ENGLISH 3384.04 EARLY ENGLISH MASTERWORKS



DR. PAUL W. CHILD FALL 2017 ENGLISH 3384.04 Early English Masterworks Fall 2017

(THREE SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS)



DR. PAUL W. CHILD

CAMPUS OFFICE: EVANS 204 TELEPHONE: 936-294-1412 E-MAIL: ENG_PWC@SHSU.EDU

CLASS DAYS, TIME, AND LOCATION: MWF 2:00 p.m. to 2:50 p.m. EV 353

> OFFICE HOURS: MWF 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. and by Appointment

ENGLISH 3384.04 EARLY ENGLISH MASTERWORKS FALL 2017 DR. PAUL W. CHILD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 3384W, Early English Masterworks (writing-enhanced), surveys British literature from its beginnings in the "Old English" to the end of the eighteenth century. The familiar and not-so-familiar works that we read include the anonymous *Beowulf* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Marlowe's *Faustus*, lyrics from Shakespeare and Donne, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and "A Modest Proposal," and Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*.



While the course seeks to provide a sound reading foundation in the literature of Britain by examining various thematic and formal developments in their social and cultural contexts, it also challenges some preconceptions by asking what makes a work of literature a "masterwork" and who decides upon this status: Does the work become a classic simply because the venerable editors of *The Norton Anthology* and other academics have institutionalized and enshrined it as such? Or is it, in fact, part of the larger fabric of our culture and the world in which we live, in the *now*?

As a junior-level survey, the course also seeks to develop your critical reading and writing skills. To those ends, the class requirements include substantial critical writing, three unit examinations, a crossdisciplinary interpretation project, and active participation. In other words, there are *many* ways for you to succeed.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302 (or approved equivalents) and a required sophomore-level English.

Course value: Three semester credit hours.

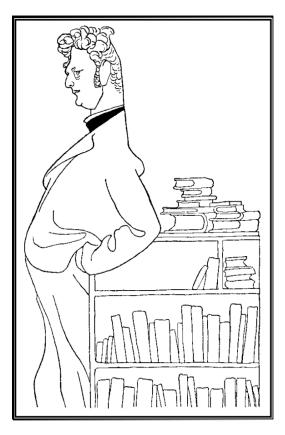
COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course aims to

- introduce you to canonical works of British literature, from its beginnings in the Old English to the end of the eighteenth century
- give you the facts about such literature (which are, indeed, important)
- develop your ability to read such works of literature critically by giving you reading approaches and strategies
- develop your ability to write arguments about such literature in an academic genre appropriate to literary studies
- develop the critical vocabulary that you use in writing about such works of literature intelligently and economically
- develop your ability to integrate supporting sources into your critical arguments
- assure that you can use MLA citation format correctly

POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

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I. CLASS MEETING DAYS, TIME, AND LOCATION

MWF 2:00 p.m. to 2:50 p.m. EV 353

II. REQUIRED TEXT

Greenblatt, Stephen, et al., ed. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 9th ed. Vol. 1. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2012. ISBN 978-0-393-91247-0 (paper)

You *must* purchase or otherwise procure the book for this class, and you must bring it to class every day, heavy as it is. To assure me that you have, in fact, procured the text for this class, I ask that you bring it to show me on or before Friday, September 1.

If you use a Kindle reading device, you must show me that you have the text throughout the entire term.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS (WITH APPROXIMATE RELATIVE VALUES) *

Reading Response Journal (40% Collectively)

Three Unit Examinations (15% each)

Crossdisciplinary Project (10%)

Participation/Daily Grade (5%): To do well with this grade, *engage* the class: Show that you care about the materials and the assignments. Come to class; come to class on time; come to class having read the materials, eager to discuss the works. Avoid complacency. Try to break the habit of automatically answering, "I don't know" when I direct a question toward you. You probably *do* know, if you give the question a couple of moments' thought. Show me also that you are taking careful class notes.

^{*} To receive credit for the course, you must submit/complete all of these major requirements.

IV. OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXTRA CREDIT

None. There are too many other ways to succeed in this class.

V. ATTENDANCE POLICY (NON-NEGOTIABLE)

Since you have decided to take this class at this time, I presume that you *want* to be here. Accordingly, I expect that you attend class *every* day. Life being what it is, however, you are allowed *five* absences. After the fifth absence, your final grade begins dropping one increment for each subsequent absence. So, for example, if you have an A, your grade drops to a B with the sixth absence; that B drops to a C with the seventh absence; that C drops to a D with the eighth absence; and that D drops to an F with the ninth absence.

Except in the case of a university-excused absence (for which I should receive formal documentation), I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Please—no doctor's notes, hospital vouchers, death certificates, court summons, or long tales of woe!

An extended illness does not excuse you from this policy; my rationale is that if you are too ill to attend all classes, you should withdraw from your courses and try them again when you can attend without distraction or dis-ease.

If you have a time-consuming job, demanding pet, "personal problems," or any other extracurricular distractions that will prevent your attending class regularly and submitting all assignments on time, please take another class and try this one again in a later term.

VI. LATE ARRIVAL, EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late is both disruptive and impractical. So for the protection of your fellow students (and myself), I count every two instances of tardiness as one absence. You are tardy if you arrive after I begin making announcements or lecturing. If you arrive too late to take a reading quiz, you will not be allowed to take the day's quiz at that time (see the make-up policy on the next page).

Do not leave class early unless you provide me with a formal note *before class begins* explaining the reason for leaving. If you stay less than half the class, of course, you are absent for the day.

VII. EXAMINATIONS

Three unit examinations, spaced more or less evenly throughout the term, will assess not only how conscientiously you have engaged the class discussion over the works but also how well you can make critical arguments about them.

The final unit examination will not be comprehensive.

VIII. MAKE-UP POLICY

An absence does not excuse you from submitting a written assignment on time; you must arrange to get the assignment to me in physical form on the due date.

You should never miss an examination date, except under the most unusual circumstances. If you anticipate missing an exam, you must let me know beforehand so that we can arrange for you to make up the test before the next class day.

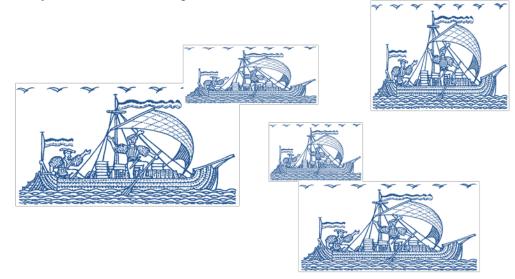
IX. GRADING

We will follow a standard ten-point grading scale in the class:

A90-100B80-89C70-79D60-69F0-59

At about the middle of the term, I will make up a spread sheet with your averages so that you know where you stand in the class to that point. While I would never encourage anyone to drop a class, except in a case in which excessive absences make your passing impossible, the spread sheet average will help you make a better-informed decision about your possibilities for success in the course.

I will post grades confidentially on line no later than noon on Monday, December 11, the deadline set by the Office of the Registrar.



X. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

For definitions, I refer you first to the Sam Houston State University policy statement about academic dishonesty in Paragraph 5.3 of the "Code of Student Conduct and Discipline" in the official *Student Guidelines*. Please read through the short description very carefully.

Plagiarism (a word that comes from the Latin term for plundering) is literary theft, the intentional or sometimes merely careless stealing of someone else's words or ideas and the passing them off as one's own without giving due credit to the original author. Plagiarism not only defeats the very purpose of the educational process—to make an independent thinker and writer of you—but also constitutes academic fraud. Any written assignment convicted of plagiarism will fail; in serious and clearly deliberate cases, the student will fail the course and face the appropriate dean for further disciplinary action. *Don't do it*.

To avoid the temptation to plagiarize, do not ever consult outside sources when writing journal responses.

Any student convicted of cheating on an examination or quiz will fail the examination or quiz and will be subject to university disciplinary action: *Don't do it*.



XI. NOTE ON NOTES: CLIFF'S NOTES, MONARCH NOTES, SPARKNOTES, AND OTHER SUCH DIGEST GUIDES TO LITERATURE

Usually such resources provide useful plot and character summaries, cultural backgrounds, and some critical commentary. You may find them helpful for establishing contexts and understanding the texts, which are not always easy.

Do not, however, read such digest guides as *substitutes* for the primary works themselves; a work of literature is not a paraphrase or summary. In order to pass any quiz or examination, you will have to read the original works.

Of course, to avoid plagiarism, you should never draw language or ideas from these guides in writing assignments. (I own copies of all these and can almost always spot plagiarism.)

And please—as a matter of respect to your professor, your fellow students, and the venerable Chaucer, Shakespeare, Swift, et alia—do not ever bring such a guide into the classroom. Agreed?

XII. CLASSROOM COMPORTMENT

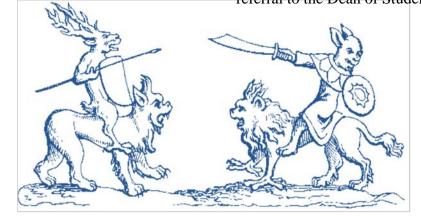
Please observe the customary classroom courtesies. I will merely paraphrase the University's policy statement here: Students will avoid any classroom conduct that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and thus impedes the missions of the University.

The use of cell phones and laptops is forbidden in this classroom. Turn your cell phone *off* (not merely to "vibrate"). Use a notebook and a pen to take notes.

You should not eat in class; use tobacco products, including e-cigarettes; make derogatory remarks about fellow students or the class (your professor has a remarkably good sense for hearing whispers); read newspapers or do work for other classes; sleep (ouch); talk with fellow students (or to yourself!) at inappropriate times; wear inappropriate clothing; or engage in any other form of distraction.

Until you are dismissed from class each day, please do not begin to pack up belongings; doing so is very distracting to your professor and your fellow students. (Thank you.)

If you engage in disruptive or otherwise inappropriate behavior in the classroom, I will ask that you leave the room. Continued behavior of this sort will result in dismissal from the class and referral to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.



XIII. ADDENDA

Students with Disabilities: Sam Houston State University responsibly observes the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, please register with the SHSU Counseling Center and talk with your professor about how he can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center, however. Contact the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, by calling (936) 294-1720.

Observance of Religious Holy Days: Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself or herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s) early in the term.

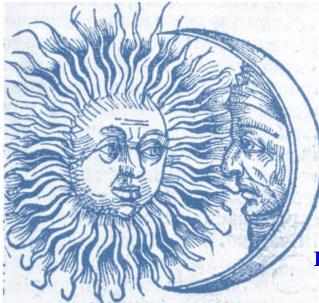
Visitors in the Classroom: I always welcome visitors in the classroom—a chance for *you* to show off. But the visitor must not disrupt the classroom with his or her attendance.

Instructor Evaluation: The University asks that you complete a course/ instructor evaluation form toward the end of the term. So if you bide your time patiently, you will have the opportunity to turn the tables on your professor by evaluating *him*.

E-Mail Policy: I am always happy to answer questions or address concerns by e-mail (eng_pwc@shsu.edu). But in e-mailing, please address me ("Dear Professor Child"), and identify yourself clearly.

Concealed Handgun Carry Policy: As of August 1, 2016, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 411.2031, a licensed, trained individual twenty-one years of age or older is permitted to carry a concealed handgun into this classroom; the individual is not required to disclose that he or she is carrying the concealed handgun. Instructor's additional policy: Students who carry concealed weapons into this classroom are not *allowed* to disclose—that is, to show or to announce to other students in the classroom that they are carrying a concealed handgun—except in the event of an active shooting situation. Disclosure for any other reason constitutes "open carry," which is forbidden on campuses of public universities in the State of Texas.

And Finally: I reserve the right to make minor changes in the syllabus.



REVISED CLASS CALENDAR AND **READING SCHEDULE**¹

The following schedule lists class meeting days and dates for completion of reading and writing assignments. We will try to follow this calendar as closely as possible; given the vagaries of life, however, we may have to modify the schedule some as we go.

Unless noted otherwise, all assignments come from *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 9th ed., Vol. 1, designated as "N" in the calendar, and the reading response journal booklet, designated as "RRJ." <u>Please note that to account for the disruptions of the storm we are dropping journal entries 6 and 9 from the original calendar; you will also need to change dates in the reading response journal booklet to correspond with dates on this revised calendar.</u>

Reading assignments give the inclusive pages only for the works themselves. Please read also the good introductions to authors and works; because these introductions provide useful contexts, material from them will likely arise in class discussions and appear thereafter on examinations.

The reading schedule is moderately demanding. Pace yourself well, read ahead as necessary, and always come to class prepared.

Unless otherwise noted, come to class every day listed below, even if there is no reading assignment.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4 No Class: Labor Day Recess

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 Introductions: The Reading Response Journal

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 Introductions: Approaches to Reading

¹ Rev. Sept. 6, 2017. This revised calendar replaces pages 13-17 of the original course booklet.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 Deadline for Procuring Text Reading Assignment: *Beowulf* (N 41-108)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 1 (RRJ 30)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 Reading Assignment: Old English Riddles (Course Booklet 25-27)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 Reading Assignment: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (N 186-238)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 2 (RRJ 31)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2 Unit Examination One

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4 Reading Assignment: Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* (N 1128-63)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6

MONDAY, OCTOBER 9 Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 3 (RRJ 32)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11

Reading Assignment: Shakespeare, Sonnet 18 (N 1172-73), Sonnet 73 (N 1177); Donne, Reading Assignment: Donne, Holy Sonnet 14 (N 1413-14)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

MONDAY, OCTOBER 16

Reading Assignment: Donne, "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" (N 1385-86); Herrick, "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time" (N 1762)

Assignment: Submit Crossdisciplinary Project Proposal (see pages 19-20 of this booklet)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 4 (RRJ 33)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20

Reading Assignment: Milton, from Paradise Lost: Book 1 (N 1945-64)

MONDAY, OCTOBER 23

Reading Assignment: Milton, from *Paradise Lost*: Book 9 (N 2091-2116), Book 12 lines 574-649 (N 2173-75)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 5 (RRJ 34)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27

Unit Examination Two



MONDAY, OCTOBER 30 Reading Assignment: Swift, "A Modest Proposal" (N 2633-39)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1 Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 7 (RRJ 36)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3 Reading Assignment: Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* Part 1 (N 2492-2531)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6 Reading Assignment: Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* Part 2 (N 2531-73)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10 Reading Assignment: Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* Part 4 (N 2587-2633)

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13 Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 8 (RRJ 37)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15 Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17 Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 9 (RRJ 38) Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20 Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22 TO FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24 No Class: Thanksgiving Recess

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27 Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29 Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1 Final Class Day Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 10 (RRJ 39) Submit Bound Reading Response Journal (RRJ 40)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4 Unit Examination Three: 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

THE CROSSDISCIPLINARY PROJECT

In taking a crossdisciplinary approach to a subject, we try to understand it better or see it in a new way by applying methods from one academic discipline to another. For example, in diagnosing a patient's illness, a doctor might not simply rely upon her scientific methods but also apply the methods of a literary critic by listening to the kind of language that the patient uses in reporting his symptoms and looking for a plot in the patient's narrative. Or an epidemiologist might consider political and economic issues in trying to understand and control the outbreak of a global pandemic.

Your mission in this crossdisciplinary project is to interpret a work of literature in a new way by applying the methods and approaches of another discipline. How, for example, can our interests in the "hard sciences," mathematics, performing and visual arts, psychology, history, and so forth—and the *methods* we employ in these other disciplines—lead to fresh *interpretations* of the literature?

Here are some possibilities, taken from past student presentations:

- Research dramatic costumery in Marlowe's day; make a costume and explain its functions to the class.
- Choreograph or set a poem to music; perform it for the class.
- Give a visual presentation of some work of literature—a drawing, painting, tapestry, or film, for example.
- Interpret a work or character according to some modern theory of psychology or sociology.
- Explain the scientific background of a piece of literature.
- Conduct a statistical computer analysis of the style of a poem or passage of prose.
- Translate a work of literature into another language.

Market "A Modest Proposal."

- Prepare a lesson that that teaches a work of literature to elementary or secondary students.
- Create a home page for an author or a work of literature.

I have set aside several days at the end of the semester for presenting your various projects to the class. The presentation may take any number of forms: a simple report of your findings, a dramatic or musical presentation, a scientific experiment (?). The formal presentation will last no fewer than ten and no more than fifteen minutes. During the presentation, you must explain clearly *how* the project interprets the literature. Consider, especially, the challenges that you confronted in interpreting the work using the new method.

Rehearse your presentation thoroughly, and dress appropriately for standing in front of an audience.

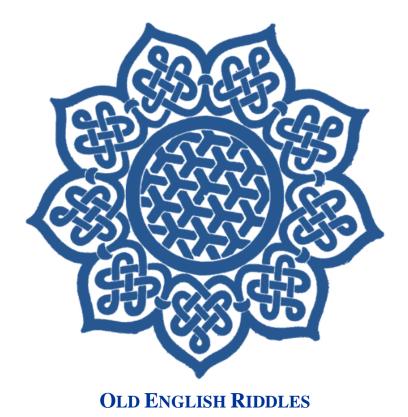
I will evaluate the project (10% of your final grade) according to the following criteria: originality, depth and understanding of interpretative process, labor involved in preparation, and presentation.

The best project by popular acclaim wins a prize.

Rules:

- 1. Work with English literature written before 1800, and make sure that the project relates specifically to the literature.
- 2. Discuss the project with me before beginning work on it.
- 3. Be creative.
- 4. Be impressive.
- 5. Have fun.





The following Old English riddles are preserved in the Exeter Book, copied ca. 979:

Riddle #7

My clothes are silent as I walk the earth or stir the waters. Sometimes that which makes me beautiful raises me high above men's heads, and powerful clouds hold me, carry me far and wide. The loveliness spread on my back rustles and sings, bright, clear songs, and loud, whenever I leave lakes and earth, floating in the air like a spirit.

Riddle #25

I am a strange creature, for I satisfy women, a service to the neighbours! No one suffers at my hands except for my slayer. I grow very tall, erect in a bed, I'm hairy underneath. From time to time a beautiful girl, the brave daughter of some churl, dares to hold me, grips my russet skin, robs me of my head and puts me in the pantry. At once that girl with plaited hair who has confined me remembers our meeting. Her eye moistens.

Riddle #26

An enemy robbed me of life, stole my strength, then soaked me in water, dipping me in and out. He set me in the sun, and all the hair I had had was gone, dried to nothing. A knife's hard edge ground away my last impurity, and fingers folded me, and a bird's delight spread black drops all over me, walking up and down, stopping to swallow tree-dye wet with water, then walking again. Later, a man covered me with sheltering boards, stretched skin around me, and dressed me in gold; a smith's glowing work was wound across me. Now let these decorations, this crimson dye, and all this glorious labor celebrate the Lord, far and near! (-Not punish the dull, like a penance!) If men will use me, their souls will be safer, surer of Heaven; their hearts bolder, more joyful; their minds wiser and more knowing. Their friends, their families, will be truer, better, more just, more worthy, more perfect in their faith. Prosperity and honor and grace will come to them; kindness and mercy will circle them around, and love will hold them tightly in its arms. What am I, so useful to men? My name is a great one, holy in itself, famous for the help it can bring.

Riddle #32

Our world is lovely in different ways, hung with beauty and works of hands. I saw a strange machine, made for motion, slide against the sand, shrieking as it went. It walked swiftly on its only foot, this odd-shaped monster, traveled in an open country without seeing, without arms, or hands, with many ribs, and its mouth in the middle. Its work is useful, and welcome, for it loads its belly with food, and brings abundance to men, to poor and to rich, paying its tribute year after year. Solve this riddle, if you can, and unravel its name. Riddle #47

A worm ate words. I thought that wonderfully strange—a miracle—when they told me a crawling insect had swallowed noble songs, a night-time thief had stolen writing so famous, so weighty. But the bug was foolish still, though its belly was full of thought.

GUIDELINES FOR RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

I am always happy to write recommendation letters for qualified students who are applying for employment, scholarships and grants, or further schooling. A few guidelines, however:

1. I cannot fairly write a recommendation for you without proper acquaintance. In order for me to write a letter, you must have completed a course with me and earned a grade of at least a *B* or have been acquainted with me in some other capacity (for example, as a member of The Sam Houston State University Writers' Forum, which I sponsor) for at least a full semester.

2. Please make the request formally, letting me know very clearly what you are applying for (a particular scholarship or a particular field of study at a particular institution). Provide the names and addresses of the contact(s) to whom I should send the letter.

3. You must give me at least a couple of weeks and preferably more time to complete the letter. Often I am working under pressures of class or professional deadlines, so it is not possible for me to get letters out at the last minute. Plan your applications well in advance.

4. I can write a very good letter based on your performance in my class or my observation of you in some other capacity. But the more that I know about your other accomplishments and interests, the better the letter. Please send me a current curriculum vitae (note the spelling of that document) or, at least, a list of such accomplishments and interests, especially those that suit you well for the job, scholarship, or educational program for which you are applying.

5. If the institution or organization to which you are applying requires a cover sheet, please get that to me in due time. As a matter of form, sign the waiver that insures confidentiality. If I agree to write you a letter, it will be a good one, and I will e-mail you a copy of the letter. So you need not worry about my sabotaging your application with a damaging or less-than-enthusiastic recommendation. However, if you do not sign the confidentiality waiver, those on the receiving end might think that your referees have been less than honest.

6. Please provide pre-addressed envelopes with postage.



YOUR PROFESSOR

Paul W. Child earned his PhD in 1992 from the University of Notre Dame and joined the faculty at Sam Houston State University in the fall of 1993 after failing as ditch-digger, rock musician, night auditor in a motel, and business manager for a building restoration contractor. His academic specialty is Restoration and 18th-century British literature, and he has scholarly interests in medical literature and the social history of medicine. He has published work on Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels* and "A Modest Proposal"; George Cheyne, doctor to the stars and lesser luminaries in 18th-century London and Bath; and the teaching of medical literature. Dr. Child teaches a wide array of classes at Sam Houston State.