

A Dump for My Thoughts

Jacob Taylor

In this Picturing Literate Activity piece, Jacob Taylor shows the often invisible parts of doing research: the digital spaces where we dump our sources, links, and early thoughts.

My research usually starts with a dump document, a space where I can paste URLs and write any thoughts I have while I am finding sources I might use in the project I am working on. The dump documents pictured in Figures 1 and 2 show both genre research and content research from a variety of **sources**: websites, YouTube videos, historical documents, people’s memories, and my own thoughts (“Content Research Terms”).

Figure 1 shows a screenshot from a dump document that will (I hope) become a future GWRJ article sharing my genre research about the ways queer folks adapt different genres of rhetoric across time periods in order to achieve specific protest goals. In my dump document, I’ve created a section for each time period I’m interested in researching. I started my content research with the AIDS crisis and began pasting URLs of webpages I found useful, along with a short description of what I found useful on that webpage. I’ve also included an initial thought about how I might want to focus my entire article that I had after seeing a theme show up in my research. In addition to what I thought I would find while researching protests during the AIDS crisis, I also found a lot of rhetoric focused on spreading health information to those most affected by the AIDS crisis in an effort to reduce

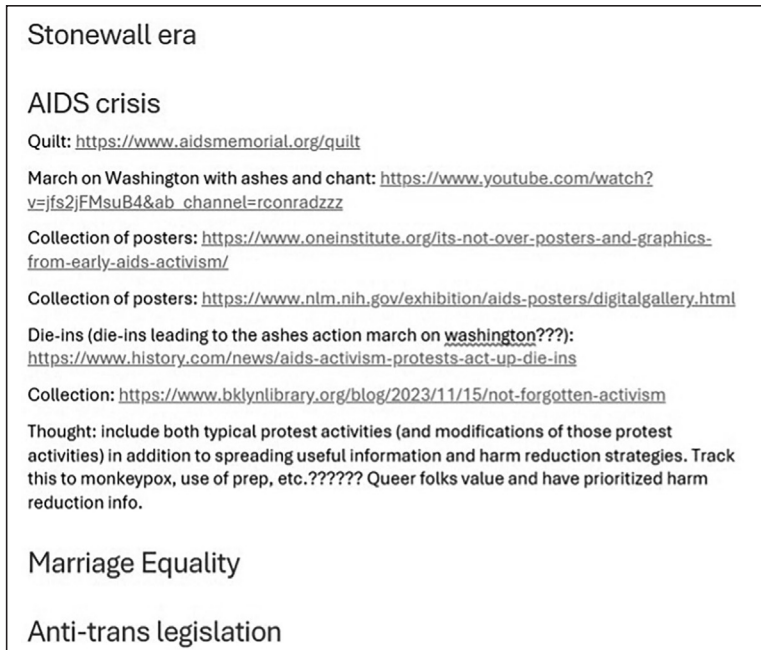


Figure 1: Screenshot of a dump document for my GWRJ article researching genres of protest during the AIDS crisis.

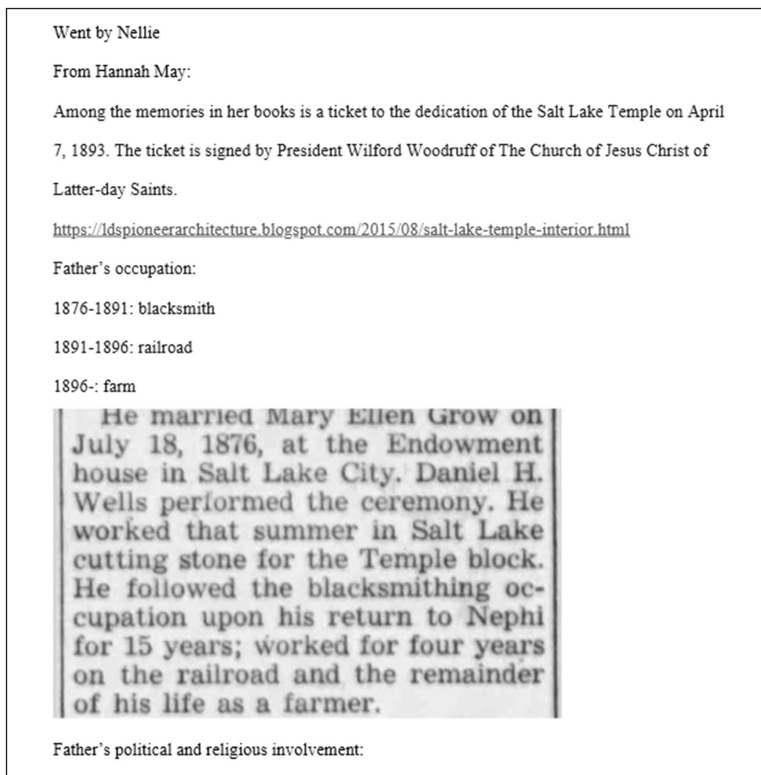


Figure 2: Screenshot of my Nellie Pexton braided essay dump document.

the harm caused by the epidemic. This caught my attention, so I wanted to research it more.

Figure 2 shows a screenshot from a dump document that will (hopefully) become a braided essay (“Find Your Footing”) that explores my connection with Nellie Pexton, an ancestor who suffered from a chronic illness similar to my own. Instead of dumping a series of URLs in this document, I’ve included quotes from the one primary source I was working with here and screenshots of news clippings. I’ve also written out things I will want to remember later in a way that makes sense to me, like the timeline of this ancestor’s father’s career.

Works Cited

“Content Research Terms.” ISU Writing Program, www.isuwriting.com/content-research-terms. Accessed 9 Nov. 2024.

“Find Your Footing: Sub-genres in Creative Nonfiction.” *Purdue Online Writing Lab*, owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/creative_writing/creative_nonfiction/sub_genres_of_creative_nonfiction.html. Accessed 9 Nov. 2024.

Jacob Taylor is a PhD student in Illinois State University’s creative writing program, where they write about queerness, poverty, illness, and the environment. They have a collection of house plants that are doing quite well and enjoy watching horror movies in the middle of the night.



Notes



Drawing by Joyce Walker