



## 2021 RSVP Digital Salon

### Doing Research as an Independent Scholar

#### Chat Transcript

13:08:41 From Amanda HASTE: Would it help to define the term "independent"?

13:10:02 From Karen Garvin : :(

13:10:54 From Karen Garvin : A definition might help.

13:12:12 From Karen Garvin : One thing I do like about "independent" is that it doesn't infer that we're standing outside the academy gates begging to be let inside.

13:12:46 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : That's certainly the way I've reclaimed the term

13:13:16 From Lisa Lane : I teach full-time at community college and have never known what to say. I'm "affiliated" but not "university". "Independent" might be a step up, since research is not associated with my position even though it's what I do.

13:15:27 From Marie Léger-St-Jean :  
<https://independentscholars.hcommons.org/>

13:15:30 From Sharon Cogdill : I have long argued that the affiliation on conference name tags is part of an assignment in a hierarchy, very few ppl actually benefit from it. (Not to take attention away from those who are not working in academic institutions)

13:16:06 From Lisa Lane : <https://www.ncis.org/national-coalition-independent-scholars-ncis>

13:16:11 From Alison Moulds : I have a small group/network as well called Academia on the Side and happy to link up :)

13:18:32 From Rachel Crossland: Sorry, Linda - could you repeat the name of your group please?

13:19:09 From Amanda HASTE : Cool Alison. Is there a weblink for Academia on the Side? Or is it on FB?

13:19:09 From Regina Martínez : <https://www.ncis.org/forum-independent-research-endeavours>

13:19:11 From Regina Martínez : I think this is it

13:19:30 From Amanda HASTE : Yep, that's it.

13:19:46 From Rachel Crossland : Great, thanks!

13:20:32 From Alison Moulds : We have an Academia on the Side Google Group - happy to add anyone if they email me: moulds.alison@gmail.com. We have weekend writing sessions and some webinars/ virtual meet-ups.

13:21:40 From Mercedes Sheldon : There's a financial practicality to "independent" in that it indicates a lack of access to paywalled materials and secure salaries to fund conference registration, etc.

13:21:42 From Karen Garvin : I agree. One problem with "unaffiliated" is the "un" part, like we just don't qualify enough to be affiliated

13:23:20 From Karen Garvin : Paywall databases are a problem. Conferences, too, though Zoom has helped a bit with that.

13:24:56 From Solveig Robinson : Isn't this also complicated by the economics of publication? Peer-review journals usually don't pay (and sometimes even charge, by expecting "subsidies"). So if you don't have the university salary and its associated economic benefits, you need to be paid for your writing: literally can't afford to pursue peer-reviewed publication.

13:25:17 From Solveig Robinson : (What Marie is saying!)

13:26:35 From Amanda HASTE : Absolutely! To me, peer-reviewed articles are a shop window for my research. They put me in the public eye, admittedly to a tiny audience. So what about validating "popular" articles?

13:26:52 From Lisa Lane : Seems like we need a modern "gentleman scholar" designation in between hobbyist and academic.

13:27:20 From Jessica Allsop : Financial barriers are huge, with teaching contracts leaving no time for research and writing, and a dead zone in between contracts where you have no access to pay wall protected materials

13:28:49 From Jasmine : Is copy writing a common starting point of the career routes that have been taken amongst the people here? I am coming to the end of my MA right now and considering my options but I have not had much career advice (and no advice at all regarding independent scholarship).

13:28:57 From Solveig Robinson : Yes: somewhere along the way "dilettante" became a pejorative; now (as Laurel noted) "academic" is a pejorative. We need a better term for writers whose ambition and achievement is "professional" and more than a "hobby."

13:30:34 From Karen Garvin : I'm a copy editor for my income, but I do historical writing on the side. Mostly I've done encyclopedias and now I'm involved in a textbook project.

13:32:12 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : Jasmine, I can't give much career advice, but I could put you in touch with people who are copy writers or are getting into the field

13:34:04 From Helen Sonner : In f/u to Patrick's comment: I didn't pursue an academic position after my PhD, but I have continued to do research independently. One key piece of advice: find scholarly societies that are particularly oriented to independent scholars. I give SHARP high kudos in this area. There's no second-class citizenship at SHARP conferences etc. (My area is early modern, not Victorian, but I am grateful for this group's presentation today, too!)

13:34:50 From Lisa Lane : @Helen - have you a link too SHARP?

13:34:59 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : +1 on what Helen said: both RSVP and SHARP have been very welcoming to me

13:35:19 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : [sharpweb.org](http://sharpweb.org)

13:35:33 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : It's the international book history scholarly society

13:36:15 From Judith Flanders : Following up Marie's comment on nomenclature, I suggest that we should revive the older meaning of the word 'amateur'.

13:38:19 From Mercedes Sheldon : Thank you for making the DNCJ more accessibly financially! It's an invaluable resource.

13:38:41 From Jasmine : Sorry! my mistake

13:39:13 From Helen Sonner : <https://www.sharpweb.org/main/>

13:44:28 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : Patrick, I have a question: you held a day job, right? How did you fit in research in your schedule?

13:46:50 From Wendy Toole : Jasmine, if you are thinking of working as a freelance copy-editor, you'll find useful advice on the website of the Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading <https://www.ciep.uk/>

13:48:13 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : there must be advice on the Canadian association too: <https://www.editors.ca/>

13:48:58 From Mercedes Sheldon : I've found some helpful resources in the US at <https://www.the-efa.org/>

13:49:21 From Karen Garvin : Also check in to ACES, <https://aceseditors.org/>

13:49:34 From Alison Moulds : I set up the Academia on the Side network largely to meet other people researching/ writing in their 'free time' alongside other jobs.

13:52:42 From Simon Rosenberg : Well put, Marie. It certainly can be liberating.

13:55:31 From Mercedes Sheldon : Yes, Marie, the CFP is a great incentive to explore a topic and to actual dedicate personal time to research.

13:55:33 From Amanda HASTE : I'm afraid I have to leave, but many thanks for providing this opportunity for us all.

13:55:42 From Mercedes Sheldon : Thank you, Amanda!

13:55:45 From Helena Goodwyn : Thanks Amanda

13:55:56 From Karen Garvin : Thanks, Amanda!

13:56:14 From Mary Monnin : Thank you Amanda

13:56:56 From Jasmine : Thank you so much Amanda!

13:57:11 From Marie Léger-St-Jean to Everyne : some more food for thought regarding research time: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/if-you-love-research-academia-may-not-be-you>

13:57:29 From Solveig Robinson : ^^^^

13:58:56 From Simon Rosenberg : Now I want Cookies.

13:59:51 From Helen McKenzie : Could there be a way in which Societies like RSVP could offer subscriptions to periodical databases or journals which might help with some of those financial barriers?

13:59:54 From Alexandra de Fircks : Great question Judith!

14:00:28 From Lisa Lane : Second Helen's request!

14:00:37 From Alison Moulds : I frequently ask on Twitter if people can send me pdfs of articles etc, but that doesn't help with finding things which aren't digitised or are full books

14:00:52 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : Like Judith, I have someone else's login, but there's also the possibility of being an Affiliated Researcher like Kate Holterhoff at Georgia Institute of Technology <http://kateholterhoff.com/>

14:02:41 From Solveig Robinson : Alas, even university affiliation doesn't always help with access to materials. My university can't afford most of the databases, so I can't get at many sources either.

14:03:41 From Karen Garvin : Do they consider people with master's degrees for an affiliation? Or is a PhD needed?

14:04:12 From Iain Crawford : Yes, Kate was a post-doc in the Britain program; affiliation would be dependent on that prior employment relationship.

14:04:14 From Mercedes Sheldon : Some university libraries have "friends of" programs that you pay an annual fee and gain access, though with restrictions.

14:04:24 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : same at the Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec, which lots of people over here don't know about

14:04:37 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : I have no clue Karen

14:05:05 From Alexandra de Fircks : Question for Helen Rappaport - are there online sources for Russian history research that you can recommend?

14:05:57 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : Another place to ask for PDFs, a Discord channel for rare books and book history:  
<https://discord.com/channels/768480861221552128/>

14:06:08 From Jasmine : If I may ask one other question, is it challenging to set your own rates/get a fair rate of pay for your publications etc when you don't situate yourself under a specific institutional umbrella?

14:06:19 From Judith Flanders : Re Mercedes' comment: yes, it's the restrictions that are a killer. I tried that, and couldn't really get the material I needed — I needed full access, and the university wasn't, um, obliging.

14:06:24 From Laurel Brake : from Laiurel

14:06:47 From Laurel Brake : Thanks for this fascinating illuminating conversation.

14:06:51 From Alison Moulds : Heading off, but thank you everyone!

14:07:03 From Jenna Herdman : Thank you for this excellent panel!

14:07:04 From Alexandra de Fircks : Either Russian or English

14:07:13 From Mary Monnin : Thank you everyone. This has all been very helpful.

14:07:28 From Lisa Peters : thanks all

14:08:53 From Marie Léger-St-Jean :  
<https://independentscholars.hcommons.org/directory/>

14:11:57 From Helena Goodwyn : Three cheers for Victoria!

14:12:27 From Judith Flanders : Even four cheers for Victoria!

14:13:03 From Karen Garvin : Is Victoria on FB or does it have its own board?

14:13:18 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : It's a listserv

14:13:26 From Karen Garvin : OK

14:13:36 From Karen Garvin : Haven't done one of those in years ;)

14:14:32 From Patrick Leary : If you want to be on VICTORIA drop me a line at pleary@gmail.com

14:14:57 From Karen Garvin : will do :)

14:15:36 From Marie Léger-St-Jean : Helen, are you on  
<https://womenalsoknowhistory.com/?>

14:17:34 From Marjolein Platjee : I made my gamer partner buy Assassin's Creed so I could watch him play to admire the historical accuracy lol

14:18:25 From Karen Garvin : When I watch TV and they show medieval knights riding Thoroughbred horses I die a little inside

14:20:08 From Judith Flanders : Thank you, Marjolein. I was MORTIFIED to see Cleopatra's Needle show up two years too early. And a poster for Dan Leno. I nearly cried.

14:20:37 From Philippa St George : Thanks very much for a very interesting discussion.

14:21:40 From Karen Garvin : Would anyone be interested in trading feedback on websites and/or current projects?

14:21:56 From Karen Garvin : I'm floating in "no one knows me" land

14:23:25 From Isabel Seidel : Thank you very much for another very interesting Digital Salon.

14:25:41 From Mercedes Sheldon : <https://twitter.com/victorianclare>

14:26:06 From Helena Goodwyn : Sam Saunders has just published 'the 19th c. periodical press and the development of detective fiction'

14:26:24 From Regina Martínez : Thank you!

14:26:25 From Alexandra de Fircks : Thank you!

14:26:31 From Marjolein Platjee : Thank you so much!

14:26:32 From Karen Garvin : Thank you for the suggestions!

14:26:34 From Judith Flanders : Thank you all. Really interesting!

14:26:36 From Amanda Farage : Thank you for a fascinating discussion!

14:26:38 From Helen McKenzie : Thank you everyone!

14:26:41 From Jo Shoebridge : Thanks

14:26:42 From Jessica Allsop : Thanks so much

14:26:43 From Simon Rosenberg : Thanks all!

14:26:46 From Hollie Geary-Jones : Thank you so much everyone this was incredible!