

Introduction

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Consider the following scenario. In preparation for an article you are drafting for submission on gender and voice in the sonnets of Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, you find yourself at your desk, surrounded by books on Wroth, while various tabs on your computer are opened to a wide range of digital resources, including recently published articles.¹ Your interest in matters of typography and orthography leads you to sign in to Early English Books Online (EEBO) in order to study the sonnets more carefully as they appeared in the first printed edition of Wroth's *Countesse of Mountgomeries Urania*, published in London in 1621.² You have also noticed certain unusual words in particular sonnets and so you conduct a search using EEBO's Text Creation Partnership for historical occurrences. After gathering examples of your words as used in the 1580s to 1620s, you switch tabs to search the Lexicons of Early Modern English (LEME). Here you find definitions of these words as used in a range of early modern dictionaries. All of this data has you reevaluating the meanings of words you thought you knew. But you're not done. A quick glance at Ilona Bell and Steven W. May's recent print edition of Wroth's sonnet sequence reminds you that there is a manuscript version of the poem housed at the Folger Shakespeare Library, and that it differs from the printed text found on EEBO.³ Within a few moments you learn that the holograph manuscript in Wroth's italic hand has been digitized by the Folger in full. Turning to the digital copy, you move through pages of the manuscript for an hour and as you start to dive into the textual variants you notice it is thirty minutes until you teach. As you walk the corridors, reviewing in your mind the lecture to come, you start to reassess your approach. You were about to teach a selection of Wroth's sonnets and you were going to do so with occasional gestures back to Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (London, 1609),

¹ Two recent examples—one an article, the other a chapter—examine female voice in relation to melancholy and music, respectively: Bullard 2015 and Larson 2015.

² STC 26051. One of the immediate features in the printed *mise-en-page* of the 1621 edition is the strict division of each sonnet into four separate stanzas.

³ See *Lady Mary Wroth: Pamphilia to Amphilanthus in Manuscript and Print* (Bell 2017, 4–5, 8). This new edition reprints the manuscript and printed versions, highlighting variants from the 1621 imprint as footnotes.

the work you'd taught the week before. But instead you opt for something else. You decide to let the students engage in the textual mess. Within minutes, the EEBO and Folger images are projected at the front of the class, and minutes after that, questions come from various students. Why is Sonnet 4 in the manuscript different from the printed edition? Why does the letter "s" look like an "f" on the EEBO page? And what is the STC? While you were hoping to look at four poems, you ended up looking only at two. However, something else happened in that hour. The students gained a new respect for the materiality of Wroth's sonnets and started to see the value of the digital resources navigated over the hour. As you walk back through the corridors, amazed at how successful this impromptu lecture—more a workshop—went, you decide to design an assignment where students engage with the matters of orthography and typography in early seventeenth-century literary texts using the digital resources from the class. The assignment goes very well and some of your students make incredible discoveries during their research. But then it ends. While you may share your experiment with some of your colleagues, or even discuss it at your next conference, the larger scholarly community would have been left unaware of the experiment and its outcomes.

This volume was borne out of an attempt to revise the ending of this imagined scenario. When we (Silva and Schofield) first met at a digital humanities panel at the Renaissance Society of America, we were excited and surprised to see that we were not the only ones interested in writing about and discussing pedagogy from a scholarly perspective. While the volume of voices in digital pedagogy has been growing steadily in our field,⁴ there is still some trepidation about how and where to approach the genre: after all, writing about pedagogy is not simply documenting what took place in the classroom; it must also consider the practical challenges and benefits of individual approaches. *Digital Pedagogy in Early Modern Studies: Method and Praxis* documents and shares a variety of pedagogical experiments from a range of early modern scholars. More specifically, the essays in this volume consider how teaching different fields (e.g., manuscript studies, bibliography, general education) and methods of study (e.g., archival research, social knowledge creation, text markup) can be enhanced and facilitated by digital technologies. Reflecting a more "hands-on" approach, these chapters primarily focus

⁴ For instance, *What We Teach When We Teach DH: Digital Humanities in the Classroom*, edited by Brian Croxall and Diane K. Jakacki (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2023), focuses exclusively on digital pedagogy. As we discuss below, a number of other notable volumes have surfaced over the past decade, although we believe this is the first volume (and we hope not the last) to focus on the intersection of digital pedagogy and early modern studies.

on classroom methodologies and pedagogical projects while demonstrating the value of digital technologies, particularly for teaching book history and helping students research and engage with manuscript and print cultures. Many of the essays address assignment design and assessment, and issues of pedagogical theory and practice. In their totality, these essays provide insight into the larger thinking and application of teaching early modern texts with digital resources.⁵

Surveying the field: digital pedagogy and early modern studies

The pairing of early modern and digital is not new, but the dissemination of how this pairing plays out in classrooms worldwide remains largely untold.⁶ This is at once surprising and not. The previous three decades have witnessed an explosion in early modern digital resources, such as the Internet Shakespeare Editions, Early English Books Online, the English Broadside Ballad Archive, The Map of Early Modern London, and Women Writers Online, and while these have proven extremely valuable for researchers in the field, there has been significant adoption of the same resources for classroom activities, particularly lectures, workshops, and assignments.⁷ Unfortunately, much of

⁵ Revising the final draft of this volume during COVID-19 has made us particularly cognizant of the unique benefits and challenges of working with digital technologies in the early modern classroom. As conversations about the virtual classroom become increasingly urgent, we hope to see even more scholarship on best practices and methodologies. Some of the work presented here (such as visits to the archives) may now feel like the markers of a very different (pre-COVID) time. Nonetheless, the creative and detailed ways each contributor approaches digital resources demonstrate that digital spaces provide students with a range of exciting opportunities for research and engagement.

⁶ Fields such as composition studies and library science have long histories of careful theorizing, documenting, and publishing on pedagogy, including teaching with new technologies. Although such a discussion is beyond the scope of this volume, it is important to acknowledge that many of us have looked (and continue to look) to those fields for best practices on digital pedagogy and have benefitted immensely from collaborations with scholars in such areas.

⁷ The current and past experiments in this area are extensive. Indeed, much of our knowledge of existing digital resources has come from online hubs. As early as 2004, Sharon Howard designed The Early Modern Web, a collection of digital resources for early modern studies. For one up-to-date listing of digital resources relating to early modern drama, the book trade, collecting, and more, see the resources section for Bourne 2016. For a similar listing of resources, including links to North American and

the innovative use of such digital resources for classroom instruction, which is but one form of digital pedagogy, goes undocumented, only to be archived in the memories of professors and their students. While professors of early modern literature and their students might speak anecdotally about a digital experiment, the larger academic public has historically been kept out of the loop. Part of the reason stems from how the Academy has often viewed teaching. Experiments in the classroom, digital and non, were treated like ephemera: important locally, but not considered worthy of large-scale, global dissemination. While journals like *The Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy* and *Digital Humanities Quarterly* regularly feature articles on digital pedagogy, only a comparatively small number work at the intersection of digital humanities and early modern studies. We know, not only anecdotally but through various digital pedagogy collaborations, programs, and conference panels, that a significant number of us are employing digital technologies in our classrooms.⁸ What follows is a representative sampling of such contributions to what remains an emerging subfield in early modern studies.

Over the last two decades, early modern scholars have started to publish on their digital pedagogy. Some have contributed chapters in collections or published articles in journals, while others have offered posts on blogs and announcements on social media. In her comparison of Renaissance and modern pedagogical practices, Danielle Clarke shows how both past and present students share a similar interest in annotating individual texts, in visualizing complex concepts and data, and in devising strategies for searching across larger corpora. Looking to the work of Bill Sherman and other critics who focus on Renaissance active reading, Clarke shows how the annotating of the printed page continues now in wikis and blogs, spaces which often “transcend the space of the classroom” (Clarke 2011, 36). Searching and gathering excerpts from various imprints using EEBO is similar to Renaissance commonplaceing, except that the search is shared between human and computer, and so “texts can be connected by links far more myriad than the extent of one individual’s reading, recall and memory” (40). By looking at the continuities and discontinuities between Renaissance and modern textual practices, Clarke is able to shed light on the essential affordances of digital media and how it shapes the way professors and their students work.

European databases and university catalogs, see the resources section for Hooks 2018.

⁸ In 2016, for instance, the Women Writers Project ran an Early Modern Digital Pedagogies workshop, and the site still hosts an impressive array of syllabi, assignments, and how-tos: wvp.northeastern.edu/wwp/teaching/ (accessed 6 January 2020).

Katherine Rowe also explores such affordances in her chapter on teaching Shakespeare with print and digital resources. Rather than assign a single edition to her students, Rowe allows them to choose among a number of print and digital editions, including the Oxford, Norton, and Folger print editions, as well as two of the earliest online editions, namely the Internet Shakespeare Editions and MIT Shakespeare. One of the results of this experiment is that students began to ask questions about the different footnotes, glosses, and other textual apparatuses found across editions, while also pointing to the substantive textual variants found in plays with complex print histories, such as *King Lear*. Access to multiple, differing versions helps students become more cognizant of editing as a practice while also more alert to the advantages and limitations of working in print and digital media. But it also creates more unpredictability for teachers. As students oscillate between scholarly and non-scholarly resources, as they move from a familiar gloss to the first hit from Wikipedia, the teacher must adjust to the variation across the classroom and equip students with ways to assess the reputability of different resources. As Rowe explains, the Shakespeare classroom must now “inherit that radical rethinking of what textual instability can be good for as we navigate so many disruptions in our textual ecosystem” (Rowe 2014, 157).

For Cordelia Zuckerman, such radical rethinking occurs when students enter the scholarly conversation traditionally restricted to professors (Zuckerman 2018). In her assessment of Thomas H. Luxon’s The Milton Reading Room, a born-digital interactive hub containing all of Milton’s writings, Zuckerman emphasizes the importance of creating an authoritative text that can reach readers with different levels of expertise. While the makers of print editions often struggle in their attempt to reach both specialist and generalist, creators of digital editions can “be both/and, rather than either/or.” In The Milton Reading Room, users can read a work such as *Paradise Lost* without opening the annotations, opening some of the annotations, or opening all of them. Abbreviations can be elongated through hovering; complex allusions can be further examined via Wikipedia, and the whole corpus is fully searchable. Reading in this digital space is always both multiple and optional. Of particular note to this volume is how Luxon uses the site for teaching. By advocating for an apprenticeship pedagogy, Luxon, working with librarians, has students research and write on key debates in the field, and present their findings at an undergraduate conference. If Zuckerman’s assessment of The Milton Reading Room allows her to signal the importance of such key concepts in digital pedagogy as reading, access, and navigation, she also engages in questions of hierarchy, training, and student experience. Zuckerman, Clarke, and Rowe remind us that the use of digital spaces for teaching and

reading of early modern texts is much more than an issue of media; it is about the fundamentals of reading and research in the humanities and the ways in which online affordances might be used to enhance such experiences.

As the articles and chapters on digital pedagogy published over the last decade lend much needed credibility to the work carried out in the university classroom and beyond, in early modern studies and other fields, these contributions need to be considered in conjunction with the many digital initiatives captured through archiving, blogging, and tweeting. Claire Bourne's and Adam Hooks's listings of the many digital initiatives and projects in the field (mentioned in note 7, above) are not exclusively pedagogical acts, as the many databases and sites listed on their respective sites are essential for our scholarly research. However, such resources are also essential for teaching and are increasingly being used by our students. By archiving digital resources in a single space, Bourne and Hooks assist early modern professors and students in teaching and research, and offer models for the kinds of archival work students can build in the classroom.

The blogging and tweeting of classroom activities and assignments is yet another way in which experiments in digital pedagogy get disseminated. While such comments on pedagogy in these channels are often much shorter, they are nevertheless impactful not least because they can be written and disseminated quickly and to a much larger audience. To give but one among countless examples, the recent announcement of *The Digital Beaumont and Fletcher (1647)* comes with the promise of an open-access, student-generated edition of the plays and poems found in the first folio.⁹ They just published their first edition (of *The Sea Voyage*), and a large online audience is already following the project, waiting for updates, ready to learn from the experience as it is released in real time. As early modern professors follow the updates, they will also learn from the project and think through its application in their own classrooms. While one professor may assign an edited play from the digital edition, another professor may be inspired to create a digital equivalent for the works of Massinger or Davenant. The new, in-progress, digital edition thus serves as a model for others to follow.

Liza Blake's "Teaching Editing in an Undergraduate Women Writers Classroom" for the Women Writers Project blog provides another example of how digital pedagogy and early modern literature might intersect (Blake 2018). In her scaffolded assignment, Blake has third-year undergraduate students

⁹ Bourne, Froehlich, and Russell 2020. The project team includes research assistants Taylor Hare, David Leblanc, Lauren Cenci, and Maria Isabel Maza.

in a class of fifty edit early modern texts which are then assembled into a digital anthology. After training her students in the core concepts of textual editing, Blake has them evaluate both articles on editing and edited anthologies, addressing such issues as punctuation, variance, and modernization, as well as gender and politics. Central to this pedagogy is the endeavor to show editing as a non-neutral activity, one that comes with choices that shape how and what we read. While the central focus of the post is primarily on detailing the parts of the assignment and the value of having students make and evaluate the texts they read, the blog addresses curriculum and program design while also signaling how other teachers might use her assignment. An essential reason for publishing on one's experiments with early modern digital pedagogy, in both traditional and non-traditional channels, is that it offers possible methods and approaches for others to follow, adapt, and learn from. Our volume is anchored in this same commitment.

Why now?

Digital Pedagogy in Early Modern Studies: Method and Praxis argues that we need to centralize and make visible the work of digital pedagogy as research. Increased interest in this subfield has emerged, in part, because of the changing shape and focus of the digital humanities (DH). While training has been an essential part of DH for the last two decades, that training has largely been tailored to the research agendas of professors and graduate students. The digital editing of early modern texts, for example, has formed the backbone of numerous large and small collaborative projects over the last two decades. Such work has often required scholars with varying degrees of digital literacy to seek training in web design and the encoding of texts in TEI. Those same scholars, now with new digital humanities training, are sharing this expertise with students. The result is that areas of research traditionally flagged as too advanced or specialized and thus off limits for students (especially undergraduates), such as descriptive bibliography, editorial theory and paleography, are now central components of early modern courses. In certain instances, student digital creations are made public and some are even vetted through peer review. In these moments, the scholar's and the student's research converges.

This last point, i.e., student work and how it is valued, marks another turn in the field. To speak of "our" digital pedagogy is not simply an acknowledgement of professors with shared investment in a similar kind of teaching. The "our" also points to the students in our classes and the need to make their work more visible and credible. As several essays in this volume attest, students are creators of content—and that content needs to be credited,