



**EEBO Essay
Contest Judges**

Laura Janover
ProQuest Information
and Learning

Newton Key
Eastern Illinois
University
(History)

Arthur Kinney
University of
Massachusetts
(English)

Hillary Nunn
University of
Michigan EEBO-TCP
Project Development
Liason

Maureen Quilligan
Duke University
(English)
recused

James Rosenheim
Texas A&M Univer-
sity
(History)

Dan Traister
Annenberg Rare
Books and Manuscript
Library at the
University of
Pennsylvania

*For information on
next years competi-
tion, see the Call for
Papers in the
Documents section of
the EEBO-TCP
website.*

Big in Japan...and Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia and Europe

by Mark Sandler

When the notion of an EEBO-Text Creation Partnership was discussed in 1998, we needed to estimate the likely size and shape of the market. To scope the effort, we considered institutions that maintained microfilm standing orders to STC and focused on the ARL community in North America and the CURL (College and University Research Libraries) institutions in the U.K. to formulate our partner recruitment goal at 150 institutions. Three years later it is interesting to reflect on the extent to which those early assumptions have held true. For one thing, EEBO's success as a teaching tool has engendered unanticipated support from small and intermediate sized institutions. Our early thinking about ARL support was too limited and likewise our focus on the North American Market underestimated the diverse institutional interest in this content.

Certainly the U.S market has driven the EEBO-TCP effort. To date, there is one paying institutional partner outside North America (The University of Oxford). That however is in the process of changing as the U.K. moves forward with a nationwide purchase agreement for EEBO and EEBO-TCP that has been driven by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). The JISC, under the direction of Dr. Alicia Wise, has negotiated a mega-agreement for EEBO and EEBO-TCP that strives to make the project available to all U.K. academic institutions without regard to size or mission. Accordingly, students and faculty at further education institutions and technical schools will have the opportunity to access EEBO along with their counterparts at CURL universities. The JISC intends to load and manage the EEBO image and text files in a central data facility and oversee the access to U.K. institutions.

In our letter of offer to the JISC, Bill Gosling on behalf of the EEBO-TCP Board noted, "We are excited about JISC's possible involvement because we see your programmatic focus as an outstanding match for this project. From the beginning, we have held to the vision that libraries need to own this file as if it had been created locally. This means the right to local-load, to build a custom interface, to integrate with other collections and resources, and to distribute in accord with their own service mission."

In addition to the influx of U.K. support, there are strong signals of interest in the text partnership from the University of Hong Kong, Keio University (Japan), and the University of Sydney. Queensland University and the University of Auckland have purchased EEBO images and are keeping an eye on our progress in creating searchable text. Likewise, Conference des Universites Rhone-Alpes (France), Universita de Salerno (Italy), and Zentralbibliothek Zurich (Germany) are image subscribers that are also watching the Text Creation Partnership. Based on comments, e-mail queries to eebotcp-info@umich.edu, and hits on our demo search site, we are pleasantly surprised at the international interest in the EEBO initiative.

Essay Contest Judges Enthusiastic about Undergraduate EEBO Use

Since it was first announced, librarians and faculty members alike have shown a great deal of support for the EEBO/EEBO-TCP Undergraduate Essay Competition. The strength of that support became even more apparent when assembling the panel that would judge the contest. Newton Key, a historian at Eastern Illinois University, for example, eagerly agreed to serve as a judge after having his students use EEBO in class while his library had trial access to the corpus. "My undergraduates have done much better research than they themselves know by using EEBO," Key commented, noting that students "learned a lot about the history of the book trade, the history of printing, and the development of the English language, all without really even knowing what a difficult thing it was they were doing."

We are pleased to announce that the contest will be held again next year. The contest judges, meanwhile, will announce this year's winners at the ALA Midwinter meeting.

The **EEBO-TCP** is a cooperative project that aims to transform 25,000 works from the Early English Books Online corpus into searchable text within the next five years. A full description is available at the project website, <http://www.lib.umich.edu/eebo/>.

Encoded Texts Offer Searchable Guide to EEBO Page Images

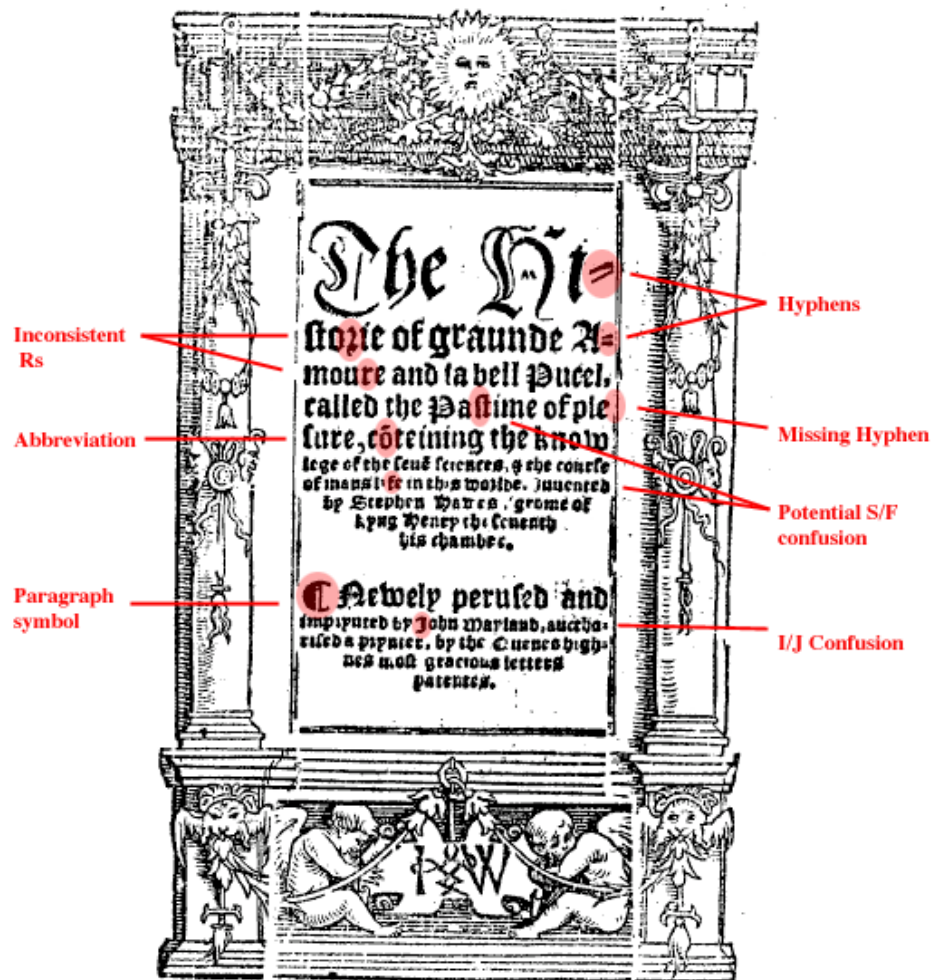
From the EEBO-TCP's beginning, members have been adamant that the electronic versions they produced remain utterly faithful to what was printed on the original page. There could be no modernization of the spelling, no "correction" of mistakes, and no expansion of early modern printers' shortcuts. As straightforward as these standards are, they nevertheless have required proofreaders and keyboarders alike to learn a great deal about early modern printing in the process of developing ways of coping with the sometimes alien characteristics that the works in EEBO present.

The title page below, from Stephen Hawes's *The historie of graunde Amoure and la bell Pucel called the Pastime of Plesure* (1554) (STC 12950), illustrates many of the challenges that EEBO texts bring to keyboarders and proofreaders. As beautiful as the page may be, its words are occasionally difficult to make out, largely as a result of the printer's black letter font. As the page image shows, early modern documents commonly used hyphens in ways that look awkward to today's readers. To make matters even more complicated, some of the letters barely resemble those we use today. For example, the *h*, long *s*, and *r* leave today's readers squinting to make out the word *Historie* at the very start. And the reading doesn't get much easier from there, with an omitted hyphen in the second line as well as several words that are missing letters we expect to see in them. The shape of the letters proves challenging too, with the page containing several different *r*'s, as well as some square *d*'s, and *u*'s where we normally see *v*'s.

The keyboarded version eliminates much of this confusion, putting the words into a font we can recognize and read more easily. That doesn't mean that all of the oddities of the early modern text have disappeared. Instead they are labeled with characters that mark such occurrences while still allowing easy readability, as you can see in the encoded version at the foot of this page. Using pipe symbols, plus signs, and tildes, along with tags for other page attributes, this encoded version marks the physical features of the texts and keeps the original spellings. At the same time, it makes the words legible (and searchable) for both computer search engines and human users. And all of the marked features can be searched as well.

As a 16th century book, Hawes's work presents a different set of challenges than works published in 1699, the end of EEBO's range. While printers often used more familiar fonts in typesetting these later works, these books contain challenging features all their own. Elaborate index pages and multiple sets of marginal notes require their own unique forms of encoding, and each is clearly labeled with SGML tagging for the user's convenience. To see how these and other features are tagged, feel free to consult the project keyboarding instructions or DTD, both available in the Documents section of our website,

www.lib.umich.edu/eebo/.



```
<PB REF="1">
<P>The Hi|storie of graunde A|mour and la bell Pucel, called the
Pastime of ple+sure, co-teining the know+lege of the seue~ sciences,
&amp; the course of mans life in this worlde. Inuented by Stephen
Hawes, grome of kyng Henry the seuenth his chamber.</P>
<P>&para; Newly perused and imprynted by Iohn Wayland, auctho|rised a
prynter, by the Quenes high|nes most gracious letters patentes.</P>
```

At Northwestern University -

Task Force of Librarians and Faculty Members Discusses Interface Design

With more and more texts moving through the production queue, making it easier to search encoded EEBO works has become the EEBO-TCP's chief priority. To help the interface's designers determine what changes should be made to the already-existing interface, a group of librarians and faculty members gathered at Northwestern University this past July 16 and 17 to offer their opinions on the prototype that debuted last March. The meeting of the Interface Task Force, affectionately referred to as "summer camp," featured some intense discussion about what users should be expected to know when searching early modern texts, as well as plenty of casual conversation about how EEBO-TCP encoding could influence teaching and research. By the end of the meeting, interface designers and future users had a much greater sense of the research possibilities that these encoded texts support, as well as the sorts of design modifications that would open up the collection to a wider audience.

"Sometimes it was fun to just sit back and listen," said Jeff Garrett, Western Language and Literatures Bibliographer at Northwestern University, commenting on the great variety of viewpoints circulating during the hands-on search sessions. The free-ranging discussions brought the central challenge of constructing the EEBO-TCP interface into focus: How can the interface for a collection of texts like those in EEBO - which contains works that often blend together topics that we now separate into categories like science, politics, history, geography, and poetry - be approachable and logical for users accustomed to the terminology of a particular discipline? Since these disciplines evolved, in many cases, from the thoughts reflected in EEBO-TCP texts, the ability to search these works through a straightforward interface would unearth influential ideas otherwise buried in unexpected places.

Without question, the task force members agreed that early modern spelling remains the biggest and most persistent obstacle to easy access. The EEBO-TCP texts, after all, find their roots in a world where "vv" functioned as today's "w", where authors commonly varied the spelling of their own names, and where printers freely abbreviated words to fit them on a line. And because the encoded texts strive to reflect what appears on the originals' pages rather than modernize it, searching can pose quite a challenge to anyone approaching these works for the first time (and often for veterans as well). Task force members endorsed the development of a front end normalizer, which would automatically look for spelling variants of submitted search terms. Extensive online Help features also proved a necessity in the minds of many participants.

The librarian/faculty pairs that formed the Task Force were Agnes Widder and M. Teresa Tavormina from Michigan State University, Jeffrey Garrett and Martin Mueller from Northwestern University, Laura Fuderer and Jess Lander from Notre Dame, Mark Sandler and Richard Baily from the University of Michigan, and Barbara Walden and David Santschi from the University of Wisconsin. Harriet Lightman from Northwestern also attended, as did Matt Stoeffler and Hillary Nunn, members of the EEBO-TCP production team at Michigan, and Laura Janover and Austin McLean from ProQuest Information and Learning.



Task Force members explore the capabilities of the new EEBO-TCP interface at Northwestern meeting.

ProQuest Offers Updated EEBO Help Menus

In an effort to make it easier for users to access background information and news about the EEBO project, ProQuest Information and Learning has updated the *Help* and *What's new* pages in EEBO. The Help menu incorporates a new section called "Project Information" which includes the following pages:

- Project Overview/Metadata
- Status of Microfilm Project
- Image Availability
- Creation of Full Text
- Citation/MARC Records Upgrade

Many of the MARC records were created under earlier cataloging rules and need to be updated. ProQuest has started correcting the erroneous data and is bringing the MARC records up to current standards. Estimates show that the upgraded records will be available in 2002.

ProQuest is also developing a redesigned EEBO interface which integrates citations, images, and full text. This project will begin in Jan. 2002, and it is anticipated that a prototype will be available for user testing by the spring.

Unless otherwise noted, all articles were written by Hillary Nunn. Layout and design by Kara Lock.

If you have further suggestions, or a story that you think ought to be included here, please contact Hillary Nunn at hunn@umich.edu. The EEBO-TCP website has also been upgraded recently, and we would enjoy your comments and feedback regarding those changes. Please see the EEBO-TCP website at <http://www.lib.umich.edu/eebo/>.

The Early English Books Online Text Creation Partnership and ProQuest Information and Learning invite you to see a demonstration of the new interface and learn how to gain access to our full collection of EEBO texts.

American Library Association Midwinter Meeting
Sunday, January 20
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Poydras Plaza at Loyola Avenue
New Orleans

10:30 - 12:00

or

2:30 - 4:00

(both meetings will have the same agenda)

Please RSVP by contacting Hillary Nunn at hunn@umich.edu



EEBO-TCP
University of Michigan
818 Harlan Hatcher Graduate Library
920 North University Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1205