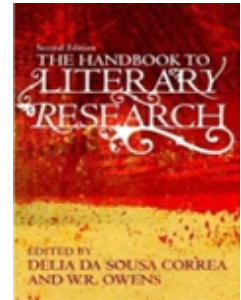


Book Review of ‘The Handbook to Literary Research’

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About the Book

Title of the Book	: The Handbook to Literary Research
Edited by	: Delia da Sousa Correa and W.R. Owens
Edition	: Second
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The Handbook of Literary Research edited by Delia da Sousa Correa, senior lecturer in English at Open University, United Kingdom and WR Owens, professor of English literature, Open University, United Kingdom, introduces various research techniques and methodologies for literary research paying special attention to their variation on the basis of institutions and countries with adequate examples. Editors of this book state that "The aim of this handbook is to make the whole process of research more exciting and less of a daunting prospect" (da Sousa Correa & Owens, 2009, p. 1). Thus, this book provides a practical guide to literary researchers about utilising various research methods and exploring multiple resources for finding information. In addition, it enhances research skills by providing brief history of textual scholarship and useful information about the role of theories in literary research. More importantly, this book provides useful advice about writing a research proposal, dissertation and its presentation. Furthermore, to make research a more innovative, exciting, independent project, this text manages exercises and further reading resources at the end of each research based article. The whole book has been divided into five sections incorporating various research based articles of renowned scholars. It is available in both forms as hard and soft copies. Among many books related to literary research and textual scholarship, I have selected this book in review because it encompasses both areas of textual information and techniques of writing proposal and dissertation effectively. This book successfully provides skills of finding and utilising online resources along with the meaning and history of textual scholarship.

In part one, an article entitled *Tools and Techniques for Literary Research: Using Online and Printed Sources* authored by Shafquat Towheed introduces some basic research methods associated with literary research, and various skills of using library and electronic

resources. More importantly, Towheed shows significance of online resources and ways of finding appropriate research communities to develop research skills and confidence. In part two *Textual Scholarship and Book History* with the support of three different articles editors aims to introduce basic concepts of bibliography, editing, book publishing, and brief history of textual scholarship. The first article entitled *Bibliography* by Simon Eliot discusses bibliography as a discipline and introduces four kinds of bibliography as enumerative, analytical, descriptive and historical. Enumerative bibliography counts the numbers of the books in the given time, analytical bibliography deals with the process of manufacturing of the printed books, descriptive bibliography provides the descriptive information of the book on the basis of ideal copy, and historical bibliography deals with the developmental process of the book capturing all related aspects of book such as making paper, printing, binding to name the few. His second article *History of the Book* explores brief historical background and development of books up to present from incorporating from oral system of expression up to digitised copies of the books and argues that book history should not ignore the development of books only focusing on European history. Finally, the third article *Editing Literary Texts* by W R Owens informs the reasons and technique of book editing. He argues that editing the text contributes to eliminating various kinds of errors such as word accuracy, mistakes of previous editions, sentence structure, word choice and so on. It further supports minimising the price of the text by reducing unnecessary information. More significantly, he depicts as an example from the second edition of *Moll Flanders* authored by Daniel Defoe which practically presents significance and ways of editing text.

In part three, under the title of *Issues and Approaches in Literary Research*, editors introduce brief institutional history, role of theories in literary research and show how literary research is related with other media and translation with the support of five research based articles. The first article *Institutional History of Literary Disciplines* authored by Suman Gupta explores the institutional history of literary discipline. He argues that ideological and theoretical changes such as Cultural Studies, Postcolonial Studies, and Translation Studies, just to name a few, play a dynamic role to transform literary history and make English as a language of lingua franca. In the second article, written by Suman Gupta, *The Place of Theory in Literary Disciplines* explores the role of literary theories in literary research. He further introduces theoretical approaches needed to literary research and reflects the critical overview of theoretical development particularly from the 1960s incorporating the concept of theory travel, against theory and after theory. Third article of this part *Literary Research an Interdisciplinary* authored by David Jonson introduces a brief history of English Studies to reflect the relationship of English Studies with other disciplines such as psychology, anthropology, philosophy and so on. In the fourth article entitled *Literary Research and Other Media* Delia Da Sousa Correa with contributions by Sara Haslam and Derek Neale introduces the relationship between literary research and other media. Latest developed technology of multimedia makes possible adaptation of literary works into other media such as film, music, painting and visual arts and so on and

further blurs the gap among literature and other disciplines which contribute to widen the scope of literary research. Last article of this part entitled *Literary research and translation* by Susan Bassnett introduces the translation and its significance in the latest globalised world. She discusses some methods of translation such as foreignization and domestication and focuses on foreignization methods to protect source culture. She argues that the translation process brings tremendous issues related to cultural, anthropological, social, postcolonial and so on and expands the area of research in English Studies.

In part four entitled *Planning and Completing a Research Project*, editors aim to provide practical advice to researchers about planning, writing and finally presenting a thesis or a dissertation with the support of article *Planning, Writing and Presenting a Dissertation or Thesis* authored by W. R Owens. He begins from finding and deciding a research topic and provides various ways to turn a research topic into arguments. Then systematically shows the way of developing a research proposal highlighting its variation depending on institution and level. Furthermore, he discusses basic components of thesis or dissertation writing incorporating introduction, body and conclusion. Finally, he provides some practical ideas of arranging and formatting a thesis before its presentation.

In part five entitled *Reference*; editors aim to provide precise information of the term used in the book to minimise the confusion and offer tremendous sources of primary and secondary resources with the support of *Glossary* authored by W.R. Owens and *Checklist of Libraries, Print, Online and Other Research Resources* provided by M.A. Katritzky.

This book introduces a wider range of materials related to literary research and offers practical advice about finding resources, writing a research proposal, dissertation and presentation. In addition, this book engages researchers by providing adequate exercises and additional materials at the end of each article to explore further. Thus, this book has made a great contribution to make researchers more confident and independent in the field of literary research. Furthermore, this text particularly from part one up to four presents research resources to prepare the final thesis. It supports everyone intending to independently write up literary research. In the latest time, extensive growth of electronic resources has modified and extended research resources and approaches available within the researchers. English Studies has an overlapping relationship with other various disciplines such as Cultures Studies, Linguistics, Politics, Music, and Philosophy and so on. Checklist provides a tremendous variety of bibliographies, databases, catalogues, and so on without which literary research becomes almost impossible. This book mainly supports researchers by providing guided reading, involving them in the solution of questions and accessing various textual examples in some of the essays to make the ideas precise and less confusing.

In short, this book offers some information about basic research methods and discusses brief historical background of textual scholarship, nature of English Studies, utilisation of

theories in literary research. In addition, this text provides exercises and further reading materials at the end of each article which contribute to developing the confidence in researchers. Thus, this book is an honest contribution in the field of literary research.

Reference:

da Sousa Correa, D., & Owens, W. R. (2009). *The handbook to literary research*. Routledge.

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