



The Search for Landmark Works in English Literary Studies: A Citation Analysis



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ABSTRACT

The authors of the current study set out to test for the presence of landmark works in a certain area of English literary scholarship with collection development in mind. By conducting a citation study on a specific niche within English literary studies, the authors hoped to identify core groups of scholarly works that could be used as a tool for collection development and provide a picture of literary scholarship on a more granular level. The data, though representative of a smaller sample size, indicated diversity in the use of sources with no clear core distinguishable, mirroring macroscopic trends in English literary scholarship.

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INTRODUCTION

For many disciplines in the sciences and social sciences, scholars can identify a focused core collection of most-cited journals through the use of Bradford's law or Trueswell's 80/20 rule. In addition to a pattern of core journals, researchers in some disciplines are even able to document the presence of highly cited landmark articles—studies of such great impact that scholars consider them foundational to the discipline.

Landmark articles and journal scatter patterns can be useful for focused areas of collection development since they provide insight into patterns of use and may identify core resources for particular disciplines. But can these patterns and concepts be applied to disciplines where they have not been traditionally used—such as those in the humanities—to identify core or even “landmark” resources as well?

Researchers have used citation analysis to describe certain characteristics of citation practice in many of the humanities disciplines, such as the tendency to cite monographs and other book-format resources more heavily than journal articles. However, humanities scholars incorporate a diversity of information-seeking practices, topics, methodologies, and even disciplines in their research, making it difficult—if not impossible—to reach overarching conclusions about the research needs of humanities scholars on the whole. Previous studies of the humanities or even specific disciplines within the humanities have not been able to identify individual books, book articles, or other resources that are cited so frequently by scholars in the field that they become considered landmark works. If these highly cited resources

exist and can be identified, then these works could be considered core resources and could be used as a helpful tool for collection analysis and development by librarians.

Although citation studies of patterns in broader, discipline-wide contexts have not found core resources, the question may be asked another way: can a core collection be defined for a very specific subfield in the humanities? Are there core collections for the various research communities within a humanities sub-discipline that can be seen when the field of examination is more narrowly defined? This study seeks to explore these questions via bibliometric citation analysis targeted to a very specific field of study in English literary scholarship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Debates about the mere presence of core collections are common in library literature. [Hardesty and Mak \(1994\)](#) trace a history of librarians consulting lists of core resources to the 1930s with *Shaw's A List of Books for College Libraries*, and argue that even though a true core collection is more of a myth than a practical ideal, it is imperative to continue the pursuit of a timeless library collection. They ultimately maintain, “While research collections should have considerable diversity and depth reflecting the research interests of local scholars, undergraduate libraries should have a higher degree of similarity built around a core collection,” even though their findings showed that less than 10% of sample libraries held comparable collections (p. 362). [Bodi and Maier-O'Shea \(2005\)](#), while also recognizing the difficulty of defining a core, emphasized the value of a core collection targeted toward the needs of a specific audience.

Conversely, [Joswick and Stierman \(1997\)](#) seem to embrace the chaos that can be collection development, especially in journal literature,

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arguing that an academic patronage is too diverse and complicated for an “ultimate” list of core titles. Echoing the incongruence between these lists and actual library holdings, the authors argue that the “dissimilarity ... emphasizes the folly of making local collection development decisions based on national or international data” (p. 53).

Although an overall core collection may not be an attainable goal, a discipline-by-discipline approach that examines “landmark works” may provide a structure around which a particular collection may be built. Citation studies of landmark articles in the sciences demonstrate their influence on subsequent literature and argue that bibliometric analysis, in addition to illustrating the influence of landmark works according to citation patterns, can provide a robust depiction of the research landscape for a discipline (Quental & Lourenço, 2012; Zhou, Xing, Liu, & Xing, 2014).

While this perhaps proves useful in the sciences, the literature has not favored these methods for finding a landmark work or developing a core collection in humanistic disciplines. Perhaps the greatest example of this is McCain's (1987) study, which attempts to identify core resources in the sub-discipline of history of technology by means of citation analysis. The study, which argued for the existence of a core collection, identified only 3 books that were cited in 2 or more articles in a sample of 27 journal articles as being core resources. However, the threshold for defining core resources was very low: these books received fewer than 30 combined citations from a sample of more than 1100. Neither the overall citations nor the overlap of sample sources citing strongly indicated the presence of a well-defined group of highly cited resources. In fact, the author even noted that “a substantial ‘core literature’ was not identified and the results provide general rather than specific insights” due to the nature of humanists' research (McCain, 1987, p. 55).

In addition to McCain's (1987) work, Lindholm-Romantschuk and Warner (1996) also identified what they considered a core collection in philosophy, sociology, and economics literature. However, the authors concede that “[a]ttempts to differentiate beyond a simple core: non-core distinction ... could only be artificially imposed” (Lindholm-Romantschuk & Warner, 1996, p. 396). A number of studies point to the lack of or difficulty in finding evidence for a core collection in their analyses (Budd, 1986; Knievel & Kellsey, 2005; Thompson, 2002; Watson-Boone, 1994). With the demonstrated preference of monographic literature in the humanities over journal literature, the idea of a “landmark article,” or landmark work in general, is even more complex. Authors studying the citation patterns of humanities literature note that while there is a clear majority of citations to books in most publications, the most consistent factor of humanities publications is in fact the wide variation among titles, publication dates, and topics, many of which can reach across disciplines (Collier, 1999; Kellsey & Knievel, 2012; Knievel & Kellsey, 2005; Thompson, 2002; Watson-Boone, 1994).

Studies of citation patterns show that literary scholars are not much different from scholars in the wider humanities: they prefer the monograph, they do not generally choose resources based on currency, and the scope of their research is so broad that pinning down a group of core resources for literary scholarship has proven difficult (Budd, 1986; Cullars, 1985; Heinzkill, 1980; Stern, 1983). Thompson (2002), who conducted a citation study on a sample of books in nineteenth-century English and American literature, found that “[t]he breadth of the academic fields in this study—the coverage of both American and British Literature across the entire nineteenth century (as opposed to one particular period)—created a broadly distributed group of authors,” but “[n]o core group of either was evident” (p. 129). In an updated look at his 1980 study, Heinzkill (2007) examined 555 journal articles in English and American literary studies and found the research profile to be consistent with almost 30 years of citation studies, with English literary scholars citing monographs 77.1% of the time. Yet again, Heinzkill (2007) observed that “there were not any works that could be considered to be heavily cited” (p. 145).

Perhaps the breadth of content examined in these citation analyses could account for the equally broad expanse of citations. Factors that may also explain these habits may be evident in studies of how humanists pursue their information. Barrett (2005) and other scholars have written on the “haphazard,” “serendipitous,” and “incidental” ways that humanists seek information (p. 326). Stern (1983) pointed out that humanities scholarship tends to be “cumulative” in nature, often disregarding what is most current, making it “least susceptible to obsolescence,” but also less focused in scope (p. 205). This, in addition to the often inter-disciplinary nature of humanities research, leads to information-seeking behaviors that are best described as browsing, or what Watson-Boone (1994) calls “grazing.” She defines the grazer as one who “accumulates, selects, and interprets information in a way that transforms it into knowledge,” which privileges individual interaction with the text over other methodologies (p. 212). The combination of these research habits, the diversity of their topics, and the controversial aspect of attempting to define a “core collection” provide very real barriers to identifying, selecting, and acquiring stand-out publications for a library collection in the humanities.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Except for McCain's (1987) study, most of the previous studies listed here have applied bibliometrics at the macro level, searching for a discipline-level core collection. The authors of the current study hypothesized that if there in fact was a core, it would not be within a discipline or group of disciplines, but within a smaller community of scholars focused on the same sub-discipline. They agree with Bodi and Maier-O'Shea (2005), that “it would be simplistic to assume that there is one, set assessment formula [for collection development] that applies to all disciplines and their print and electronic resources” (p. 146). Therefore, the authors used bibliometric analysis to examine citations of literary publications for patterns of recurring sources within a specific area of scholarship.

In contrast to most of the last 40 years of research on humanities citation patterns, the current study pinpoints a specific area in the field of English scholarship. By doing so, the authors hoped to test, at a granular level, the idea of landmark works or a core collection in not just a general area of scholarship, but within a specific scholarly community. For that reason, the authors opted to focus their citation analysis on the scholarly literature published on a specific literary work, hypothesizing that researchers publishing on the same text would be more likely to respond to each other, drawing from a common core group of resources, rather than those publishing research on a variety of literary texts.

The authors determined to select a sample small enough to be manageable but large enough for meaningful analysis. They also wanted a sample that would be relevant to their own collection development needs and could serve as a tool for informing collection development decisions if a core collection could be identified. Therefore, they started with the reading lists for the comprehensive exams for the MA in English at their institution over a three-year span (2011–2013) for their sample. These reading lists, compiled by faculty members in the English Department at the institution and posted on the department website, provide a window into the literary texts that the department expected its students to thoroughly comprehend by the time of their completion of the graduate program.

From these potential works, the authors selected Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, a title included on the department reading lists each year from 2011 to 2013, as the work to examine. The authors searched *Persuasion* in the *MLA International Bibliography*, limiting results to records that listed it as “Primary Subject Work” and were book-format resources (those whose “publication type” was listed as either “book” or “book article”) published since 1990. The authors used the *MLA International Bibliography* because of its comprehensive and systematic indexing of books, book chapters, and journal articles of literary

scholarship, which includes the most prominent journals and publishers in literary studies.

The authors of the current study focused their investigation on books and book articles about *Persuasion* because the search results included enough book-format items to create a sample large enough for analysis but not so large as to be unmanageable for a pilot project. The authors sought to test their methodology on a focused data set in order to explore the viability of conducting a larger-scale study in the future, incorporating any methodological changes that emerged from the pilot project. In addition, knowing that citation patterns in journal articles differ from those in book-format resources (Thompson, 2002, p. 131) led the authors of the current study to separate book-format resources from journal articles in order to effectively pilot this methodology.

The year limiter provided a glimpse of the number of resources focused on *Persuasion* published over a recent two-decade span, which the authors determined would be a useful window for analysis for two primary reasons. Analyzing data from more recent scholarship would provide an understanding of the trends in the citation environment that impact active scholars today. In addition, if items from the sample were determined to be highly cited items themselves, then they might be more easily obtained for retroactive collection development than older items.

The search in *MLA International Bibliography*, conducted in December 2014, yielded 5 monographs and 59 book articles on *Persuasion*. The authors found two pairs of book articles that were alternate versions of the same work in different publications, so they decided to record the bibliographic data from both versions of the articles but to consider them one article. That resulted in a total of 57 unique book articles in the sample. The authors then examined the resources cited by each of those 5 monographs and 57 book articles, recording the bibliographic citation data in Excel spreadsheets. Since citation format varies by publication, the authors recorded data for resources cited explicitly in the bibliography or footnotes/endnotes of the sample work or in the text of the study (depending on the styles used in each sample source). Regardless, the inconsistency of the citation styles produced incomplete results. Frequently the items in the sample recorded citations to scholarly resources in a bibliography or footnotes, but only made in-text citations to literary works. The sample works sometimes specified what edition of the literary work the authors used in an accompanying note; other times they did not.

The authors of the current study then assigned the resources to 1 of 5 categories based on the characteristics of that cited item: monographs, volumes of collected essays, journal articles, Jane Austen editions, and other items. For the purposes of this study, monographs are defined as single-author, single-subject, book-length studies. Volumes of collected essays are defined as book-format publications whose contents are essays or articles, usually written by a variety of authors and appearing in an edited collection. The category of journal articles includes only those items cited as appearing in journals and does not include conference proceedings; conference proceedings and other similar items appear in the “other” category. In addition to conference proceedings, “other” included items created before 1900 (including archival manuscripts and published works), reference works, literary works not authored by Jane Austen, and films. The authors placed these kinds of works together in the general category of other and then later added sub-categories to further analyze the data for patterns. The authors decided to group any citations to the various editions of Jane Austen’s literary works (including citations to introductions, scholarly essays, or articles included in critical editions) in an effort to potentially identify meaningful patterns of usage of particular scholarly editions. The authors categorized items as they were cited, therefore creating the potential for mis-categorization for certain items. To be as thorough as possible with the information given, the authors recorded as much information as could be gleaned, and marked incomplete entries as “unknown.”

Table 1
Data profile of sample sources from *MLA International Bibliography*.

	Books	Book articles
Raw number of citations	1495	1207
Average citations per book/book article	299.00	21.17
Highest number of citations in a single book/book article	613	84
Lowest number of citations in a single book/book article	53	3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 provides a glimpse of the overall characteristics of the sources in the sample. The data regarding the highest/lowest citations in a given sample source highlight some of the variances already mentioned in humanities scholarship: the difference between the highest and lowest numbers signals very different practices and expectations for citing sources, even when the subject of the research is the same.

The data in Table 2 indicate that this sample has many of the characteristics of other citation studies of literary scholarship: a predominance of citations to monographs and other book-format resources, a relatively small number of citations to journal articles, and significant usage of sources that do not neatly fall into the categories representing books and journal articles (“other”).

While Table 2 presents the cumulative totals for citations in each category, Table 3 provides a snapshot of how these overall numbers average out in the individual items in the sample.

In order to best measure the presence of a core and get a sharper picture of the scholarship of *Persuasion*, the authors decided to examine the number of sample sources citing a particular resource rather than simply looking at raw citations to a work. This ensured that the study would identify the most widely cited resources across the sample, and not merely the most highly cited sources—i.e., those resources cited frequently by just a handful of sample sources. At the data gathering and early analysis phases, the authors hypothesized that by carefully selecting a subset of literary scholarship, citation analysis would reveal a small set of overlapping citations shared by a significant percentage in the sample (70% or greater). The authors agreed that any group of sources that were cited by 10% or more of the sample would at least be a pattern of interest, with the idea that a group of sources cited by 30% or more of the sample could potentially constitute a core. However, when the authors compiled the data for the final analysis, both the diversity of sources and the overall lack of shared citations among sample sources showed a lack of any unifying core. Table 4 shows the limited number of overlapping monographs cited by books and book articles in the sample.

No monograph titles appeared in the bibliographies for all five books; six titles appeared in four of the five sample books. Only two monographs were cited by ten or more book articles, indicating that a low level of citation overlap was common for the entire sample.

Hypothesizing that there might be a “landmark essay” to be traced in the sample, the authors focused their initial analysis on identifying widely cited individual essays appearing in collected volumes and individual articles appearing in journals. However, the data revealed no significant overlaps at that level of comparison. The authors then decided to analyze the data for widely-cited volumes of essays and widely-

Table 2
MLA sample—citations by category.

Category	Books	Book articles	Total	Total %
Monographs	626	419	1045	38.7%
Other	336	303	639	23.6%
Collected essays	273	150	423	15.7%
Journal articles	217	162	379	14.0%
Jane Austen editions	43	168	211	7.8%
Unknown	0	5	5	0.2%
Total	1495	1207	2702	100%

Table 3
MLA sample—average citations by category.

Category	Books	Book articles
Monographs	125.2	7.4
Other	67.0	5.3
Collected essays	54.6	2.6
Journal articles	43.4	2.8
Jane Austen editions	8.6	3.0
Unknown	0	0
Total	298.8	21.1

cited journals. Tables 5 and 6 present the data for volumes of collected essays and journals, respectively. Analysis again revealed a low-level of overlap, with only two volumes of collected essays cited by four of the sample books. Likewise, the most-cited volume of collected essays in the book article sample was only cited by five book articles.

Only a few journal titles stood out in the data, with *Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal* and *English Literary History* being prominent in both the data from sample books and the data from sample book articles. It should also be noted that the data for *Persuasions* combine citations to both the print and online versions of the journal, both having similar titles and being published by the Jane Austen Society of North America. It is worth noting that a fair proportion of articles in the data did come from *Persuasions* (16 out of 62 sample sources, or roughly 26%); however, that percentage is still relatively small and isolated when searching for a group of core resources. It is the overall lack of citations to articles from what is a high-profile journal in the field that stands out.

In examining the citations to other literary works by Jane Austen and specific editions of those works, several interesting patterns emerge. Based on this sample, Table 7 shows that scholars writing on *Persuasion* regularly invoke *Emma*, *Mansfield Park*, and *Pride and Prejudice* in their discussions. Not surprisingly, *Persuasion* itself is the most-cited Jane Austen work in the entire sample. However, it is worth noting that not even the novel of study was cited in 100% of the works examined in the sample, works that are all classified in the *MLA International Bibliography* as being primarily about *Persuasion*. One explanation is that those not citing the literary work itself may be dedicated to more thematic explorations of the novel (and therefore may not overtly cite specific instances from the work itself), but it may also be that these scholarly works focused more on the film adaptations of Austen's

Table 4
Overlap of monographs cited by sample sources.

	Monographs cited by books	Percentage	Monographs cited by book articles	Percentage
Cited by 1 sample source	494	90.6%	250	82.2%
Cited by 2 sample sources	33	6.1%	34	11.2%
Cited by 3 sample sources	12	2.2%	7	2.3%
Cited by 4 sample sources	6 ^a	1.1%	5	1.6%
Cited by 5 sample sources	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
Cited by 6 sample sources	n/a	n/a	2	0.7%
Cited by 7 sample sources	n/a	n/a	3	1.0%
Cited by 8 sample sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 9 sample sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 10 sample sources	n/a	n/a	1 ^b	0.3%
Cited by 11 sample sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 12 sample sources	n/a	n/a	1 ^c	0.3%
Total	545	100%	304	100% ^d

^a Cited by 4 of 5: *Jane Austen and her Art* by Mary Lascelles; *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* by Marilyn Butler; *Jane Austen: A Life* by Claire Tomalin; *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* by Claudia L. Johnson; *The Improvement of the Estate* by Alistair Duckworth; *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* by Mary Poovey.

^b Cited by 10 of 57: *Jane Austen* by Tony Tanner.

^c Cited by 12 of 57: *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* by Marilyn Butler.

^d Does not equal exactly 100% due to rounding.

Table 5
Overlap of collected essays cited by sample sources.

	Collected essays cited by books	Percentage	Collected essays cited by book articles	Percentage
Cited by 1 sample source	115	86.5%	92	84.4%
Cited by 2 sample sources	14	10.5%	10	9.2%
Cited by 3 sample sources	2 ^a	1.5%	3 ^b	2.8%
Cited by 4 sample sources	2 ^c	1.5%	3 ^d	2.8%
Cited by 5 sample sources	0	0.0%	1 ^e	0.9%
Total	133	100.0%	109	100% ^f

^a Cited by 3 of 5: *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*, ed. B. C. Southam; *Jane Austen and the Discourses of Feminism*, ed. Devoney Looser.

^b Cited by 3 of 57: *Jane Austen: New Perspectives*, ed. Janet Todd; *Jane Austen: Bicentenary Essays*, ed. John Halperin; *Jane Austen on Screen*, ed. Gina MacDonald and Andrew MacDonald.

^c Cited by 4 of 5: *Jane Austen: New Perspectives*, ed. Janet Todd; *Jane Austen's Business*, ed. Jan Fergus.

^d Cited by 4 of 57: *Jane Austen: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Ian Watt; *Jane Austen's Business: Her World and Her Profession*, ed. Juliet McMaster and Bruce Stovel; *New Casebooks: Mansfield Park and Persuasion*, ed. Judy Simons.

^e Cited by 5 of 57: *Jane Austen in Hollywood*, ed. Linda Troost and Sayre Greenfield.

^f Does not equal exactly 100% due to rounding.

work and therefore did not cite any edition of the novel itself. Since the authors of the current study included any book-format result from the *MLA International Bibliography* that listed *Persuasion* as a Primary Subject Work (a designation that does not automatically distinguish between the novel itself and the film adaptations), that seems to be a reasonable possibility. In the overall sample, editions of Jane Austen works published by Oxford University Press appeared regularly, with Oxford editions edited by R.W. Chapman being cited by numerous works. These citations were mostly to editions of Chapman's well-known *The Novels of Jane Austen*.

The category of other—a diverse, catch-all category of different types of materials—did not manifest any meaningful overlapping citations, even in its subcategories. In fact, the citation data to the subcategories of other listed in Table 8 indicate significant variance even between the book and book article data. The subcategories of films, literary works, pre-1900 publications, and reference works varied considerably in their proportions in the data from books and book articles.

Table 9 summarizes this overall lack of overlapping citations in monographs, collected essays, and journals. Only 4 items were cited by more than 10 sample sources, with none being cited by more than 16 sample sources. As in the data presented in previous studies, such a

Table 6
Overlap of journals cited by sample sources.

	Journals cited by books	Percentage	Journals cited by book articles	Percentage
Cited by 1 source	82	82.0%	60	73.2%
Cited by 2 sources	14	14.0%	9	11.0%
Cited by 3 sources	2 ^a	2.0%	5	6.1%
Cited by 4 sources	2 ^b	2.0%	4	4.9%
Cited by 5 sources	n/a	n/a	1	1.2%
Cited by 6 sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 7 sources	n/a	n/a	2 ^c	2.4%
Cited by 8 sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 9 sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 10 sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 11 sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 12 sources	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Cited by 13 sources	n/a	n/a	1 ^d	1.2%
Total	96	100.0%	82	100.0%

^a Cited by 3 of 5: *Persuasions; Nineteenth-Century Fiction*.

^b Cited by 4 of 5: *Critical Inquiry; English Literary History*.

^c Cited by 7 of 57: *Nineteenth-Century Literature; English Literary History (ELH)*.

^d Cited by 13 of 57: *Persuasions: the Jane Austen Journal*.

Table 7
Overlap of citations to Jane Austen novels and specific editions.

	Number of books citing	Number of book articles citing	Total sources in sample citing	Percentage of sample
Novels				
Persuasion	5	48	53	85.5%
Pride and Prejudice	4	21	25	40.3%
Mansfield Park	5	18	23	37.1%
Emma	4	17	21	33.9%
Northanger Abbey	2	12	14	22.6%
Sense and Sensibility	2	11	13	20.9%
Editions				
Other or unknown	4	32	36	58.1%
Oxford editions	3	29	32	51.6%
R. W. Chapman editions	3	24	27	43.5%
Penguin editions	4	13	17	27.4%
Norton editions	3	0	3	4.8%

Table 8
Citations to "Other" items by subcategory.

Subcategory	Citations from books	Percentage	Citations from book articles	Percentage
Literary works	69	20.6%	103	34.0%
Other	81	24.2%	86	28.4%
Films	1	0.0%	45	14.9%
Pre-1900 publications	100	29.9%	37	12.2%
Jane Austen correspondence	6	1.7%	18	5.9%
Reference works	78	23.3%	14	4.6%
Total	335	100.0%^a	303	100.0%

^a Does not equal exactly 100% due to rounding.

low level of shared citations across a given sample does not point to a clear core collection or a recognizable pattern of landmark works.

In a final effort to identify a possible pattern of core resources, the authors of the current study examined citations to particular authors in the sample, without noting which of their scholarly works were cited. The hypothesis was that individual scholarly works may not

Table 9
Summary of most-cited titles.

	Cited by books (out of 5)	Cited by book articles (out of 57)	Total sample sources citing (out of 62)	Percentage of total sample
Monographs				
<i>Jane Austen and the War of Ideas</i> by Marilyn Butler	4	12	16	25.8%
<i>Jane Austen</i> by Tony Tanner	0	10	10	16.1%
<i>Jane Austen and her Art</i> by Mary Lascelles	4	0	4	6.5%
<i>Jane Austen: A Life</i> by Claire Tomalin	4	0	4	6.5%
<i>Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel</i> by Claudia L. Johnson	4	0	4	6.5%
<i>The Improvement of the Estate</i> by Alistair Duckworth	4	0	4	6.5%
<i>The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer</i> by Mary Poovey	4	0	4	6.5%
Collected essays				
<i>Jane Austen's Business: Her World and Her Profession</i> , ed. Juliet McMaster and Bruce Stovel	4	4	8	12.9%
<i>Jane Austen: New Perspectives</i> , ed. Janet Todd	4	3	7	11.3%
<i>Jane Austen in Hollywood</i> , ed. Linda Troost and Sayre Greenfield	0	5	5	8.1%
<i>Jane Austen: A Collection of Critical Essays</i> , ed. Ian Watt	0	4	4	6.5%
<i>New Casebooks: Mansfield Park and Persuasion</i> , ed. Judy Simons	0	4	4	6.5%
<i>Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage</i> , ed. B. C. Southam	3	0	3	4.8%
<i>Jane Austen and the Discourses of Feminism</i> , ed. Devoney Looser	3	0	3	4.8%
<i>Jane Austen: Bicentenary Essays</i> , ed. John Halperin	0	3	3	4.8%
<i>Jane Austen on Screen</i> , ed. Gina MacDonald and Andrew MacDonald	0	3	3	4.8%
Journals				
<i>Persuasions</i>	3	13	16	25.8%
<i>English Literary History</i>	4	7	11	17.7%
<i>Nineteenth-Century Literature</i>	0	7	7	11.3%
<i>Critical Inquiry</i>	4	0	4	6.5%
<i>Nineteenth-Century Fiction</i>	3	0	3	4.8%

Table 10
Most cited authors based on total sample items citing.

Author	Sample sources citing	Percentage of total sample sources citing
Austen, Jane	60	96.7%
Butler, Marilyn	18	29.0%
Southam, B.C.	17	27.4%
Wiltshire, John	15	24.2%
Tanner, Tony	14	22.6%
Johnson, Claudia L.	12	19.3%
Duckworth, Alistair	11	17.7%
Trilling, Lionel	11	17.7%
Kirkham, Margaret	10	16.1%
Mudrick, Marvin	10	16.1%
Tave, Stuart	10	16.1%

constitute a core, but certain established scholars could exemplify a core in their bodies of work. Yet again, as illustrated in Table 10, diversity trumped centrality as no substantially quantifiable core emerged from the sample. One author did appear in 18 of the 62 sample works (29%), but this was the only author that reached that threshold—the exception being Jane Austen herself, whose works were (unsurprisingly) almost universally cited throughout the sample. Yet again, the data did not support the existence of a group of resources that were regularly cited throughout the entire sample.

The journal *Persuasions* and Butler's monograph, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*, are perhaps the only standout works between the books and book articles in the entire data set that even came close to the hypothesized thresholds for defining a core. This rather underwhelming level of overlap contrasted with presumptions that there would be more shared citations among scholarly works dedicated to studies of not only the same author, but the same literary work. This lack of significant overlap does not indicate a tight group of core titles in this sample, no matter how the authors of the study parsed the data. Interestingly, the only points in the data where the authors of this study noted any patterns of overlap beyond those low numbers were in the citations to other works written by Jane Austen or to specific editions of those literary works. While those patterns do validate the idea that certain editions (such as R.W. Chapman's *The Novels of Jane Austen* and Oxford editions in general) are preferred by scholars for their own use, even

those patterns of overlap are so low as to prevent definitive conclusions about certain resources forming a core for the field. All in all, the data from this sample do not point to a neat core of resources but to a high level of diversity among the resources used, much like the data from citation analyses in English literary scholarship in general and the broader humanities.

CONCLUSION

A number of questions remain that merit further study. A larger data set that spanned more years could conceivably indicate different results. Since many of the sources cited by the sample works are more general studies of Jane Austen and her works as a whole, rather than being focused only on the novel *Persuasion*, then analysis of scholarship relating to a single literary author may be more likely to reveal landmark works than analysis focused on scholarship surrounding individual literary works. A sample of journal articles dedicated to studies of *Persuasion* (or Jane Austen's works as a whole) could also demonstrate different patterns because of the varying norms of the publication and peer-review processes between books and articles. Finally, looking at citation patterns from earlier eras could reveal how the proliferation of scholarly publishing and the rise of Web access have impacted the diversity or uniformity of citations in the field.

The results of this study, which echo its macro-level counterparts, provided little to no support for the concept of the “seminal” or “landmark work” in literary scholarship. Rather than identifying predictable patterns of use, the data highlight the diversity of sources used even in a very narrow field of literary scholarship, a pattern that matches the overall patterns observed in literary studies and the humanities as a whole. Although the current study only looked at literary criticism that focused on one title of one British writer, these patterns (or lack thereof) correlate to Budd's (1986) observation about American literature, which, like the sub-discipline examined here, “...consists of the products of the imagination of many individuals over a period of a few hundred years ... [Scholars], using the products of imaginations as their laboratory, are therefore likely to draw from varied materials in the course of conducting their research or formulating critical ideas” (p. 192).

The diversity of sources used by literary scholars working in a relatively narrow field highlights the unique resource needs of individual scholars, which points away from collection development practices that emphasize broad patterns of use and instead indicates the importance of collection development models that focus on the needs of the local user community. Without the predictable, discipline-wide citation patterns of other fields of study, those working to serve the teaching and research needs of literary scholars and humanists in general need to embrace tools for collection development that provide insight on the particular research patterns of the local community of scholars. After

all, “we are in a user-centered rather than collection-centered world” (Bodi & Maier-O'Shea, 2005, p. 145). Landmark works and core resources may not exist for certain disciplines or sub-disciplines as a whole, but citation studies and other measures that focus on resource usage by the local community of scholars may point to more meaningful indicators of high-priority resources, which can lead to the best decisions on how to allocate limited library budgets in support of acquiring or accessing those sources.

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