The Literature Resource Center User Guide

The Literature Resource Center is designed around three major literary research tools - Contemporary Literary Criticism, Dictionary of Literary Biography, and Contemporary Authors. Designed originally for students of literature, this database offers a wealth of information that includes criticism, biographies, bibliographies, work overviews and explicati

Getting Started

The Literature Resource Center is available from both on-campus and off-campus computers. To use the database from home and other off-campus computer, you must have an Internet connection and be a current Rock Valley College student, administrator, faculty or staff member. For instructions on how to access The Literature Resource Center and many other databases from off-campus, see the guide entitled "Using Library Resources Off-Campus."

Step 1. Access the Rock Valley College Library website at http://www.rockvalleycollege.edu/library
Step 2. Click the "Library Databases" link in left hand column.

2. Click "Library Databases"
Step 3. Scroll down the alphabetical list to the L’s and select *Literature Resource Center*

**Kids Search**
Kids Search makes it easy for students to search by keyword or by topic to find the most useful search results. Results can be easily sorted by source type—magazines, reference books, photos, flags, etc.

**Latino American Experience**
A full-text digital resource exploring the history and culture of U.S. Latinos.

**LexisNexis Academic**
A collection of full-text resources including newspapers, business, legal, medical and general reference sections.

**LexisNexis Statistical** *(a LEXIS-NEXIS database)*
Find answers by searching a collection growing by 30,000 statistical tables annually.

**Science & Technology Abstracts**
A bibliographic database provides coverage on subjects such as librarianship, classification, cataloging, bibliometrics, online information management and more. Delivered via the EBSCOhost platform, LISTA indexes nearly 500 periodicals plus books, research reports, and proceedings. With coverage dating back to the mid-1960s, it is the oldest continuously produced database covering the field of information science.

**Literature Resource Center**
The Literature Resource Center is designed around three major literary research tools—Contemporary Literary Criticism, Dictionary of Literary Biography, and Contemporary Authors. Designed originally for students of literature, this database offers a wealth of information that includes criticism, biographies, bibliographies, work overviews and evaluations. Also included are web sites, periodical articles, compare and contrast pages, full-text author’s works, and reading lists that are useful in many disciplines.
1. Select type of search.
- You may search for terms in the following categories: Person by or About (Authors of a Work and biographical Information, a Name of a Work (story title), keywords, or search “All text” which will search the content of all the articles in the database.

2. Type in search terms
- Type your search words into the “Find” box. You may use single names of authors of people (ex. James Joyce), titles of works, (Glass Menagerie), or combine keywords using Boolean operators (Hamlet AND death), as explained below.

- Boolean Operators (And, Or, Not): Use to link or combine keywords. “And” finds records that have both your first and second keywords (time management and college student), and will narrow your search results. “Or” finds records that contain either your first keyword or your second keyword, or both (time management or college student), and will broaden your search. “Not” will allow you to eliminate certain words from your search. If a record contains a word that has been designated with a “not” (Bermuda not triangle) it will not be displayed.
3. **Search Limits**

There are several ways to further limit your search.
- **Limit to “Peer Reviewed”**. This will cause only scholarly journal articles to be returned as part of the set.
- **Limit by “Publication Date.”** Search for articles published in a specific timeframe.
- **Limit by “Content Type.”** Search for only certain types of content, such as biographies, literature criticism, and primary source & literary works.

4. - Click the “Search” button to begin searching.
Viewing the Search Results

-The results of your search will be displayed after you click on the Search button. The number of records or citations that have been returned and the types of results will be shown on the tabs above the article titles.

- Clicking on the title of the article will open up the full text the article. This will include also the necessary items need to correctly cite the article including the article title, author(s), source (journal name), and volume, issue, and date information.

- In the left hand column, it is also possible to limit to particular subjects related to the search.
Full Text Features of The Literature Resource Center

- This page will provide the entire article and all the necessary bibliographic information including, Title, Author, the original journal of publication (many of the articles are reprints), and the publication, volume, and date where article has been reprinted.
- Print, Save, E-mail options.
- Once you have opened a full-text article, you have the option to print the article, save to disk or e-mail the record to yourself. You may do so by selecting the appropriate link. Also, if you are e-mailing the document, you may select to include a copy of the article citation in a number of different formats (MLA or APA).

Full Text of Article

Bibliographic Information

Title: 
'Through Soundproof Glass': The Prison of Self-Consciousness in The Glass Menagerie

Author(s): Erle K. Law


Document Type: Critical essay

[essay date December 1993] In the following essay, Levy explores the significance of mirrors as a symbol for superficial appearances and fragile self-image in The Glass Menagerie.

In his production notes introducing The Glass Menagerie, Tennessee Williams refers to nostalgia as "the first condition of the play." This appraisal at first seems accurate, for the drama deploys the past in a series of receding planes by which the very notion of nostalgia is progressively deepened. From the perspective of Tom, the narrator and a chief character, the past when he started to 'bea lkeable' with the urge to leave home becomes a haunting memory from which his present struggles vainly to free. But the continuing power of that past derives from his mother's nostalgic attachment to her own more distant past and the desperate need to exploit motherhood as a means of reviving 'the legend of her youth.'

Yet once we analyze how Amanda manipulates maternity, a factor in the play more fundamental than nostalgia will begin to emerge. This principle is self-consciousness--a term which, as we shall see, the text supplies and in its own way defines. Each character is hardened in relating to others by the need to inhabit a private world where the fundamental concern is with self-image. Some characters (Amanda and Jim) use others as mirrors to reflect the self-image with which they themselves wish to identify. Other characters (Laura and Tom) fear that through relation to others they will be required to make reflections, trapped in the mirror of the other's judgment. In virtue of this preoccupation with self-image and the psychological mirrors sustaining it, the world of the play is aptly named after glass. Indeed, Laura's remark ironically becomes the motto of the play: "My glass collection takes up a good deal of time. Glass is something you have to take good care of."

Let's begin by examining Amanda's influence on Laura. Unwittingly, Amanda exploits her maternal concern about Laura's lack of marital prospects as a means of identifying with her own past when she herself was visited one Sunday afternoon in Blue Mountain by "seventeen—gentlemen callers". In effect, she turns her daughter into a mirror in which her own flitting self-image is reflected, but to do so she must first turn herself, more precisely, her parental judgment, into a mirror reflecting Laura's limitations. The play itself suggests this seminal image. After helping Laura dress and groom herself, Amanda instructs her to stand in front of a real mirror. "Now look at yourself, Laura. This is the finest you will ever feel... You are not to try yourself now. You're going to be spoiled by your..."
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"Through Soundproof Glass": The Prison of Self-Consciousness in *The Glass Menagerie*

**Eric P. Lew**


Critical essay

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E-mailing an article

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Scott Goldy, Instructional Librarian, 2010