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Archives on Trial:

'Executing' *Richard II* & *Eikon Basilike* in the Digital Age¹

"They shall be satisfied. I'll read enough / When I do see
the very book indeed . . ." (*Richard II*, 4.1.273-74)

"Yet since providence will have it so, I am content so much
of My heart . . . should be discovered to the world . . ."
(*Eikon Basilike*, 159)

This chapter offers a transferable model for an
interdisciplinary literary studies course that investigates
dynamic reciprocities between two foundational works:
Shakespeare's *Richard II* (1597); and *Eikon Basilike*—

the so-called King's Book, purportedly written by Charles I during the months of his captivity leading-up to his execution on January 30, 1648/9. As the respective epigraphs illustrate, both texts portray decisive challenges against the divine right of kings within cultural contexts energized by the steady progress toward limited monarchy and by the technologies of the times, which engendered public demands for greater access to information about liberty and license, Providence and Parliament, sovereignty and secularism in a rapidly-changing world.

Richard II and *Eikon Basilike* thus provide myriad opportunities for exploring a rich, dialectical theme at the heart of literary studies in the digital age: how and why new technologies both celebrate and challenge the sovereignty of the text and of the archive; how and why interactively-designed forms of access to information remediate the very objects of knowledge we value as well as the fields of study within and against which we place those artifacts. The fact that *Richard II* and *Eikon Basilike* are already archives unto themselves (i.e. constituted by various source-documents and printed in multiple editions) increases the potential for students to discover those synergies.² The added fact that both works were

controversial during their own times because of the ways in which they staged the deposition of Richard II and the defense of Charles I underscores their significance within a variety of possible classes, whether for undergraduates or graduate students. Both works highlight the political and precarious nature of knowledge when archives are themselves placed on trial, that is, *executed* through increasingly diversified points of access.

We thus draw from our research and teaching experiences in two different courses, each at the University of Denver. In both classes, students worked with a generous selection of print and electronic texts, reference works, databases and archives.

The first course, "Archives on Trial," was co-taught by Professors Howard, Keeran, and Bowers and was offered to both undergraduate and graduate students as an interdisciplinary experience: English 3223 / Digital Media Studies 3900. "Archives on Trial" met in a 'smart' classroom. We designed two digital tools (a Research Guide and a Wiki) for assignments, dialogue, research and presentations beyond our standard F2F meetings. The second course, English 2202 "Digital Archives," was taught by Professor Howard and included two research presentations by Professors Keeran and Bowers. "Digital Archives" was

designed for undergraduates as a 'blended' learning experience: primarily an electronic class delivered via Blackboard that also involved alternating F2F and synchronous Wimba e-classroom meetings. "Digital Archives" reconfigured the first course for a new audience and occasion, and accordingly employed a greater amount and variety of interactively-designed digital tools and assignments.³

Notwithstanding those differences, both classes delivered a consistent methodology: an exploration of texts and contexts that define key issues and events from earlier times and that also provoke critical reflection upon the diversified media (print, visual, electronic) which shape the fields of knowledge.

Methodology

Our courses examined the transformation of literary texts into cultural documents (and vice-versa) when those materials are taught, researched and interpreted within and against the resources of subscription digital projects, such as *Eighteenth Century Collections OnLine (ECCO)*,⁴ specialized digital collections, such as the *Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads (BLBB)*,⁵ and digital libraries,

including *British History Online (BHO)* and the *John Milton Reading Room*.⁶ Such an array of resources cultivates a rich learning environment in which archival research is grasped as immediate and integral rather than as remote and mysterious. By interweaving intellectual inquiry and the research process, our classes made the discovery and interpretation of primary and secondary sources of central importance, thus enriching our students' understanding of the complexity of early modern print and visual cultures. At each step along the way, we examined every resource (including printed books) vis-à-vis a three-point, recursive analysis:

Access: What is it and where is it coming from? Who is the target audience? What degree of authority informs the resource? How and why has the point-of-access been constructed?

Form/Content: How and why does the design of this resource make a contribution to a particular field of knowledge?

Integration: How and why does the medium of information shape not only the message, but also the changing field(s) of knowledge and object(s) of investigation?

We engaged our students on all of those levels in order to address the fundamental matter of remediation: neither manuscripts nor databases nor digital classroom tools are neutral spaces; they all distinctively shape “the information [they convey] and [are shaped] in turn by the physical and cultural worlds in which [they function]” (Bolter & Gromala 77). Whether our students were interpreting King Richard’s allegorical musings upon the reflected image of his face,⁷ or deciphering King Charles’s self-fashioned iconography,⁸ or navigating the British Library’s *Treasures in Full, Shakespeare Quartos*,⁹ or reading Project Canterbury’s digital edition of *The King’s Book*,¹⁰ we hoped they would gain more complex and nuanced understandings of the many ways in which literary works and digital archives are not static objects, but dynamic sites where interactive design conditions the possibilities for collaborative and constitutive inquiry within and beyond the classroom.

We offer the following account of resources and strategies that were most successful in reaching those goals.

Resources & Strategies

After our students had completed reading Forker's edition of *Richard II*—including his substantial "Introduction" and Appendices—they examined a variety of digital editions of the play: 1.) the six quartos via *Treasures in Full* as well as from *Early English Books OnLine (EEBO)*; 2.) out-of-copyright, scanned texts of the play available through *Google Books*; 3.) multiple e-book versions of *Richard II* from *Project Gutenberg*; and 4.) a digital transcription of the play available from the University of Virginia Library, *Electronic Text Center*. We investigated all of those versions of Shakespeare's play (including the Arden, hard-copy text edited by Forker) according to our three-point, recursive methodology (i.e. access, form/content, integration). That robust, comparative adventure took a whole week, but was well worth the effort.

The following steps, however, transposed that activity to an even more exciting level: students were asked to select one open-access e-text version of *R2*; locate a key moment in the play; copy and paste the language from that moment into Wordle (a word-cloud generator that gives prominence to words according to their frequency in a given section of text); then create, edit and publish their *R2* collages to the public Wordle platform. We then used Jing

to create .png files of our students' R2 word-clouds and gathered those into an open-access gallery in Blackboard. Students then visited the gallery and wrote 100-word comments on the collages in reply to this question: "how and why does each word-cloud teach you something new about close-reading the corresponding key moment from *Richard II*?" For example, here is one of those collages that remixes a portion of the deposition scene, 4.1.268–318:



Through that sequence of recursive activities, our students

discovered and engaged critically with a variety of digital archives and electronic versions of Shakespeare's play; they took their first steps toward theorizing the dynamics of remediation involved in each of those resources; and they became co-creators of digital collages that led them to profound, new understandings about old-fashioned close-reading, which has perhaps always-already been an exercise in re-mediation.

As with any archive a scholar visits, knowledge of how and why it was created gives insight into what is held and why. What is the origin of *EEBO*, for example, and why does it matter? A.F. Pollard (cited frequently in Forker's volume as an early twentieth-century expert on *Richard II*) and Gilbert R. Redgrave compiled and published in 1927 *A short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English books printed abroad, 1475-1640*, followed some years later by Donald Wing's *Short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British America, and of English books printed in other countries, 1641-1700*. These lists of books are referred to respectively as Pollard and Redgrave, or as *Short Title Catalog I (STCI)*, and Wing, or *STCII*. Beginning in the late 1930s, Eugene Power, founder of University Microfilms International (UMI), used these

bibliographies to locate and microfilm the printed books of Britain and its colonies published between 1475 and 1700, including Shakespeare's printed source materials.¹¹ These two monumental microfilming projects resulted in UMI's *Early English Books I (EEB1)* and *Early English Books II (EEB2)*. In the 1990s, UMI digitized the two microfilm collections and launched the content online as *EEBO*.¹² Thus, *EEBO* has its roots in the traditional practice of compiling bibliographies, but (unlike past generations of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literary scholars who immediately recognized the names Pollard, Redgrave, and Wing) students today may lose that historical understanding about how their digital collections came to be.

Locating the quartos in *EEBO* is straightforward: using the "Basic Search," enter *Shakespeare* as author keyword, *Richard II* as title keyword, and limit by the date (1597) or range of dates (1597-1634). As part of *EEB1*, the quartos are also available on microfilm, and reel numbers can be found by searching *WorldCat* or the *English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC)*. And, as noted above, the British Library's electronic *Shakespeare Quartos* allows side-by-side comparisons of all six editions, and also provides in-depth information about Shakespeare's sources, early performances, and the complete publication history of

Richard II. Faculty and students who don't use Forker's text or who don't have access to *EEBO* or *EEB1* may use *Treasures in Full* instead.

Consulting the bibliographic information Forker includes, our students searched *EEBO* for sources to which Shakespeare might have had access prior to 1595, when the play was first performed: Holinshed's *Chronicles*; Hall's *The vnion of the two noble and illustre families*; Daniel's *The first fowre bookes of the ciuile warres*; Marlowe's play, *Edward the second*; Berner's translation of Froissart's *Cronycles*; and *A Mirrour for Magistrates*. The anonymous play, *Thomas of Woodstock*, is not in *EEBO* because it existed only in manuscript form, but the 1929 Malone Society text is available in print and via Chadwyck-Healy's *English Drama*. In order to create our own archive of those source-texts, students posted durable URL links to these works in the course wiki under the category "Shakespeare's Source Texts," where they also contributed their own annotations on each of the documents.

Eikon Basilike is Greek for 'royal portrait,' and, as the image of the king plays an important role in understanding the historical figures of Richard II and Charles I, our students examined portraits of both as well as the symbolism employed to illustrate the divine right of

each. Here, we consider the *Wilton Diptych* of Richard II (National Gallery, London) and the Westminster Abbey portrait of Richard II.

Prior to the Web, discovering images was difficult, whereas today there are a variety of freely-available and subscription digital image collections that can be used to find visual sources. However, there are still challenges: quality varies and copyright issues put restraints on posting online. In *Google Images*, the portraits of Richard II listed above are available, but their origin and quality can be questionable. *ARTstor*, a subscription database, includes the *Wilton Diptych*, but does not have the Westminster portrait. To identify systematically surviving portraits of historic British figures, consulting the 'Likenesses' section at the end of each biographical sketch in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)* is a good place to start, followed by searches for digital images in *Google Images*, *ARTstor*, and via the websites for the institutions which own the objects, or, if not available online, in books.

The best image of the jewel-like *Wilton Diptych* is the high-quality digital copy located on the National Gallery website. This portable, private altarpiece, with two panels hinged together like a book (roughly 22" x 11.5" in

size when closed), reveals inside a religious world, with Richard on the left being presented by three saints to Mary, Jesus, and a host of angels on the right. On the exterior of the diptych are the symbols of Richard's secular world: his arms and a chained white hart with a crown about its neck. Although the image is not downloadable, the ability to zoom-in on the religious scene is breathtaking and allows for a close analysis. Richard is the center of attention, surrounded by very personal symbolism: the livery of his father-in-law Charles IV, the white hart from his mother, and the rosemary from Anne of Bohemia, his wife. The viewer can see the minutest of details, such as the carefully crafted badge of a hart, with pearls on its antlers and a crown about its neck, on Richard's chest. In contrast, the much larger (roughly 6' x 3.5') Westminster Abbey public portrait shows Richard sitting on a throne with the emphasis on his regalia. This painting symbolizes that kingship is inherited and holy. Students were unable to locate a digital copy of the Westminster Richard to equal the quality of the National Gallery's digital copy of the Wilton Diptych, so that in some cases books may prove to be the best resource.

Our archival investigations of *Eikon Basilike* centered on the cultivated role of Charles I as characterized in his

last masque and the similar performative spectacle of his trial and execution. The printed text of *Salmacida Spolia*, surviving theatrical sketches, periodical accounts of the trial proceedings and execution, broadside ballads, scaffold speeches, and published memoirs were compared and served to illustrate how political events were reflected in and re-mediated by seventeenth-century high and popular culture.

First performed on January 21, 1639/40, *Salmacida Spolia* was the only masque in which both Charles and Henrietta Maria performed together and was the last masque of their court. Written by William D'Avenant, with scenes and inventions by Inigo Jones and music by Lewis Richard, *Salmacida Spolia* presents the king as Philogenes, lover of his people, who appears to the audience seated on the Throne of Honour. Although he maintains the divine attributes standard to the genre, Charles is specifically praised for his patience to "out last those stormes the peoples giddy fury rayse," (Song "To the King, when he appears" st. 2) and the masque is tempered by the political reality of the time. Students used the printed version in *EEBO* to draw parallels with the antimasque figures and contemporary civil unrest, and to note how the staging and text work to create representations of the royal couple.

Surviving stage designs and costume sketches by Inigo Jones contributed further to our students' understanding of how the masque served as a propaganda tool. Only a few sketches for *Salmacida Spolia* are available in *Google Images* and no relevant images are found in *ARTstor*, so the best resource for Jones's sketches is Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong's book, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court . . . [from] the collection of the Duke of Devonshire* (UC Press, 1973). Having to rely on the printed book acted as a catalyst in our classes for discussing the online availability of archival materials, the nature of and access to private collections, and why this particular book is located in our library's Special Collections.

Seventeenth-century periodicals, especially those from the time of the Civil Wars, offer insight into the range of public opinion concerning contemporary events. After the Star Chamber was abolished in July 1641, the press was afforded greater liberty in publishing and promoting causes on both sides of the conflict. Scholars are fortunate that George Thomason, Rev. Dr. Charles Burney, and others had the foresight to understand the historical value of these ephemeral publications. Thomason's collection of primarily Civil War periodicals (1641-1663) has been scanned from the microfilm and included in *EEBO*. The collections of Burney

and John Nichols comprise the subscription database, *Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Burney Collection Newspapers* (1603-1800), referred to as *Burney*, which is based on the microfilm collection, *Early English Newspapers*, with additional contributions from the British Library's holdings. Students may use either database to review issues for commentary on specific events, or to search across a date range for mention of relevant key terms. Although *EEBO* does not permit full-text searching of periodical contents, the periodicals sometimes are characterized by lengthy and descriptive titles, such as *The armies modest intelligencer. Communicating to the whole kindom [sic], certaine passages in Parliament, the full proceeding upon the Kings triall, debates at the General Councell, vvith varietie of intelligence from several places in England, and other parts of Europe. Burney* offers the distinct advantage of full-text periodical contents searching.

In our classes, students consulted *EEBO* and *Burney* to assess contemporary reception to the trial and execution of Charles I. Since both the trial and execution occurred during January 1648 (Julian) or 1649 (Gregorian), this discrepancy in historical dating provides an opportunity to discuss potential problems when searching for accounts of

these events in archival materials, the role played by catalog records, and possible search strategies. Students discover that these news accounts present Charles in a range of roles, from sympathetic to tyrannical character.

In addition to periodicals, students also investigated popular accounts of the trial and execution in contemporary broadside ballads. The freely-available *Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads* collection features more than 30,000 ballads, dating from the sixteenth through the twentieth century. Browsing the subject index for the heading, "Charles I, King of England, 1600-1649," retrieves fourteen ballads, two of which specifically address the end of Charles's life: "The manner of the King's tryal at Westminster" and "England's black tribunal, or, King Charles's martyrdom." The *English Broadside Ballad Archive* includes an additional ballad, "The Kings last Speech at his time of Execution," as well as a copy of "The manner of the Kings Tryal at Westminster-Hall . . . with his/Speech made upon the Scaffold before he was Beheaded." These ballads enabled our students to explore differences in textual and visual representations of the King, and also to note contextual information, such as the tune to which the ballad was sung (e.g., *Aim not too high, Gerheards Mistris*).

Published accounts of Charles's speech on the scaffold are numerous in *EEBO*: either as separate documents, or included with other materials regarding the trial and execution, or sometimes collected with various scaffold speeches, such as the 180-page volume, *England's black tribunal . . . together with His Majesties speech on the scaffold . . . together with . . . several dying speeches from the year 1642 to 1658*. Students may compare the King's scaffold speech with that of the Earl of Strafford (or with those of other contemporaries) by searching keywords (*scaffold* or *last dying*) and *speech** or by using subject headings in conjunction with desired date ranges: "Last words—England—Early works to 1800;" "Last words—Early works to 1800;" "Executions and executioners—England—17th century." Our students also read accounts of the events as related in the memoirs of Sir Thomas Herbert, who was an attendant to Charles I during his captivity. Herbert published *Threnodia Carolina* in 1678 (not in *EEBO*), but we used *ECCO* to find his narrative, *Memoirs of the two last years of the reign of that unparallell'd prince, . . . King Charles I*, published in 1702, which offers a moving description of Charles's final day.

Re-mediating Renaissance Literature & Culture

These courses have been exciting and rewarding to teach, not only because of the new possibilities for research that digital technologies provide, but especially since those e-resources and interpretive strategies resonate so strongly with the temper of the Renaissance, when boundaries between texts and contexts were quite fluid. As Bolter and Gromala observe, at least since the sixteenth century two competing epistemologies have been shaping the western fields of knowledge and technological development: one concerned with permanence and transparency; the other, contingency and reflectivity (60-74). "Good Web design is both transparent and reflective. It reflects the user's needs and wants in all their complexity" (74). Digital archives, electronic texts, and interactively-designed tools for research and teaching underscore the inter-involvement of both traditions. The six quartos of *Richard II* may be discovered and engaged via *Treasures in Full* as both transcendent artifacts and as constitutive works of cultural re-mediation. Researchers and librarians, educators and their students, authors and publishers all thus share a heightened responsibility, however: that of embarking on a new era of collaboration in the active process of building and maintaining the

archives, texts and contexts that matter most for the fields of knowledge that perhaps change the least.

Works Cited

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Notes:

¹ We have decided to include URLs only for those archives and databases that might not otherwise be readily accessed via title and/or keyword searching on the Web.

² Students searched in *EEBO* for the six quartos of *Richard II* for comparisons with Forker's edition, looking specifically at the presence or absence of the deposition scene (4.1.155-318), which was presumably deleted from the original prompt-copy of the play from which the First Quarto (1597) was set. The politics of the deposition scene were treacherous, as illustrated by the fate of Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex, whose supporters hired Shakespeare's company to enact *R2* with the deposition scene (7 February 1601) in the hopes of fomenting public sentiment against Elizabeth I. Essex staged his ill-fated rebellion the following day; was consequently tried for and convicted of treason by the Star Chamber; then beheaded on Tower Green (25 February). The deposition scene appears in four of the early editions of Shakespeare's play: the Fourth (1608) Quarto, possibly based upon a performance; the First Folio (1623); the Second Folio (1632); and the Sixth Quarto (1634) which is derived from the 1632 Second Folio. The deposition scene does not appear in Q1 (1597), Q2 (1598), Q3 (1598), or Q5 (1615). Our students also used

EEBO to compare versions of *Eikon Basilike* against the Daems and Nelson edition, noting in particular the presence or absence of the controversial "Prayer in time of Captivity" (first printed in William Duggard's edition, March, 1649). In 1649 alone, thirty-five editions of *Eikon Basilike* were published in England; twenty-five, elsewhere in Europe. Many of those were pirated texts: printers were hunted-down; volumes were destroyed.

³ While we may not provide access to all of the documents and digital tools pertaining to those courses, we can include links to our syllabus from "Archives on Trial" (<http://mysite.du.edu/~showard/S07.3223.html>) and to our Research Guide from "Digital Archives" (<http://libguides.du.edu/engl2202>). In the first class, we used PB Wiki (<https://archivesontrial.pbworks.com>); in the second, Blackboard (<http://blackboard.du.edu/>) to create various Web 2.0, interactive tools, including blogs, discussion boards, synchronous chat sessions, and wikis.

⁴ Our students searched in *ECCO* to find a variety of documents concerning the on-going *Eikon Basilike* authorship controversy.

⁵ Students used the *BLBB* to find differing accounts of King Charles's last words.

⁶ For example, in *BHO* students searched through *Journal of the House of Lords* for records concerning the impeachment of Queen Henrietta Maria. In the *Milton Reading Room*, they consulted a hypertext edition of *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* for Milton's argument in favor of executing Charles I.

⁷ *Richard II*, 4.1.273-303.

⁸ Our students also used *EEBO* to compare printings of the engraved portraits of Charles I by William Marshall and Thomas Rawlins, which served as frontispieces for some of the seventeenth-century editions of *Eikon Basilike*.

⁹ Our students used this magnificent digital library to compare all six quartos of *Richard II*.

¹⁰ Students compared that electronic text (edited by Edward Almack, printed in 1904 and based upon a so-called advance copy of the first edition from 1649) with other copies of *Eikon Basilike* printed in 1649 and available via *EEBO*.

¹¹ The company (now called ProQuest) estimates this project will be done in 2020, spanning almost 90 years!

¹² *STC1* and *STC2* were, in turn, also used as the foundation for the online *English Short Title Catalog* (*ESTC*) database.