

**Humanities \ General**

Scholes, Robert. **English after the fall: from literature to textuality**. Iowa, 2011.

163p bibl index afp ISBN [160938055x](#) pbk, \$21.00; ISBN [9781609380557](#) pbk, \$21.00.

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Scholes (emer., Brown) argues that "the humanities have been marginalized" and that English teachers--and, by extension, all teachers of literature and the humanities--can best reverse this trend (while enriching the minds and lives of their students) by accepting "the responsibility to teach all aspects of textuality." He outlines a necessary expansion of prevailing ideas of "literary" literacy to "a more spacious ... literacy" that embraces more than literary texts--which he continues to value. Proposing a redefinition of the teaching of literature as comparative textuality studies, Scholes argues that "reading is a constructive process" involving "reweaving the texts" one encounters "into the texts of [one's life]," be those texts "*sounds in the air, pixels on a screen, or ink on a page*" [italics added]. In making his argument, Scholes offers interpretations of a generous range of sacred (New Testament) and profane texts--by Wordsworth, Shakespeare, and John Ford (the film *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*) and several operas--in order both to give concreteness to his proposals and to show how this expanded pedagogic process can be a coherent effort. He ends with a too-brief "sample program" for studies of textuality. Especially valuable for scholars and teachers of literature. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty. -- K. Tölölyan, *Wesleyan University*