Search Tips for Literary Criticism

Search Tip #1: **Search Terms**

- Use the Author's name as a search term. Try various formats:
  - F. Scott Fitzgerald
  - Fitzgerald, F. Scott
  - Scott AND Fitzgerald
- Use the name of the work as a search term
  - No results? Try looking for the title in the full text of the article.
  - Wrong results? Try quotes, e.g. "As You Like it" or "Power and the Glory"
- Use the word, *criticism*, as a search term (try searching with and without this term)
- Use your topic as a search term, e.g. *bullfighting*
  - No results? Try looking within the full text of the article.
  - Try synonyms

Search Tip #2: **Know what you’re searching**

- Full text - Many databases look for your search terms within the full text of the articles
- Item Record -- GIL Catalogs and EBSCOHost databases look for your search terms within the author, title, subject terms, and descriptors of the item, but do not look within the text of the item itself.
  - You may be able to use a drop-down box to change a search from an Item Record search to a full text search.

Search Tip #3: **Become more powerful with Advanced Search and Drop-Down boxes**

- Advanced Search options give you much more control over your search
- Drop Down boxes can help you look for your search terms as only the title, author, or subject term.
- You may be able to use the drop-down box to change a search from an Item Record search to a full text search.
- Drop Down boxes may change the type of search from All your search terms to Any of your search terms

Search Tip #4: **When in an author not an author?**

- General purpose database (Academic Search, JSTOR and OmniFile) and library catalogs
  - the author you are researching is the SUBJECT of your research
  - the person who wrote the article/book about the author is the AUTHOR of the article
- Literary Databases
  - Most literary databases allow you to put the author you are researching as the AUTHOR

Search Tip #5: **Narrow to Scholarly Sources**

- Narrow your results to Scholarly Sources when appropriate
- JSTOR, Project Muse, and Bloom's Literary Reference are ALL scholarly sources
- If in doubt, read the description of the database in GALILEO's Databases A-Z.

Search Tip #6: **Whether or not to use Boolean Operators**

- In EBSCOHost, the default search assumes your search is an exact phrase unless the words are connected with the Boolean operators AND, OR, and NOT
- Many other databases automatically assume you mean "AND" for your search terms
- Drop Down boxes may change the type of search from All your search terms to Any of your search terms