

**COLLIN COLLEGE**

**ENGLISH  
DEPARTMENT  
SOURCE  
BOOK**

**Annotated Bibliography**

2018-19

## *Annotated Bibliography: Rhetoric and Composition Studies*

**Allitt, Patrick. *I'm the Teacher, You're the Student*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2005. Print.**

At the recent 2012 Texas Community College Teachers Association annual conference, I attended an outstanding session by the keynote speaker Dr. Patrick Allitton "Teaching for Student Success." His presentation provided practical tips for improving the classroom setting both to challenge students and to expedite the most learning possible. His use of humor and insights into teaching clearly delighted the audience.

During the presentation Dr. Allitt referenced his book *I'm the Teacher, You're the Student*. Many books and presentations have influenced me over the years and have helped inform my teaching, but I don't recall one as enjoyable, as practical, and as accurate to the college classroom setting as that of Dr. Allitt. He deals with both the thriving student as well as the underprepared student. I would have loved to hear Dr. Allitt and read his book before I ever stepped into a college classroom as the teacher so many years ago. I recommend it especially to all new faculty.

*Contributed by Shirley McBride*

**Bailey, Richard W. *Speaking American: A History of English in the United States*. New York: Oxford UP, 2012. Print.**

A wide-ranging account of American English, Richard Bailey's *Speaking American* investigates the history and continuing evolution of our language from the sixteenth century to the present. The book is organized in half-century segments around influential centers: Chesapeake Bay (1600-1650), Boston (1650-1700), Charleston (1700-1750), Philadelphia (1750-1800), New Orleans (1800-1850), New York (1850-1900), Chicago (1900-1950), Los Angeles (1950-2000), and Cyberspace (2000-present). Each of these places has added new words, new inflections, new ways of speaking to the elusive, boisterous, ever-changing linguistic experiment that is American English.

**Barry, John A. *Technobabble*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991. Print.**

The computer revolution, like many of the technologies that preceded, is producing an abundance of new terms and catchphrases that are making their way into the English language. In this lively account, computerese expert John A. Barry chronicles an important linguistic development which he has termed technobabble: the pervasive and indiscriminate use of computer terminology, especially as it is applied to situations that have nothing at all to do with

technology. Technobabble examines the new computer lexicon from an etymological, historical, and anecdotal perspective.

**Barthes, Roland. *Critical Essays*. Trans. Richard Howard. Chicago: Northwestern UP, 1972. Print.**

Most of the work in *Critical Essays* marks and apparently decisive conversion to structuralism understood in its strictest sense, whereby literature and social life are regarded as 'no more than' languages, to be studied not in their content but in their structure, as pure relational systems.

---. ***Writing Degree Zero*. New York: MacMillan, 1977. Print.**

In his first book, French critic Roland Barthes defines the complex nature of writing, as well as the social, historical, political, and personal forces responsible for the formal changes in writing from the classical period to recent times.

**Birkets, Sven. *The Gutenberg Elegies, The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age*. New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1994. Print.**

Sven Birkerts adds to the growing body of literature and experience regarding a non-reading culture. When we do not read, we also lose our ability to learn deeply. And we lose our ability to converse. A must-read... for a society that appears to be reading less and less (though some evidence exists that say American is changing some).

**Booth, Wayne C. *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent*. Chicago and London: Chicago UP, 1974. Print.**

So here we can see Booth indicating how the rhetoric of assent can and should be used. In this example he does not imply that assent is an end in itself, rather, "That doesn't mean everyone is going to come out agreeing when they attempt reconciliation, but it does mean, for me, that this is a supreme value...it really requires talk, and effective talk requires rhetorical communication" (Emory Report). For Booth, the rhetoric of assent is what allows us to set the stage for this "rhetorical communication," thereby (arguably) highlighting the relevancy and necessity of his argument.

**Bryson, Bill. *The Mother Tongue-English And How It Got That Way*. New York: Williams Morrow, 1991. Print.**

Bryson displays an encyclopedic knowledge of his topic, and this inevitably encourages a light tone; the more you know about a subject, the more absurd it becomes. No jokes are necessary, the facts do well enough by themselves, and Bryson supplies tens per page. As well as tossing off gems of fractured English (from a Japanese eraser: "This product will self-destruct in Mother Earth."), Bryson frequently takes time to compare the idiosyncratic tongue with other languages. Not only does this give a laugh (one word: Welsh), and always shed considerable light, it

also makes the reader feel fortunate to speak English.

**Carr, Nicholas. *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010. Print.**

One of the major issues dividing the critics was whether Carr's claim that the Internet has shortchanged our brain power is, essentially, correct. Many bought into his argument about the neurological effects of the Internet, but the more expert among them (Jonah Lehrer, for one) cited scientific evidence that such technologies actually benefit the mind. Still, as Lehrer, in the New York Times Book Review, points out, Carr is no Luddite, and he fully recognizes the usefulness of the Internet. Other criticism was more trivial, such as the value of Carr's historical and cultural digressions--from Plato to HAL. In the end, Carr offers a thought-provoking investigation into our relationship with technology--even if he offers no easy answers.

**Carruthers, Mary J. *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000. Print.**

A companion to Mary Carruthers' earlier study of memory in medieval culture, *The Book of Memory*, her new book, *The Craft of Thought*, examines medieval monastic meditation as a discipline for making thoughts, and discusses its influence on literature, art, and architecture, deriving examples from a variety of late antique and medieval sources, with excursions into modern architectural memorials. The study emphasizes meditation as an act of literary composition or invention, the techniques of which notably involved both words and making mental 'pictures' for thinking and composing.

**Clark, Roy Peter. *The Glamour of Grammar: A Guide to the Magic and Mystery of Practical English*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2010. Print.**

Early in the history of English, the words "grammar" and "glamour" meant the same thing: the power to charm. Roy Peter Clark, author of *Writing Tools* and the forthcoming *Help! For Writers*, aims to put the glamour back in grammar with this fun, engaging alternative to stuffy instructionals. Now in paperback, this widely praised practical guide demonstrates everything from the different parts of speech to why effective writers prefer concrete nouns and active verbs. Above all, Clark teaches readers how to master grammar to perfect their use of English, to instill meaning, and to charm through their writing.

**Crider, Scott. *The Office of Assertion: An Art of Rhetoric for the Academic Essay*. Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2005. Print.**

Crider's text begins with an introduction to "rhetoric as the liberal art of soul-leading in writing." Crider differentiates between rhetoric, which is interested in discovering and communicating truth, from sophistry, which is interested in manipulation and lies. He defines rhetoric more specifically as "the power or capacity of the mind to

discover, the actualization of a human intellectual potential that, when actualized, releases energy” (7). The rest of the chapters provide an in-depth look at rhetoric at

work in the academic essay in all its stages, from the discovery of arguments to the revision stage.

While this text might not be accessible to basic writers, my more advanced students enjoyed Crider's philosophical and practical explanations of organization, style, and grammar as meaningful components of the academic essay and its rhetorical purpose. Regarding outlines, Crider explains "The designer of the whole ought to know the design of the parts. Why? Because, when a reader discovers that the leader of his or her soul has the cosmic comprehension of design, he or she is more likely to yield to that soul-leadership. An outline tells the reader explicitly what the essay will do" (56). Even if teachers decide not to use this in class, it can still be useful in informing their pedagogy and practices.

**Derrida, Jacques, *Dissemination*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983. Print.**

As many other have said, this is worth it for "Plato's Pharmacy" alone. Derrida follows the various translations that translators have used for translating the Greek word to *pharmakon*: the Greek word conveys senses of remedy, poison, drug, narcotic, magic potion, love philtre, and cure. Derrida shows how the various translations point towards the whole metaphysical situation of the binary. The *pharmakon*, however, is a trace which is both absent and present. Derrida sees writing as a constant joker, always referring outward, and yet a site of context within itself. Derrida also brings Plato to his knees in a brilliant critique that turns Sophocles into a magician and a Stoic -- his biggest foes.

**Elbow, Peter. *Vernacular Eloquence: What Speech Can Bring to Writing*. New York: Oxford UP, 2012. Print.**

Since the publication of his groundbreaking books *Writing Without Teachers* and *Writing with Power*, Peter Elbow has revolutionized how people think about writing. Now, in *Vernacular Eloquence*, he makes a vital new contribution to both practice and theory. The core idea is simple: we can enlist virtues from the language activity most people find easiest-speaking-for the language activity most people find hardest- writing. Speech, with its spontaneity, naturalness of expression, and fluidity of thought, has many overlooked linguistic and rhetorical merits. Through several easy to employ techniques, writers can marshal this "wisdom of the tongue" to produce stronger, clearer, more natural writing.

**Faigley, Lester. *Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1992. Print.**

In Faigley's 1992 book, he addresses the lack of attention to postmodern theory in composition studies, with particular attention to composition studies' "belief in the writer as an autonomous self" (15). While composition studies has developed

as a discipline concurrently with the development of postmodernity, postmodern theory (as of 1992) had little influence on the development of composition theory, with the exception of process theory.

**Feyerabend, Paul. *Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge*. New York: Verso, 1993. Print.**

The invention of the transistor certainly has made life easier, but science can do as much harm as good: some of the most talented and intellectually persistent individuals are drawn into an institution where they are likely to spend their energy on publishing papers in obscure journals (of which millions of pages are published weekly), and their talent geared at solving questions important only to a tiny part of the community (mainly other academics). (To some extent they become like medieval monks, only that medieval monks did not hold their annual conferences at the most expensive vacation resorts of the Mediterranean.) Thus science, even in ideal circumstances (that is neglecting the possibility of corruption, nepotism, etc.), can be a major obstacle to the spontaneous flow of human creativity.

**Fish, Stanley. *How to Write a Sentence: And How to Read One*. New York: Harper, 2011. Print.**

Author Annie Dillard ("The Writing Life," 1989) was asked by a student, "Do you think I could be a writer?" Dillard's response: "Do you like sentences?" According to Stanley Fish, author of "How to Write a Sentence," it's as important for writers to genuinely like sentences as it is for great painters to like paint. For those who enjoy an effective sentence and all that it involves, this short (160 page) book is insightful, interesting and entertaining. For those who consider reading or writing a chore, perhaps this book can help one's interest level and motivation regarding sentences, though the author's intended audience is clearly those with a genuine interest in writing.

**Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum, 1970, 1993. Print.**

So why invest so much time and effort in studying and lauding Freire? To simply disregard Freire's fundamental argument because its ultimate goal is currently infeasible on a large scale in America would be tragically fallacious. His banking concept of education is a call for all educators to think critically about what they do and say (and, just as importantly, what their students do and say) in the classroom. To ignore this is to ignore our vocation.

**---. *Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare To Teach*. Boulder: Westview P, 1998. Print.**

Freire speaks directly to teachers about the lessons learned from a lifetime of experience as an educator and social theorist. Freire's words challenge all who teach to reflect critically on the meaning of the act of teaching as well as the meaning of learning. He shows why a teacher's success depends on a permanent commitment to learning and training, as part of an ongoing appraisal of

classroom practice. By opening themselves to recognition of the different roads students take in order to learn, teachers will become involved in a continual reconstruction of their own paths

of curiosity, opening the doors to habits of learning that will benefit everyone in the classroom.

**Garber, Marjorie. *The Use and Abuse of Literature*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2011. Print.**

Even as the decline of the reading of literature, as argued by the National Endowment for the Arts, proceeds in our culture, Garber (“One of the most powerful women in the academic world” —The New York Times) gives us a deep and engaging meditation on the usefulness and uselessness of literature in the digital age. What is literature, anyway? How has it been understood over time, and what is its relevance for us today? Who are its gatekeepers? Is its canonicity fixed? Why has literature been on the defensive since Plato? Does it have any use at all, or does it merely serve as an aristocratic or bourgeois accoutrement attesting to worldly sophistication and refinement of spirit? Is it, as most of us assume, good to read literature, much less study it—and what does either mean?

**Grendler, Paul F. *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600*. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1989. Print.**

Before 1400, as every student of the Renaissance has been told, logic and Christianity were the staples of the classroom and lecture hall; after 1400, initially in Italy and gradually throughout the rest of Western Europe, rhetoric became the basic intellectual discipline, and the Latin authors of republican and imperial Rome its seminal texts. As in the case of almost every other revolution, the break with the immediate past was, as we now know, neither as sharp nor as complete as some of the followers of Jacob Burckhardt would have had us believe.

**Hitchins, Henry. *The Language Wars: A History of Proper English*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011. Print.**

*The Language Wars* examines grammar rules, regional accents, swearing, spelling, dictionaries, political correctness, and the role of electronic media in reshaping language. It also takes a look at such de-tails as the split infinitive, elocution, and text messaging. Peopled with intriguing characters such as Jonathan Swift, Lewis Carroll, and Lenny Bruce, *The Language Wars* is an essential volume for anyone interested in the state of the English language today or its future.

**hooks, bell. *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Print.**

bell hooks seeks to theorize from the place of the positive, looking at what works. Writing about struggles to end racism and white supremacy, she makes the useful point that "No one is born a racist. Everyone makes a choice." *Teaching Community* tells us how we can choose to end racism and create a beloved community. hooks looks at many issues—among them, spirituality in the classroom, white people looking to end racism, and erotic relationships between professors

and students. Spirit,

struggle, service, love, the ideals of shared knowledge and shared learning - these values motivate progressive social change.

---. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994. Print.

Cultural theorist hooks means to challenge preconceptions, and it is a rare reader who will be able to walk away from her without considerable thought. Despite the frequent appearance of the dry word "pedagogy," this collection of essays about teaching is anything but dull or detached. hooks begins her meditations on class, gender and race in the classroom with the confession that she never wanted to teach. By combining personal narrative, essay, critical theory, dialogue and a fantasy interview with herself (the latter artificial construct being the least successful), hooks declares that education today is failing students by refusing to acknowledge their particular histories.

Houston, R A. *Literacy in Early Modern Europe: Culture & Education 1500-1800*. London: Longman, 1988. Print.

This study presents an analysis of that momentous change in European society from widespread illiteracy in 1500 to mass literacy by 1800. The book explores the importance of education, literacy and popular culture in Europe during this critical transitional period and reveals their relationship to political, economic and social structures as both more complex and revealing than is usually believed. The value of the book lies in Dr Houston's use of material in all European languages; and his concentration on the experiences of ordinary men and women. What emerges is social history of early modern Europe itself.

Illich, Ivan. *In the Vineyard of the Text: A Commentary to Hugh's Didascalicon*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1993. Print.

In a work with profound implications for the electronic age, Ivan Illich explores how revolutions in technology affect the way we read and understand text. Examining the "Didascalicon" of Hugh of St. Victor, Illich celebrates the culture of the book from the twelfth century to the present. Hugh's work, at once an encyclopedia and guide to the art of reading, reveals a twelfth-century revolution as sweeping as that brought about by the invention of the printing press and equal in magnitude only to the changes of the computer age--the transition from reading as a vocal activity done in the monastery to reading as a predominantly silent activity performed by and for individuals.

Jackson, Kevin. *Invisible Forms: A Guide to Literary Curiosities*. New York: Thomas Dunne, 1999. Print.

In these postmodern times, a book about footnotes, indexes, acknowledgments, and

so forth - was bound to be written. We should be grateful that such a book was written by Kevin Jackson. This book is hilarious, and should find an audience amongst

graduate students, and more generally, bibliophiles. Jackson's book is a study (the better word is 'celebration') of 'paratexts', those matters which are an essential part of any book - footnotes, epigraphs, stage directions, indexes, and so forth. One can only hint at the humor in this book.

**Jackendoff, Ray. *Foundations of Language: Brain, Meaning, Grammar, Evolution*. New York: Oxford UP, 2003. Print.**

Jackendoff (linguistics, Brandeis Univ.) tackles the substantial tasks of assessing where Noam Chomsky's foundation of research has led linguistics and reinterpreting his theory of universal grammar. While embracing many of Chomsky's ideas, Jackendoff proposes his own overall theory of language.

**Jacob, Alan. *The Pleasures of Reading in an Age of Distraction*. New York: Oxford UP, 2011. Print.**

For one who has been drawn to lists of great books, various reading plans, and Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren's *How To Read a Book* in the past, Alan Jacobs' new book is a fun and challenging read. As a sort of rejoinder to *How to Read a Book*, Jacobs extols reading by Whim and serendipity, while at the same time offering some practical approaches to the practice of reading.

**Jarratt, Susan C. *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1991. Print.**

This book is a critically informed challenge to the traditional histories of rhetoric and to the current emphasis on Aristotle and Plato as the most significant classical voices in rhetoric. In it, Susan C. Jarratt argues that the first sophists—a diverse group of traveling intellectuals in the fifth century B.C.—should be given a more prominent place in the study of rhetoric and composition. Rereading the ancient sophists, she creates a new lens through which to see contemporary social issues, including the orality/literacy debate, feminist writing, deconstruction, and writing pedagogy.

**Johnson, Christopher. *Microstyle: The Art of Writing Little*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2012. Print.**

Some of the most important verbal messages we craft are also the shortest: headlines, titles, sound bites, brand names, domain names, slogans, taglines, company mantras, email signatures, bullet points. These miniature messages depend not on the elements of style but rather on the atoms of style. They require microstyle. Branding consultant Christopher Johnson here reveals the once-secret knowledge of poets, copywriters, brand namers, political speechwriters, and other professional verbal miniaturists.

Each chapter discusses one tool that helps miniature messages grab attention,

communicate instantly, stick in the mind, and roll off the tongue. As he highlights examples of those tools used well, Johnson also examines messages that miss the mark, either by failing to use a tool or by using it badly. Microstyle shows readers how

to say the most with the least, while offering a lively romp through the historic transformation of mass media into the media of the personal.

**Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. New York: Anchor Books, 1994. Print.**

In this collection of essays on writing, Lamott provides a frank account of her own experiences as a writer. Along the way, she offers sage and realistic advice about the writing process, dealing with writer's block, and the value of having someone read your drafts. I don't usually assign the whole book to students, but I have given them the chapters "Shitty First Drafts" and "Perfectionism" to help students overcome two of the biggest problems I see in my first-year composition courses. First, students want to produce perfect papers in one sitting. They are convinced that this is what good writers do. Lamott debunks this myth by saying "people tend to look at successful writers, writers who are getting their books published and maybe even doing well financially, and think that they sit down at their desks every morning feeling like a million dollars, feeling great about who they are and how much talent they have...But this is just the fantasy of the uninitiated.... Very few writers really what they are doing until they've done it" (21-22). Her chapter on perfectionism deals with the second issue that I often encounter in comp classes, particularly from older students and over-achievers. Students think their writing has to be perfect, so they pick it at it and pick it until it no longer resembles the assignment they were supposed to complete. The chapter on perfectionism starts out with the claim that "Perfectionism is the voice of the oppressor, the enemy of the people. It will keep you cramped and insane your whole life, and it is the main obstacle between you and a shitty first draft" (28). Reading the words of a published author who struggles in the same way that they struggle has allowed many of my students to let go of their desire to write perfect, single drafts and to embrace the process.

**Lanham, Richard A. *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*. Berkeley: University of California P. [1962] 1992. Print.**

The great thing about this book is that it gives name to a great many devices we already use in everyday speech, and for a writer this information is invaluable. The better facility a writer has with these devices the better he or she can express our endless human emotions.

**Leitch, Vincent B. *Deconstructive Criticism: An Advanced Introduction*. New York: Columbia UP, 1983. Print.**

The ideal prelude to the study of deconstructive theory for the as-yet-uninitiated reader. Leitch uses in-depth analyses, surveys of historical background, and helpful overviews to address the questions posed by the major figures -- Saussure, Lacan, Levi-Strauss, Heidegger, Derrida, Barthes Foucault -- then penetrates and displays the subtle intricacies of their answers.

**Manguel, Alberto. *A History of Reading*. New York: Penguin, 1997. Print.**

Writer, translator, and editor Manguel (*In Another Part of the Forest*, LJ 6/15/94) has produced a personal and original book on reading. In 22 chapters, we find out such things as how scientists, beginning in ancient Greece, explain reading; how Walt Whitman viewed reading; how Princess Enheduanna, around 2300 B.C., was one of the few women in Mesopotamia to read and write; and how Manguel read to Jorge Luis Borges when he became blind. Manguel selects whatever subject piques his interest, jumping backward and forward in time and place. Readers might be wary of such a miscellaneous, erudite book, but it manages to be invariably interesting, intriguing, and entertaining. Over 140 illustrations show, among other things, anatomical drawings from 11th-century Egypt, painting of readers, cathedral sculptures, and stone tables of Sumerian students. The result is a fascinating book to dip into or read cover to cover.

---. ***The Library at Night*. Princeton: Yale UP, 2009. Print.**

Inspired by the process of creating a library for his fifteenth-century home near the Loire, in France, Alberto Manguel, the acclaimed writer on books and reading, has taken up the subject of libraries. "Libraries," he says, "have always seemed to me pleasantly mad places, and for as long as I can remember I've been seduced by their labyrinthine logic." In this personal, deliberately unsystematic, and wide-ranging book, he offers a captivating meditation on the meaning of libraries.

---. ***A Reader on Reading*. Princeton: Yale UP, 2011. Print.**

In this major collection of his essays, Alberto Manguel, whom George Steiner has called "the Casanova of reading," argues that the activity of reading, in its broadest sense, defines our species. "We come into the world intent on finding narrative in everything," writes Manguel, "landscape, the skies, the faces of others, the images and words that our species create." Reading our own lives and those of others, reading the societies we live in and those that lie beyond our borders, reading the worlds that lie between the covers of a book are the essence of *A Reader on Reading*.

**Martin, Henri-Jean. *The History and Power of Writing*. Trans. Lydia C Cochrane. Chicago: University of Chicago P, 1994. Print.**

Cultural history on a grand scale, this immensely readable book—the summation of decades of study by one of the world's great scholars of the book—is the story of writing from its very beginnings to its recent transformations through technology. Traversing four millennia, Martin offers a chronicle of writing as a cultural system, a means of communication, and a history of technologies. He shows how the written word originated, how it spread, and how it figured in the evolution of civilization.

Using as his center the role of printing in making the written way of thinking dominant, Martin examines the interactions of individuals and cultures to

produce new forms of "writing" in the many senses of authorship, language rendition, and script.

**McWhorter, John. *Our Magnificent Bastard Tongue: The Untold History of English*. New York: Gotham, 2009. Print.**

This evolutionary history of the English language from author and editor McWhorter (*The Power of Babel: A Natural History of Language*) isn't an easy read, but those fascinated by words and grammar will find it informative, provocative and even invigorating. McWhorter's history takes on some old mysteries and widely-believed theories, mounting a solid argument for the Celtic influence on English language that literary research has for years dismissed; he also patiently explains such drastic changes as the shift from Old English to Middle English (the differences between written and spoken language explain a lot).

**Morton, Herbert C. *The Story of Webster's Third: Philip Gove's Controversial Dictionary and its Critics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995. Print.**

If you're one of those people who consider a well done dictionary to be good early- morning reading material (and really, who isn't?) then this book is for you. Seriously, the Merriam-Webster Third Edition created a huge controversy when it was first released in 1961, being the first major U.S. dictionary that took a mainly DESCRIPTIVE rather than PRESCRIPTIVE approach to the English language. Never mind that European dictionaries had been doing much the same for a hundred years or more, to many Americans this was heresy. The ripples from this storm are still bouncing about today. Too bad that Philip Gove, the editor and virtual godfather of the Third, was such a poor defender of it. Also, too bad he didn't live long enough to see his editorial philosophy largely vindicated.

**Murphy, James J. *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance*. Berkeley: University of California P, 1974. Print.**

Murphy has read and synthesized a vast amount of source material, published and unpublished. He appears to know intimately the contents of many of the libraries of western Europe. He has integrated a great deal of international scholarship. He usually writes simply and clearly. He has a good perspective and values his subject. And he has advanced the history of rhetoric a thousand years.

**Ong, Walter J. *The Presence of the Word, Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota P, [1967] 1981. Print.**

A religious philosopher's exploration of the nature and history of the word argues that the word is initially and always sound, that it cannot be reduced to any other category, and that sound is essentially an event manifesting power and personal presence. His analysis of the development of verbal expression, from oral sources through the transfer to the visual world and to contemporary means of electronic communication, shows that the predicament of the human word is the predicament of man himself.

**O'Reilly, Karen. *Ethnographic Methods*. New York: Routledge, 2012. Print.**

In this very accessible text, O'Reilly provides detailed explanations for how to go about conducting and writing about ethnographic research. For teachers who are looking to move beyond the basic academic research paper, asking students to do ethnographic research can be a fun and fascinating way for students to produce original texts and to learn something new about a culture. When I used this in my class, I asked students to do ethnographies on cultures to which they already belonged. This promoted critical thinking and reflection about their lives and practices. The students sometimes struggled with trying to look at their data objectively, but it was a very profound exercise for many of them.

**Parkes, M. B. *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1993. Print.**

We often take punctuation for granted, but its evolution has been largely responsible for our ability to communicate meaning and convey emphasis with the written word. Believing that the best way to understand usage is to study it historically, Parkes focuses on how marks have actually been used. He cites examples from a wide range of literary texts from different periods and languages; the examples and plates also provide the reader with an opportunity to test Parkes's observations.

**Pennebaker, James W. *The Secret Life of Pronouns: What Our Words Say About Us*. New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2011. Print.**

James Pennebaker studies words. Originally interested in the beneficial effect of writing about personal trauma, he and his students developed software to analyze this writing. Their investigation soon expanded to include spoken conversations, emails, political speeches, and other language samples. They discovered that much can be learned from the short "stealth words" that we barely notice, but that make up more than half of our speech. "Pronouns (such as I, you, we, and they), articles (a, an, the), prepositions (e.g., to, for, over), and other stealth words broadcast the kind of people we are."

**Petrucci, Armando. *Writers and Readers in Medieval Italy: Studies in the History of Written Culture*. Ed. and Trans. Charles M. Radding. New Haven: Princeton UP, 1995. Print.**

Armando Petrucci's collection of ten essays on medieval Italy, ably translated by Charles Radding, ranges from types of books, the various ways in which books were conceived, the problems of literacy in states conquered by illiterates, to sundry schools and the beginning of a university system. Petrucci also discusses paleography, scribes, written evidence as symbol, authors and autographs, the vulgar tongue, book production and reading.

**Pinker, Stephen. *The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window into Human Nature*. New York: Penguin, 2008. Print.**

Is there a difference between the meanings of these two sentences? (1) "Hal loaded hay into the wagon," and, (2) "Hal loaded the wagon with hay." Steven Pinker claims there is a difference and it's a difference that reveals something about the way the mind conceptualizes experience. That is "the stuff of thought" with which Pinker's latest book is concerned, and this "stuff," as he convincingly demonstrates, can be made accessible through a careful analysis of "the stuff of language," i.e., word categories and their syntactic habitats.

**Piper, Andrew. *Book Was There: Reading in Electronic Times*. Chicago: U of Chicago, P, 2011. Print.**

Much ink has been spilled lamenting or championing the decline of printed books, but Piper shows that the rich history of reading itself offers unexpected clues to what lies in store for books, print or digital. From medieval manuscript books to today's playable media and interactive urban fictions, Piper explores the manifold ways that physical media have shaped how we read, while also observing his own children as they face the struggles and triumphs of learning to read. In doing so, he uncovers the intimate connections we develop with our reading materials—how we hold them, look at them, share them, play with them, and even where we read them—and shows how reading is interwoven with our experiences in life. Piper reveals that reading's many identities, past and present, on page and on screen, are the key to helping us understand the kind of reading we care about and how new technologies will—and will not—change old habits.

**Rasaula, Jed, and Terry McCafferty, *Imaging Language: An Anthology*. Boston: MIT Press, 1998. Print.**

The texts in this anthology play with language and its evolution into modern times, more hypermediated times. Works are not merely about words any longer. Rather, such literary works must involve all the senses, paying close attention to the visual and auditory appeal of language. Placing such a wide array of hypermediated, philosophically challenging works into this anthology proves to be a trial for the reader, who must take time after each work to consider its meaning and the author's purpose.

**Saenger, Paul. *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Series: *Figurae: Reading Medieval Culture*). Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 2000. Print.**

Reading, like any human activity, has a history. Modern reading is a silent and solitary activity. Ancient reading was usually oral, either aloud, in groups, or individually, in a muffled voice. The text format in which thought has been presented to readers has undergone many changes in order to reach the form that the modern Western reader now views as immutable and nearly universal. This book explains how a change in

writing—the introduction of word separation—led to the development of silent reading during the period from late antiquity to the fifteenth century.

**Scholes, Robert. *English After the Fall--From Literature to Textuality*. Des Moines: U of Iowa P, 2011. Print.**

Robert Scholes's now classic *Rise and Fall of English* was a stinging indictment of the discipline of English literature in the United States. In *English after the Fall*, Scholes moves from identifying where the discipline has failed to providing concrete solutions that will help restore vitality and relevance to the discipline. With the self-assurance of a master essayist, Scholes explores the reasons for the fallen status of English and suggests a way forward. Arguing that the fall of English as a field of study is due, at least in part, to the narrow view of "literature" that prevails in English departments, Scholes charts how the historical rise of English as a field of study during the early twentieth century led to the domination of modernist notions of verbal art, ultimately restricting English studies to a narrow canon of approved texts.

**Small, Jocelyn Penny. *Wax Tablets of the Mind: Cognitive Studies of Memory and Literacy in Classical Antiquity*. New York: Routledge, 1997. Print.**

In this volume, the author argues that literacy is a complex combination of various skills, not just the ability to read and write: the technology of writing, the encoding and decoding of text symbols, the interpretation of meaning, the retrieval and display systems which organize how meaning is stored and memory. The book explores the relationship between literacy, orality and memory in classical antiquity, not only from the point of view of antiquity, but also from that of modern cognitive psychology. It examines the contemporary as well as the ancient debate about how the writing tools we possess interact and affect the product, why they should do so and how the tasks required of memory change and develop with literacy's increasing output and evoking technologies.

**Stock, Brian. *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1983. Print.**

This book explores the influence of literacy on eleventh and twelfth-century life and though on social organization, on the criticism of ritual and symbol, on the rise of empirical attitudes, on the relationship between language and reality, and on the broad interaction between ideas and society. Medieval and early modern literacy, Brian Stock argues, did not simply supersede oral discourse but created a new type of interdependence between the oral and the written.

**Strunk, Williams, Jr., and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. New York: Longman, 1999. Print.**

There are a handful of reference tools: dictionary, thesaurus, Gregg's Reference Handbook, Writers Market, and the Elements of Style. Strunk and White is a wonderfully-written, extraordinarily concise tool that pays homage to classic high-end English. It takes language insight to make this prediction in 1979: "By the time this paragraph makes print, uptight... rap, dude, vibes, copout, and funky will be the words of yesteryear." The book begins with eleven "Elementary Rules of Usage," and then continues with eleven more "Elementary Rules of Composition," and eleven "Matters of Form." This amazing compilation fills only thirty-eight pages, yet covers ninety percent of good writing fundamentals.

**Taylor, Mark C. *Hiding*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1998. Print.**

A philosopher of religion and technology, Mark C. Taylor means to disabuse us of our archaic notion that what lies beneath the surface is any more significant or real than what rides on the skin of things. With occasional pages entirely blank or black, text interrupted by drifting quotations and fonts commingled, the book wears its heart on its sleeve, but its sleeves are unhappily short, especially in this era of a thinning ozone layer when we must all cover up.

**---, and Esa Saarinen. *Imagologies: Media Philosophy*. London: Routledge, 1994. Print.**

Provocative, irritating and stimulating, this is a work to be engaged, questioned and pondered. As the web of telecommunications technology spreads across the globe, the site of economic development, social change, and political struggle shifts to the realm of media and communications. In this remarkable book, Mark Taylor and Esa Saarinen challenge readers to rethink politics, economics, education, religion, architecture, and even thinking itself. When the world is wired, nothing remains the same. To explore the new electronic frontier with Taylor and Saarinen is to see the world anew. A revolutionary period needs a revolutionary book

**Truss, Lynne. *Eats, Shoots, and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*. New York: Gotham, 2006. Print.**

This impassioned manifesto on punctuation made the best-seller lists in Britain and has followed suit here. Journalist Truss gives full rein to her "inner stickler" in lambasting common grammatical mistakes. Asserting that punctuation "directs you how to read in the way musical notation directs a musician how to play," Truss argues wittily and with gusto for the merits of preserving the apostrophe, using commas correctly, and resurrecting the proper use of the lowly semicolon.

**Winchester, Simon. *The Meaning of Everything: The Story of the Oxford English Dictionary*. New York: Oxford UP, 2004. Print.**

The story of the making of the *Oxford English Dictionary* has been burnished into legend over the years, at least among librarians and linguists. In *The Professor and the Madman* (1998), Winchester examined the strange case of one of the most prolific contributors to the first edition of the OED - one W. C. Minor, an American who sent most of his quotation slips from an insane asylum. Now, Winchester takes on the dictionary's whole history, from the first attempts to document the English language in the seventeenth century, the founding of the Philological Society in Oxford in 1842, and the start of work on the dictionary in 1860; to the completion of the first edition nearly 70 years, 414,825 words, and 1,827,306 illustrative quotations later.