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EEBO Introduction Assignment

Rough Draft Due: 3/22

Final Due: 3/29

Weight (as percentage of final grade): 30 points

Length: 1500 words +/- 100.

Overview: You will use the *Short Title Catalogue* or the EEBO (Early English Books Online) database to find a little-known popular text and write an introduction to it.

Imagined Readership: Readers of the *EEBO Introductions* series (scholars and senior students) and/or the users of the *MoEML* website (senior undergraduates, professors, literary scholars, historians, educated members of the public, independent researchers).

Overview of *EEBO Introductions* series: "Each contribution to the series offers insights into a range of contextual, bibliographical, and reception-based issues associated with a work in EEBO that has received no recent scholarly edition, and which is unlikely to be edited for publication without the interest of the scheme."

Choosing your Text: You may select any text printed in England before 1640 (i.e., limit your search to the *STC* collection). that is not well known and has not been the subject of a modern (i.e., post-1900) edition. You do need to read the entire text, but you may wish to look for a text of fewer than 50 pages. On the other hand, a broadside (i.e., proclamations, orders, mortality bills, ballads) is too short. If you do want to write about a text printed in broadside, introduce a cluster of related texts that includes at least three examples. If you found an interesting text while working on your Stationers Assignment, you are welcome to write about that!

What to Include in your Introduction: You will want to discuss at least the following issues. They're categorized to help you keep your information organized, but the introduction will ultimately be in prose (see the model of "Beware the Cat").

Author, Title, STC, and Imprints

- Information about the author (more if the author is not well known; less if the author is well known already but the text is not well known)
- The full title (long title) of the text as per the title page.
- An "authority name" for this text. You will likely be making it up yourself, if the text has never been studied before. Check the *Short Title Catalogue* but do feel free to shorten, lengthen, and/or standardize the title for the benefit of future scholars.
- STC numbers for this text and any related texts.
- Number of editions and/or distinct imprints before 1900. (Check the *Short Title Catalogue* and look for any entries headed "Anr. ed." [i.e., "Another edition"] or "Var." [i.e., "Variant"]).

Printer Information

- Information about the printer(s) and publisher(s). You can find this in the *BBTI* (*British Book Trade Index*).
- Information about the transfer of printing rights from one stationer to another (if relevant). You can find this information in *The Stationer's Register, vol. 3*: <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001168984>

Textual points of interest

- What format was your text printed (broadside, folio, quarto, octavo, duodecimo, etc)? This information may be difficult to figure out even when you cross-reference using *EEBO* and *ESTC*, so please just find what you can.
- Describe the *mise-en-page*, that is to say: how does the text present itself visually? Typeface? Layout? Marginalia? Images? Printers' ornaments? Anything funny going on with catchwords, signatures, pagination?
- Please index any paratexts in the book, e.g., dedications, addresses to the reader, laudatory epistles written by others, errata, a table of contents, or an index.
- What does the format of the book suggest about its content? About its imagined readership?

Content

- What is the text about? It's appropriate to give a summary of the text when you are writing about a little-known text.

- What is important about this text? What are its central themes? What does it tell us about early modern culture?
- Does the work respond to other works? Did it invite responses?

Scholarship (modern)

- Is there any scholarship on this text in particular or the work in general? [Note: a **WORK** is the ideal, to which all the editions, variants, and imprints bear witness. A **TEXT** is a single material witness. A work may have several different texts. For example, *Hamlet* (a work) survives in three different texts: Q1, Q2, and F. There are two **COPIES** of Q1 extant, a number of copies of Q2, and over 230 copies of F.)

Bibliography

Include a list of ALL the scholarship on your text. Consult the usual suspects: the MLA International Bibliography, WorldCat, and GoogleScholar.

Models

For models, look at any of the [EEBO Introductions](#) linked from the [Contents page](#). We are rather fond of the [introduction to *Beware the Cat*](#).