

Melanie Conroy, Associate Professor of French, University of Memphis
Deborah Talbot Research Award Final Report

Book Title

Realist Geographies from Balzac to Proust

Project Report: I was able to complete the majority of my manuscript *Realist and Post-Realist Geographies from Balzac to Proust*, for which I received the Deborah Talbot Research Award this summer. This manuscript was solicited by the Digital Humanities editor at Cambridge University Press and the final manuscript is due in December 2020. It is referred to as an element, which is a new format being developed by the press, comprising a short book with a digital companion. I was able to finish the accompanying website and most of the visualizations without the need for a designer, as initially anticipated. I have versions of all chapters and am working with my editors to address issues raised in the first round of review. With this award, I was able to spend an entire month writing and rewriting the major portions of the book. I was also able to finish 12 out of 15 diagrams. The student assistant (Jessica Collins) revised and corrected a dataset that is used in some of the diagrams that I have not yet completed.

I am grateful to the College of Arts and Sciences, the University, and Deborah Talbot for providing me with the funds to work on this book exclusively during a full month of the summer. I am confident that this book will receive international attention in the fields of digital humanities and novel studies. I am presenting this work at two upcoming conferences and will publicize the electronic version and the print version in fall of 2021. While I have published a great deal in related fields, French studies remains a book field and having a book on a major publisher is important to developing an international reputation in my field. All of the feedback I have received on this book so far suggests that it will be a welcome addition to the field of digital humanities and lead to future research opportunities. After almost ten years of working on this project, I am thankful for the support to finish this project.

Corrected Budget

- 1. Student stipend (Jessica Collins) \$1,500
- 2. Summer Salary \$3,500

TOTAL = \$5,000

Budget Explanation

Instead of paying a designer to help me with my 15 visualizations and illustrations, I completed the design work myself and hired a student assistant (Jessica Collins) part time over a two month period to verify the data that went into the visualizations.