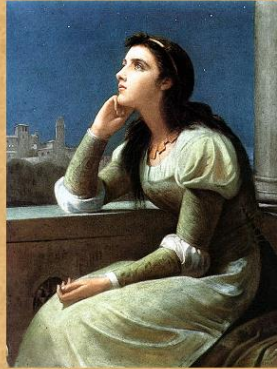
[Character Bio](#)

[Family and Friends](#)

[Quotable Quotes](#)

[Film and Modern Day Interpretations](#)

☆ **Desdemona's Marriage**

Desdemona's Marriage

Secret Marriage

"For your sake, jewel,

I am glad at soul I have no other child,

For they escape would teach me tyranny,

To hang clogs on 'em."

(1.3.194-197)

    Brabanzio, Desdemona's father, is shocked at his daughter's secret marriage to Othello, as illustrated by the above quotation in which Brabanzio confesses Desdemona's elopement would cause him to restrain his other children, if he had them, like criminals. Not surprisingly, literature in Early Modern England warned that marrying without the parents' consent was a "great and abominable Crime" [3], growing especially more common among women. According to one manuscript from 1696 (even almost a century later than *Othello*), this behavior could cause "Ruin of their Families" [3]. Brabanzio's rage can be placed in context partly with a fear of societal shame due to his daughter's elopement.

    In Early Modern England, the consent of the parents was "considered essential" and "open courtship" highly recommended [1]. Not only did Desdemona fail to receive consent from her father for the marriage, but she courted Othello in secret, leaving her father without any inclination of the events to occur. In fact, the time period contained a series of "unwritten rules" involving parents, other relatives, friends, lawyers, and businessmen, that Desdemona and Othello omitted for their secret courtship and marriage [1].

    A common sentiment at the time was that parents have the power to make the marital decisions for their children, and that the parents would take "most care" to find a well-made and happy match for their child [3]. It was therefore believed that "for a Son or a Daughter to be disobedient to this, is the greatest piece of Rebellion, as well as the highest point of Ingratitude they can well be guilty of" [3]. Not only does Desdemona's behavior defy her father, the head of the household, but she has, according to popular belief, disgraced her family, as well. This sentiment explains Brabanzio's rage at discovering his daughter's secret marriage, in addition to the other socially-prohibited marital factors described in the sections

Project Overview

- The project was run during the fall 2007 & 2008 semesters.

- In small groups, students created wikis based on social identities that recur throughout Shakespeare's works.

- Themes included fools, villains, kings, queens, men, women, jesters, drunks, the poor, the supernatural, etc.

- Wikis were intended to be part of an evolving online research guide for Shakespeare studies.

- Students would decided what to include and how this guide would look.

Course Goals

- To approach Shakespeare's works with a historicist's lens… apply a "new historicist" approach to "doing history" in a literature class.

- Explore primary and secondary sources to separate Shakespeare from his pop-culture image.

- Enhance information literacy skills by Incorporating research methodology into the fabric of the course.

- Employ a technology that would both engage students and help us attain course goals.

Initial Successes

- The flexible nature of the medium helped illustrate how classic themes & ideas are in constant flux.

- Encouraged students to go beyond the textual and think more creatively about how to seek & organize information.

- Also promoted more reading outside the assigned texts... encouraged students to search for new contexts and "fill in gaps."

- Project life-span extended beyond the semester. Students took greater ownership of their work than usual... wanted wikis live on and continue to grow.

Concerns

- Some wikis suffered from style over substance... no clear relation between text & image; images used as padding.

- Lack of consistency, both in the quality of wikis and resources used.

- Over-reliance on general information & summary, not enough in-depth analysis.

- Occasional lack of audience awareness & cohesion (navigation & usability issues).

Assessment

- Much of the value is experiential... hard to separate assessment from experience & interaction.

- Need to find a form of assessment that goes beyond these subjective terms, but still encourages exploration & discovery.

- Requires more reflection about what counts as information literacy in a changing environment... what do we value & why?

- Can ACRL standards be tailored to meet the needs of students & teachers working with new media?

Phase Two Changes

- The second phase employed the "Beile Test of Information Literacy for Education" and was tailored for literature students and account for the type of media being used.

- This **pre/post test** was compliant with the ACRL standards for English majors (see appendix).

- Would also include more focused instruction based on phase I results + two informal workshops toward the end of the semester/

- Final assessment also include a citation analysis to evaluate the quality of sources used in the wikis.

Citation Analysis
Background:

- Davis & Cohen studies citations from microeconomics courses at Cornell University (1996-1999).

- Their study found a fairly significant decrease in the number of "traditional" scholarly resources (books & journal articles) used during that time.

- Book citations dropped from an average of 30% in 1996 to 19% in 1999.

- Study concluded that instructors should be more "prescriptive" with the types of resources that students should use.

Background Continued…

- Davis conducted a follow-up study in 2000 in which he implemented three key recommendations from the first study:

  - ❖ Stricter guidelines for what types of resources should be used.

  - ❖ The creation of more scholarly portals to direct students to "authoritative" sources.

  - ❖ More instruction to show how to evaluate sources.

- The changes yielded no improvements and the "scholarliness" of bibliographies continued to decline.

- Davis concluded that "A possible crisis in undergraduate scholarship is at hand."

Background Continued...

- Building on Davis's results, Robinson & Schlegl designed a similar study based on the "**instruction and encouragement**" (typified by Davis) & their own "**instruction-and-penalty**" approach.

- They found that, "instruction and encouragement has very limited effect on the quality of student research, but instruction-and-penalty does have significant effects"

- When penalties were enforced, the quality of the bibliographies was closer to what Davis and Philips had seen in 1996.

- Percentage of Scholarly Citations:

  - ❖ Control = 72%

  - ❖ Instruction only = 74%

  - ❖ Instruction & Penalty = 88%

Our Approach

- The "instruction + penalty" approach doesn't promote self reliance, a key component of information literacy.

- Need to find a more integrated approach that balances targeted instruction with freedom & exploration.

- Hypothesis: this could be accomplished by making research methodology part of the general discourse throughout the semester.

- The results were tracked with a citation analyses of the wikis conducted at the end of each semester.

Results from Phase I
(Fall 2007,12 Wikis)

- 42.9% book citations; 27.9% scholarly.

- 21.8% article citations; 19.7% scholarly.

- 8.8 % Primary sources (all considered scholarly).

- 24.5% Internet citations; 2.7% scholarly.

- 2.0% Other.

➢ Total Citations	147
➢ Average per wiki	12.3
➢ Total Scholarly	59.2%
➢ Total Other	40.8%

Results from Phase II
(Fall 2008,9 Wikis)

- 40.6% book citations; 31.3% scholarly.

- 24.4% article citations; 23.8% scholarly.

- 15 % Primary sources (all considered scholarly).

- 13.1% Internet citations; 2.5% scholarly.

- 6.9% Other.

➢ Total Citations	160
➢ Average per wiki	17.8
➢ Total Scholarly	74.4%
➢ Total Other	25.6%

Rate of Change
From fall 2007 – Fall 2008

- -2.3% book citations; +3.4% scholarly.

- +2.6% article citations; +4.1% scholarly.

- +6.2% Primary sources.

- -11.4% Internet citations; -0.2% scholarly.

Results

- Our results showed a fairly significant increase over the Davis & Cohen study that relied on the Instruction + encouragement approach.

- Our results were naturally lower that the Robinson & Schlegl study, which relied on the "instruction + penalty" approach.

- Our results showed positive change in each category from the first to second year as the first year's results were used to create more targeted instruction during the second year.

- This led to an increase in scholarly materials & primary sources and an overall decrease in Internet citations… also led to a more strategic approach to creating the wikis, which suffered from unevenness and occasional style over substance during the first year.

Appendix

Key ACRL Standards for English Majors:

I.   Understand the structure of information within the field of literary research;

II. Identify and use key literary research tools to locate relevant information;

III. Plan effective search strategies and modify search strategies as needed;

IV. Recognize and make appropriate use of library services in the research process;

V.   Understand that some information sources are more authoritative than others and demonstrate critical thinking in the research process;

VI. Understand the technical and ethical issues involved in writing research essays; and

VII. Locate information about the literary profession itself.

Commercial Assessment Tools

- Internet and Computing Core Certification (Certiport)

- Information Literacy Test (ILT) James Madison University

- International Computer Divers' License – Australian Computer Society

- iSills (Educational Testing Service)

- SAILS (Project SAILS)

Free Assessment Tools

- **Beile Test of Information Fluency for Education – B-TILED** (University of Central Florida)

- Information Literacy Initiative (Canada)

- Cited References Rubric (University of Central Florida)

- Literature Review Rubric (University of Central Florida)

- Information Literacy Exercises Assessment Rubric (New Jersey City University)

- Portfolio Assessment: Information Literacy Rubric (New Jersey Inst. of Technology)