

EN 6005 3.0
Theories and Practices of Literary Editing

Prof. Lesley Higgins
ATK 544 | 19higgins55@gmail.com

This course encourages students to question the “authority” of texts and the editorial processes that produced them. The particular focus in Fall 2023 is late Victorian and Modernist texts. | **Part I** | The course begins by surveying major theoretical approaches to literary editing and their ideological implications, paying particular attention to the editorial principles which emerged in the 1920s and 1930s (based on the practices of biblical and classical scholars, who worked with various versions of texts, but *not* with manuscripts); the rationalizations for author-based editing best exemplified by Fredson Bowers and G. Thomas Tanselle in the 1960s and 1970s; and the impact of Foucauldian ideas about the “sociology” of texts and their reading communities as interpreted by D. F. McKenzie in the 1980s and Jerome McGann since that time. Key issues for documentary and scholarly editing will be discussed (manuscript “authority”; transcription principles; choice of “copy-text”; historical conditions of textual transmission). Attention will also be paid to the ways in which gender, class, and other social norms are reiterated in editorial work. | **Part II** | With this groundwork established, the class will consider the ramifications of editorial principles and practices in relation to a particular group of texts. To assess the implications and effects of editorial mediations, published versions of texts will be compared with digital and photocopied manuscript reproductions, on-line archives, and/or published transcriptions.

In Fall 2023, we will focus on four case studies: the manuscript poetry of Emily Dickinson (1830–86) and Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–89), both of whom refused to be published; T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922); and Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse* (1927).

Evaluation:

Two short editorial exercises (transcription and analysis), 30%; a 15-minute presentation, 20%; research essay (15 pages), 40%; class participation, 10%.

Reading List:

The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson, ed. Thomas H. Johnson (Little/ Brown); *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Reading Edition*, ed. R. W. Franklin (Belknap Press/ Harvard UP); T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land* (any edition) and *The Waste Land: A Facsimile Edition*, ed. Valerie Eliot (Faber); Gerard Manley Hopkins, *The Major Works*, ed. Catherine Phillips (Oxford World’s Classics, OUP); Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (Oxford World’s Classics, OUP); William Proctor Williams and Craig S. Abbott, *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*, 4th ed. (Modern Language Association).

The instructor will provide additional background materials and a copy of the holograph transcription of *To the Lighthouse*, ed. Susan Dick.