

Idaho State UNIVERSITY

Department of English and Philosophy
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TEACHING LITERATURE BOOK AWARD 2017 COMMITTEE'S COMMENDATION

Winner

***Service Learning and Literary Studies in English*, edited by Laurie Grobman and Roberta Rosenberg (New York: Modern Language Association, 2015)**

In assessing a pedagogical book, one of the most important questions to ask is, "Will this make our teaching better?" With *Service Learning and Literary Studies*, the answer is a resounding yes. The book is a timely and lucid guide to emerging practices in service learning. The introduction provides a well-articulated rationale for service learning and its relation to literary studies, while the individual chapters offer examples and practical advice for teachers interested in implementing service learning in their courses.

In chapters devoted to a broad collection of literary forms, periods, and practices (including American and British literature and creative writing), the contributors describe a range of approaches. From proposals for situating the study of the nineteenth-century British reform novel in relation to public-service initiatives in major American cities to collaborative classes conducted in maximum security prisons, from life-writing work with seniors to volunteer work at the Sexual Assault Center of East Tennessee, each essay delivers a powerful and sustained argument for the interconnections between literary study and public service.

Not only are these contributions well written, accessible, and engaging, they also cover service learning with students and community populations from a wide range of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. As a whole, the book is at once a resource for practical ideas and a challenging work of literary studies, and it intervenes at a moment in which the possibility of this kind of service-based expansion is at the center of debates about the very nature of the humanities and the cultural role of higher education.

Honorable Mention

***Teaching Early Modern Literature from the Archives*, edited by Heidi Brayman Hackel and Ian Frederick Moulton, Options for Teaching Series (New York: Modern Language Association, 2015)**

This book provides inspiring and useful guidance on teaching literature in ways that utilize a range of resources to help students develop new practices for archival research. It combines theoretical grounding in the methods of archival work with lucid explanations of how these theories inform specific goals and activities in the classroom. The contributors expertly demonstrate how a range of archives offers new ways to explore transmission and reception, analyze content, and construct context. The contributors also address concerns about access to digital resources. *Teaching Early Modern Literature from the Archives* focuses on archives relevant to early modern English literature and history, yet the chapters apply to broader changes in the teaching of literature – and the humanities in general – with digital resources in today's classrooms.

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The Teaching Literature Book Award is an international, juried prize, awarded biennially by the faculty in the graduate programs in English at Idaho State University. The 2017 external reviewers were: Jesse Matz, William P. Rice Professor of English and Literature, Kenyon College; Tison Pugh, Professor of English, University of Central Florida; and Laura Wright, Professor of English, Western Carolina University.