

Impact Report:

Discover How the Gale-ASECS Fellowships Helped Inspire New Research Inquiries

Read How One Fellow Used Digital Humanities Tools to Understand the Representation of Speech and Communication Disorders in the Eighteenth Century



Jared Richman

Associate Professor of English,
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Gale-ASECS Non-Residential Fellowship

MEET THE SCHOLAR

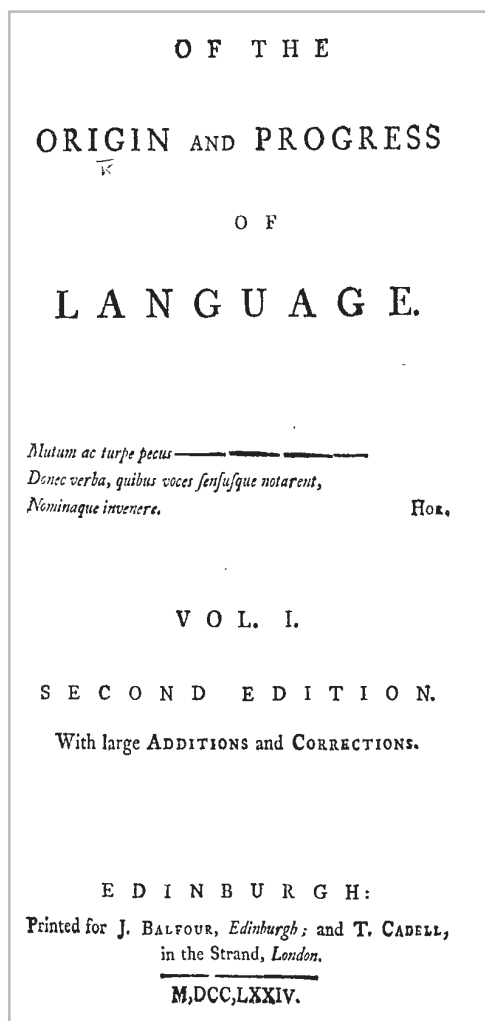
As one of five researchers awarded a fellowship from Gale and the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) in 2022, Jared Richman used digital humanities tools to enhance his research on how figures represented and politicized speech and communication disorders in the eighteenth century. Richman's project, "Voicing Disability in Eighteenth-Century Print Culture," builds on the work of other disability scholars in the field.

All Gale-ASECS Non-Residential Fellowship recipients were granted access to Gale's *Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)* and *Gale Digital Scholar Lab (the Lab)* for a six-month period of research. *ECCO* is the most comprehensive online historical archive supporting eighteenth-century studies, connecting researchers to every significant English-language and foreign-language title printed in the United Kingdom between the years 1701 and 1800. The expanse of content housed in *ECCO* meets substantial research potential in the *Lab*, an industry-leading, text- and data-mining research environment that removes barriers to digital scholarship.

Fellows received training to use the text- and data-mining tools available in the *Lab* to explore *ECCO* and advance their work using digital humanities methods. Read on to see how Richman used this powerful cloud-based analysis platform to build a robust body of data, run meaningful analyses using digital humanities tools, and open new research pathways.

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Of the Origin and Progress of Language,
James Burnet, 1774, ECCO.

BUILDING ON CRITICAL INSIGHTS OF DISABILITY SCHOLARS

During the Gale-ASECS fellowship, Richman aimed to discover insights into the commentary on speech and communication disorders during the eighteenth century. When summarizing his research, Richman said, “This project delineates how the eighteenth century, and its questions regarding the very definition of humanity, represented and politicized speech and nonnormative verbalization.”

The scholar further explained, “I understand language and its vocalization as a contested space crucial to ongoing efforts to define human nature. It has remained so from the early modern era to the present moment. Thus, by bringing together

the history of elocution with the discourse of disability in an early modern context, I build on the work of disability scholars such as Lennard Davis, David Turner, Christopher Mounsey, Felicity Nussbaum, and Helen Deutsch alongside historians of language and speech like Paula McDowell, Jack Lynch, and Janet Sorensen.”

ESTABLISHING A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Before even beginning to search for his data, Richman needed to further define the type of content he was seeking. He noted, “To discuss speech (and disabilities associated with speech), we must begin by delimiting our field of inquiry. This is no easy task when it comes to the long eighteenth century and the Enlightenment attitudes and practices with which that century is often associated. Perhaps because it was marked by an explosion in print culture, the period took a keen interest in the different ways in which verbal communication took place. Grumble, mumble, ramble, maunt, mant, babble, burble, blurt, blather, chatter, flatter, lisp, sputter, stutter, stammer, prattle, tattle, utter, whisper, ejaculate, blurt, groan, moan: in order to announce how a thing was, eighteenth-century Britons inherited, invented, or newly applied a bevy of terms to describe modes or forms of speech.

“Thus, the crucial question with which I started for this project was how and where might we locate renderings of vocal disability in eighteenth-century print culture?” Richman outlined. “Some scholars have suggested (despite evidence to the contrary) that ‘disability’ was not a viable category for identity and embodiment in the eighteenth century (with the term not achieving its modern definition until the middle of the nineteenth). I contend, however, that the lack of the term as a settled category does not indicate a lack of disability representation in early modern texts—far from it.”

Richman elaborated, “The early modern era, with its emphasis on linguistic correctness and standardization, was precisely the period in which the idea of ‘disability’ as we know it was, in fact, being codified throughout a host of disciplinary discourses (medical, philosophical, dramatic, linguistic, aesthetic, poetic, etc.). What I seek to do here, using vocal disability and communication disorder as a framework, is to locate the terms beyond ‘disability’ to discover where they reside, in what context and genres they appear, how they function in those instantiations, and how they may point to modern understandings of what we now call ‘disability.’”



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Document Title	Content Type	Document Types	Publication Title	Publication Date	Publisher	Place of Publication
Hymns. By the Rev. S. Medley, of Liverpool	Monograph	Monograph	Religion and Philosophy I.	1789	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The history of Julia D'Haumont: or the eventful connection of the house of Montmelian with that of D'Haumont. By the Rev. James Douglas, of Chiddingly, Sussex. Vol. I	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1797	Gale	London, United Kingdom
Prolegomena in versione syriaca phoenicianam Novi Testamenti. Editi J. White, S.T.P. Ling. Arab. Apud Oxonienses Prof.	Monograph	Monograph	Religion and Philosophy II.	1798	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Oxford, United Kingdom
Detached pieces, in verse; by Thos. Cammings, Private Soldier, 61st. Regt.	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	[1792?]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
A serious alarm to the people of Bath; or, the diabolical soliloquy of an old witch. Overheard in the Crescent, by an apothecary of Bath	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	MDCCXXXII. [1782]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The pittiad: A satire. By Doll Common	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	MDCCXLIX. [1789]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The age of infidelity: part II. In answer to the second part of The age of reason. With some additional remarks upon the former. By a layman, the second edition	Monograph	Monograph	Religion and Philosophy I.	1799	Gale	London, United Kingdom
An historical account of the life and reign of David King of Israel. In four books. ... In which ... Mr. Bayle's criticisms, ... are fully considered. By the author of Revelation examined with candour. In two volumes ...	Monograph	Monograph	Religion and Philosophy I.	1769	Gale	London, United Kingdom
A new chronological abridgement of the history of France, Containing The Publick Transactions of that kingdom, from Clovis to Lewis XIX. their wars, battles, sieges, &c. their laws, manners, customs, &c. With	Monograph	Monograph	History and Geography I.	MDCCXLII. [1782]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
By permission of the Right Worshipful the Vice-Chancellor, and the Worshipful the Mayor: At the Swan-Hall, on Wednesday evening, the 26th of June instant, at half-past six o'clock, Captain S. Villiers has the hon	Monograph	Monograph	Social Sciences I.	[1788?]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
An essay on conversation	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	MDCCXXXVII. [1737]	Gale	San Marino, CA, United States
Ministers of the gospel witnesses for Christ. A sermon, preached before The Reverend John Carver, B.L.L. Archdeacon of Surrey, at his visitation, held in the Parish Church of St. Saviour, Southwark, October 26	Monograph	Monograph	Religion and Philosophy I.	1766	Gale	London, United Kingdom
Flametes: a poem, humbly inscrib'd to his Grace, the D. of Marlborough. By W. Weygatte, Gent. of Lincoln College Oxon	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1706	Gale	Cambridge, MA, United States
Mad Tux; or, the bard of Bath	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	M.DCC.LXXX. [1781]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The trial of James N. Tandy, Esq. as had in His Majesty's Court of King's Bench, on the 11th of June, 1762, on an indictment for challenging and provoking to fight, John Toler, Esq. His Majesty's solicitor general.	Taken in short hand, by a barrister			1762	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Cambridge, United Kingdom
A grammatical institute of the English language; comprising, an easy, concise and systematic method of education; designed for the use of schools in America. In three parts. Part III. Containing the necessary	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	[1786]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
A true account of the siege of London-Derry. By the Rev. Mr. George Walker, rector of Donaghmore, in the county of Tyrone, and late governor of Derry, in Ireland. To which is added, Sir John Dalrymple's account	Monograph	Monograph	Social Sciences II.	M.DCC.LXXXVII. [1787]	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Dublin, Ireland
An address to the public, concerning impediments in speech, defects of utterance, &c. and a syllabus of a course of lectures on public speaking	Monograph	Monograph	Social Sciences I.	M.DCC.LXXXV. [1786]	Gale	Oxford, United Kingdom
Eccentric excursions on, literary & pictorial sketches of countenance, character & country, in different parts of England & South Wales. ... Embellished with upwards of one hundred characteristic & illustrative p	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1799	Gale	Cambridge, MA, United States
The works of Mrs. Behn. Entire in three volumes. ...	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language II.	1711	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Austin, TX, United States
Cerberus; or, a treatise of portraits. A poem	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language II.	MDCCXXXVIII. [1788]	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Oxford, United Kingdom
An American selection of lessons in reading and speaking. Calculated to improve the minds and refine the taste of youth. And also to instruct them in the geography, history, and politics of the United States. To	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language II.	M.DCC.LXXXIX. [1786]	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Washington, DC, United States
An American selection of lessons in reading and speaking. Calculated to improve the minds and refine the taste of youth. And also to instruct them in the geography, history, and politics of the United States. To	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language II.	~1797	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Washington, DC, United States
Poems, by S. T. Coleridge, second edition. To which are now added poems by Charles Lamb, and Charles Lloyd	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1797	Gale	Cambridge, MA, United States
The gardeners kalendar, directing what works are necessary to be done every month, in the kitchen, fruit, and pleasure gardens, and in the conservatory. With an account of the particular reasons for the propos	Monograph	Monograph	Science, Technology, and Medicine II.	MDCCXXXIII. [1733]	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Cambridge, United Kingdom
Moral epistles, respectfully dedicated to Earl Stanhope	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	MDCCXIV. [1755]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The laureates of the English stage: consisting of the most affecting and sentimental passages, ... in the English plays, ancient and modern. ... The third edition, ... In three volumes. ...	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1766	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The mysterious mother: A tragedy. By Mr. Horace Walpole	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language II.	MDCCXLVII. [1768]	Gale, part of Cengage Group	London, United Kingdom
The ruins of Lindisfarne, with selected notes in vindication of the character of Mary, Queen of Scots. By Joseph D. M'Arthur, North York	Monograph	Monograph	Social Sciences II.	1798	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Oxford, United Kingdom
A Caution to gentlemen who use Sheridan's dictionary. To which are added, for the assistance of foreigners and natives, select rules for pronouncing English with precision and elegance	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	MDCCXCI. [1791]	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Dublin, Ireland
A catalogue of rare, splendid, and valuable books, in every branch of polite literature; including the entire libraries of the Rev. Harvey Spragg, ... also of the Rev. Henry Putnam, ... The sale will begin on February	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1799	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The friendly and honest advice of an old lady to the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge	Monograph	Monograph	Social Sciences I.	MDCCLI. [1781]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
A sermon preach'd May the 4th. 1707, at Uxbridge, upon occasion of the late day of thanksgiving for the union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland. By John Olyffe, M.A. Rector of Hedgerly Bucks	Monograph	Monograph	Religion and Philosophy II.	1707	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Oxford, United Kingdom
The brother's gift, or, the naughty girl reformed. Published for The advantage of the rising generation. To British Ladies, would you wish to see Abstemious Offspring prattling round your Knees, then, shun each	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	[1778]	Gale	Manchester, United Kingdom
The Benefits of an inland navigation, to Ireland. Estimated in a dialogue between a gentleman in the country, and a citizen of Dublin, in spring, 1791. Occasioned by the great scarcity of coals then in the city	Monograph	Monograph	Social Sciences II.	MDCCXLI. [1761]	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Oxford, United Kingdom
This day the poll was continued for electing two Members to represent the City of Dublin in Parliament. and at the Adjournment of the Court the Poll stood thus,	Monograph	Monograph	Law I.	[1781]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
An alarm to the people of England; shewing their rights, liberties, and properties, to be in the utmost danger from the present destructive, and unconstitutional association, for the preservation of the game all	Monograph	Monograph	Social Sciences I.	M.DCC.LVII. [1757]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
Demosthenis legati Demetrii ad Antiochum. « Demosthenis orationes de republica duodecim, cum Willelmo interpretatione denu castigata, et notis Natoris J. V. Lucchesii. Accessit Philippi epistola. Editi G	Monograph	Monograph	Religion and Philosophy I.	MDCCLV. [1766]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The new week's preparation for a worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper, as appointed and practised by the Church of England, part the second: Consisting of Meditations, Prayers, and Hymns suitable for the S	Monograph	Monograph	Religion and Philosophy I.	1759	Gale	Lawrence, KS, United States
Unto the Right Honourable the Lords of Council and Session, the petition of Sir James Lockhart of Carstairs, baronet, ...	Monograph	Monograph	Law II.	[1747]	Gale, part of Cengage Group	Edinburgh, GB, United Kingdom
A catalogue of the valuable farming stock, implements in Husbandry, Dairy and Brewing Utensils, of the late Rev. Tobias Rustat, Deceased, At Blotton, Suffolk, which will be sold by auction, by Messrs. Harris & E	Monograph	Monograph	General Reference I.	[1783]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The mysterious mother: a tragedy	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1791	Gale	Manchester, United Kingdom
Letters of the late Rev. Mr. Laurence Sterne, to his most intimate Friends. With a fragment in the Manner of Rabelais. To which are prefix'd, Memoirs of his Life and Family Written by himself And published by hi	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1776	Gale	London, United Kingdom
A poem on the happy return of His most Sacred Majesty King George. Humbly inscrib'd to His Royal Highness the Prince	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	1719	Gale	Cambridge, MA, United States
Atys and Adrastus, a tale in the manner of Dryden's fables. By Mr. William Whitehead, Fellow of Clare-Hall in Cambridge	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	MDCCXLVI. [1746][1743]	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The noble game of chess, or, A New and easy Method to learn to play well in a short Time Together with a curious Account of its Antiquity, Derivation of its Terms, &c. By Philip Blomme, Native of Aleppo in Syr	Monograph	Monograph	Fine Arts I.	1745	Gale	London, United Kingdom
The psalm singer's guide: being a choice collection of the most useful tunes of the psalms, in two three, and four parts, the Upper Parts being all in the G-Sol-re-ut CBR. With Psalms and Hymns on several Occa	Monograph	Monograph	Fine Arts I.	1719	Gale	London, United Kingdom
Liberty. A poem. To the Queen	Monograph	Monograph	Literature and Language I.	M.DCC.XXX. [1729]	Gale	London, United Kingdom

Document content set built by Richman for the term “stutter.”

HARNESSING THE POWER OF TEXT & DATA MINING

Richman began his research on this topic a few years before he was awarded the Gale-ASECS fellowship. During the fellowship, his access to relevant materials and digital humanities tools allowed him to pursue more-fulfilling research pathways.

“I realized my ongoing project had reached a point where it would benefit from quantitative data,” said Richman. “My primary search path (traveling to archives) ceased as of March 2020 with the advent of the global pandemic. I had a great deal of data acquired from previous research trips and from searching digital archives offered by some libraries, and I recognized I needed to expand my content sets of primary materials. While there has been significant work on eighteenth-century rhetoric and elocution, there was no way to cross-reference those studies with my own work on disability. The Gale fellowship opened a possible avenue for bringing those strains of research together.”

Richman elaborated, “The ability to access *ECCO*’s huge collection of eighteenth-century printed documents in such a way that allows one to search and delineate among document types by year, genre, topic, and other markers was remarkable. Though I had used *ECCO* in the past to gain access to period-specific documents (primarily historical, political, medical, and literary), I had not been able to group and separate documents based on specific search terms (and certainly not with such speed!). Moreover, being able to quickly build (and shape) document content sets allowed me to process a large amount of information with greater ease and in a fraction of the time I would normally require.”

“While the catalogs of various libraries often offer rich detail via title, author, subject, etc., it rarely allows a researcher to drill down on obscure search terms and names with such speed and depth. The ability to search and analyze a much, much larger volume of content with meaningful analysis in the *Lab* has been a boon to my work.”



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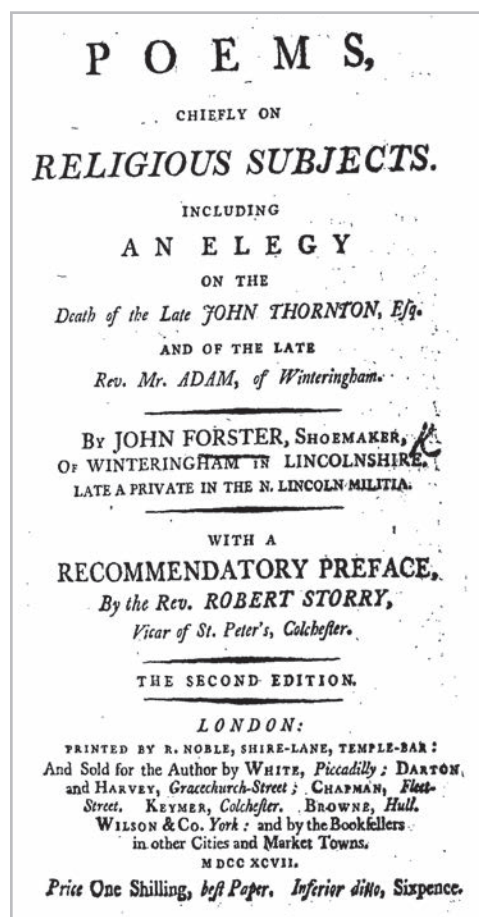
DISCOVERING NEW RESEARCH PATHWAYS

When asked how the *Lab* influenced his research in new ways, Richman said, “I was surprised mostly that it created new research questions.

“Having been a relative novice with regard to digital humanities research (save for basic stylometrics), I came to see how algorithmic approaches to research might yield not just different sets of data but also shape new questions. . . . The sheer volume of content made available for quick analysis also opened new windows into existing projects,” noted Richman.

The scholar elaborated, “For example, while I was trying to locate trends and clusters of terms related to disability and speech over time, I realized that there were fascinating questions to be asked regarding the genre and form of the documents related to the general search terms I was using. It has become clear to me that my project needs to address not just discrete instances of these terms and concepts but also to consider how parallel and related public discourses (political thought, literature, medicine) diverge or overlap in their use of concepts related to disability and nonnormative speech. I am still in the process of forming new search inquiries around literary form and print genre that will shape the next stage of this project.”

“I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to access the *Lab*. As I noted, I am relatively new to digital humanist research and methodology, but I have been so pleased with discovering new approaches to research questions that have become central to aspects of my scholarship.”



Poems, Chiefly on Religious Subjects. Including "An Elegy on the Death of the Late John Thornton." John Forster, 1797, ECCO.

FINDING SURPRISINGLY RELEVANT NARRATIVES

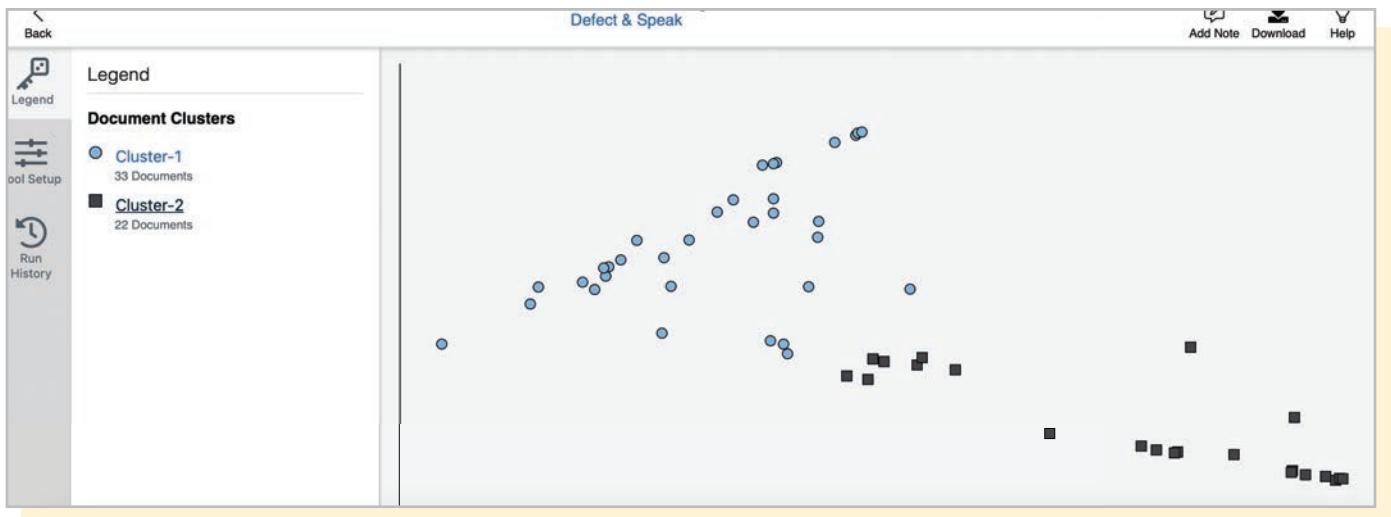
So what types of content did the *Lab* allow Richman to find?

“One fascinating set of documents I discovered in *ECCO* with the *Lab* were those grouping notions of disability within a military context,” said Richman. “An example: *Poems, Chiefly on Religious Subjects. Including An Elegy on the Death of the Late John Thornton*’ by John Forster (1797). This text emblemizes the unexpected nature of the search capability of the *Lab*—had I simply located this text in a library catalog, it is unlikely I would have paused to read the full document. However, because I was able to cross-reference specific terms, I discovered a poem written by a military veteran that highlights his disability (his identity as a disabled veteran). One sample from the text itself . . . highlights the connection between his writing career (as a poet), his military service, and his physical impairment.”



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Document clusters on “defect” and “speak.”

USING DIGITAL HUMANITIES TOOLS TO FIND NEW INSIGHTS

Considering his experience analyzing datasets in the *Lab*, Richman noted, “What has been most fascinating for me is tracking the appearance and use of particular terms related to my research project over the century (1700–1800). I suspected that terms related to speech impediments (e.g., stutter, stammer, lisp, hesitate, mumble, mutter, etc.) would increase along with the advent of the British elocution movement . . . I did not have quantifiable data to support my hypothesis. The *Lab* allowed me to gather data related to those search terms alongside ‘voice,’ ‘speech,’ ‘tongue,’ and ‘elocution’ to generate a historical map of these terms.”

Richman elaborated, “For example, printed works that feature the term ‘elocution’ more than doubled after 1750 (as do works that feature the term ‘voice’). Moreover, with an increase in works dedicated or featuring ‘voice’ and ‘elocution,’ so, too, appears a rise in works invoking the terms ‘defect,’ ‘stammer,’ ‘stutter,’ and ‘lisp’ at around the same historical frequency.

“I’m still working through ways to interpret this print phenomenon, but it seems likely that increased cultural attention to vocal correctness coincides with concerns over incorrect or ‘defective’ speech i.e., disability in the second half of the century,” the scholar concluded.

PREPARING FOR FUTURE RESEARCH & INSTRUCTION

When considering the potential of the data he collected during the Gale-ASECS fellowship, Richman said, “I will be working with the data I collected for some time, continuing to analyze and refine the data collected and thinking through how best to render the results accurately and in a way that makes it legible to the various audiences I seek to reach.

“I plan to experiment more with digital humanities methods on other aspects of this research project and on future projects,” said Richman.

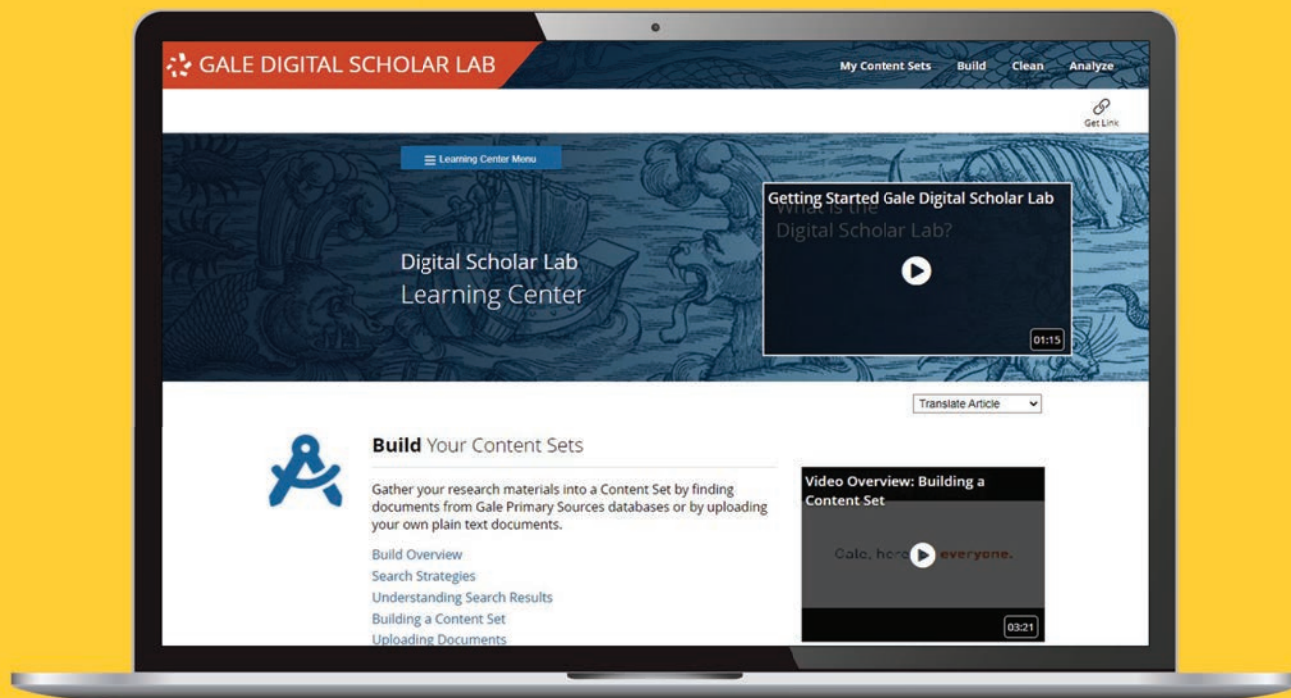
As an associate professor of English, Richman also noted, “I am excited to bring the *Lab* into the classroom to use with my students. I have used *ECCO* for many years to give my students access to early British texts without modern editions, teach basic archival methods for studying early modern poetics, and the like. I can already see potential teaching exercises using the *Lab* and its available tools to help students analyze and process texts available in *ECCO*.”

“To be able to have the time and space and tools to really dig into these new digital mechanisms has been a real help to my work. It has also instilled a new sense of excitement about the possibilities of digital humanities in both my research and teaching.”





Gale, here for **everyone**.



Get an Inside Look at Powerful Research Tools

Want to learn more about the resources Richman used to enhance his research and develop his digital humanities skill set?

Discover the possibilities of *Gale Digital Scholar Lab* at gale.com/digital-scholar-lab

Find more information about *ECCO* at gale.com/ECCO

Interested in learning more about ASECS?



Find more details about ASECS, including the society's initiatives and events, at asecs.org