Using doctoral theses in your research

EThOS webinar
10 December 2013
The British Library
The British Library
Voices of Science

Explore 100 life stories about environmental science, British technology and engineering from 1940 to the present

Listen and Watch

VOICES OF SCIENCE tells the stories of some of the most remarkable scientific and engineering discoveries of the past century using oral history interviews with prominent British scientists and engineers.

Listen and watch short audio and video clips of scientists and engineers talking candidly about their motivations, frustrations, triumphs, colleagues, families and childhoods.

Joseph Farman: discovering the ozone hole

Mary Lee Bemers-Lee: programming in the 1950s
Today’s presentation

• What is EThOS?
• How does it work with UK universities?
• How do you use it?
• The wider research context
• What about your own PhD?
What is EThOS?

E-Theses Online Service
An online aggregation of the UK’s doctoral theses
Providing access to the full text thesis wherever possible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Animality in the works of Émile Zola</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author:</td>
<td>Woolen, C. G.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awarding Body:</td>
<td>University of Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Institution:</td>
<td>University of Leicester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of Award:</td>
<td>1975</td>
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<tr>
<td>EThOS Persistent ID:</td>
<td>uk.bl.ethos.477996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisor:</td>
<td>Hemmings, F.W.J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification Name:</td>
<td>Thesis (Ph.D.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification Level:</td>
<td>Doctoral</td>
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Abstract:

This thesis is an attempt to define Zola's concept of animality and the way it is elaborated in his written works. Zola's animal metaphors are more concerned to convey a meaning than a visual impression, thereby disconcerting those who expect a more colourful and anecdotal treatment of animal imagery. Didactic may mean drab but we must take the author's general animal comparisons very seriously in the high light of his life-long intention to relate man. Metonymically, to all other material phenomena of the cosmos. The main animality idea that permeates Zola's literary endeavor is that the relationship between man and other animals is fundamentally wrong and in urgent need of improvement. Sections on anthropomorphism and animalization pinpoint the various problems, and suggest tentative solutions. It is only by the adoption of a new, biological morality, however, than man, nature's deviant species, can attain greater harmony and self-knowledge. Individualism must be sacrificed to the survival prospects of the collectivity, viewed over the long term. Man's social status and natural state will then reflect one another in the true Darwinian sense, and no longer encourage grisly parodies of the "struggle for life" ethic.

www.bl.uk
EThOS in numbers

- 320,000 records
- 2000 new records a month
- 110,000 full text theses
- 127 UK universities
- Users in every country
- 30 a day scanned from paper
- 36 million pages of top research!
- 1200 theses viewed every day
EThOS objectives

• Make doctoral theses more **visible** for researchers

• Uncover **top research** by UK’s universities

• A **record** of all UK theses

• Free access to the **full text** of as many as possible
How does it work with UK universities?
Links with all UK universities

© fitntc.edu; wirralnews.co.uk; bangor.ac.uk; ukoln.ac.uk; aasarchitects.com
How theses get into EThOS

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<th>University</th>
<th>Records (information about the theses)</th>
<th>Theses</th>
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EThOS
Nearly all institutions have a repository
How users access the theses

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EThOS

- Search and discover
- See what’s available now
- Follow links to uni
- Access from uni
- Download from EThOS
- Order a scanned thesis
Enriching the system

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University policies and practice vary
How do I use it?

[DEMO]
How does it help your research?

“… helped me fill in the gaps in my research where published secondary material was unable to”

“To get used to the size of argument required at doctoral level”

“… in the US international dissertations are difficult to get in a timely manner. EThOS is wonderful!”

“… gave me a specific idea about my research topic and its design”

“I look regularly to find out if a thesis has been written on a particular topic”

“It’s allowed me to find and contact other researchers in allied areas.”
The UK research context
Opening up access to research

• UK Government initiatives

• Publicly funded research papers should be available for new researchers to use and build on

• UK Research Councils’ policy on open access, from Apr 2013
Open access PhDs?

- Policies apply mainly to journal articles

- But PhDs extremely important research

- Open access PhDs embraced by UK universities

- Funder expectations
Postgraduate research funding, 2011/12

- No financial backing: 38%
- Institution: 21%
- Local government: 2%
- Overseas: 7%
- Other government: 3%
- Other: 6%
- Research council: 15%
- Charity/British Academy: 4%
- UK industry: 4%

Source: S. Hill, Hefce. Vitae Conference Workshop 2013
“In the case of Ph.D. theses funded by Research Councils, metadata describing the thesis should be lodged in the institution's repository as soon as possible after award and a full text version should be available within a maximum of 12 months following award.

It is expected that metadata in institutional repositories will be compatible with the metadata core set recommended by the ETHOS e-thesis online service.”

Doctoral Training Grant Terms & Conditions

Your own PhD thesis
Why happens to my thesis?

Deposit
- University policy
- E-deposit into repository or e-store
- Or paper submission
- Or both!
- Thesis deposit agreement

Open access
- Might be voluntary deposit or mandatory
- Open re-use of the metadata
- More controlled access to thesis

EThOS
- Aggregates metadata
- Google Scholar
- Specialist indexes
- Always works with the university
Why make my research open to all?

**Concerns**
- Commercial or sensitive content
- Plagiarism
- Future publication

**Benefits**
- Great research is shared
- Contribute to the knowledge pool
- Visibility for you and your research
- Make connections
Why make my research open to all?

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**Benefits**
- More citations: higher search rankings!
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- Visibility for you and your research
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Plagiarism

• Concern often expressed
• 2010 survey & report - http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/117151/
• Little hard evidence
• Plagiarism detection technology?
• Open visibility means it’s clearly your research!
• Takedown processes in place
Future publication concerns

- Concern often expressed
- Survey & report - http://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/1177/
- Little hard evidence
- More keen to publish?
- Embargoes
Contacts

• http://ethos.bl.uk

• Your own university

• British Library Higher Education newsletter
  http://forms.bl.uk/newsletters/index.aspx

• General EThOS enquiries - ethos@bl.uk

• Sara.gould@bl.uk
Three ways to explore the collections

1. Access digital collections at http://www.bl.uk
2. Search the catalogue at http://explore.bl.uk
3. Book an open day at http://www.bl.uk/whatson
Similar aggregating services in other countries

- **Europe** – DART-Europe [http://www.dart-europe.eu/basic-search.php](http://www.dart-europe.eu/basic-search.php)
- **South African** ETD Portal [http://www.netd.ac.za/](http://www.netd.ac.za/)
- **Spain** – Tesis Doctorals en Xarxa (theses in Catalan) [http://www.tdx.cat/](http://www.tdx.cat/)

**USA**
2. PQDT Open (some free theses online) [http://pqdtopen.proquest.com/](http://pqdtopen.proquest.com/)

- **NDLTD** (USA and other countries – the nearest we have to a global database, although this is really a resource for data librarians and not end-users. It does contains lots of useful thesis info, including a list of national services)
Thank you