Pairing E-Books & Rare Books To Improve Student Research

By: Greta Browning

Abstract
A poster and handout for Tech4Teach Fair, February 5, 2016. Resources include things to consider in Historical Book Research, what databases and e-books offer, and what physical books offer. Also included are suggestions for teaching about Complementary Study of E-books and Rare Books in courses, as well as selected Library Databases and Open-Access Online sources for Historical E-books.

Browning, G. (2016). "Pairing E-Books & Rare Books To Improve Student Research." Tech4Teach Fair, February 5, 2016. Appalachian State University Belk Library & Information Commons, Boone, NC.
Pairing E-Books & Rare Books to Improve Student Research
Greta Browning, Special Collections, Belk Library

What are the differences between these two books?
Ownership Evidence

Paper Watermark & Handmade Paper Evidence

Relief & Intaglio Processes on the Same Page
Pairing E-Books and Rare Books to Improve Student Research

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Tech4Teach Fair, February 5, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Databases &amp; E-Books Offer</th>
<th>What Physical Books Offer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Easy access to many texts—no need to leave home to study these</td>
<td>● First-generation printing</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Portability of texts—easily saved for handouts, presentations, further study</td>
<td>● Paper watermarks, when present</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Searchability of texts (with caution)</td>
<td>● Provenance evidence (i.e., bookplates, ownership markings)</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Possibility to examine more than one copy of a text if it is available</td>
<td>● Book production evidence in paper, binding, type, illustration</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Eliminate wear and tear on originals</td>
<td>● Marginalia added by past readers or owners</td>
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Things to Consider in Historical Book Research

● E-books offer easy searching, but the words are not always correctly recognized from the original type or printing

● Digital texts in databases such as Early English Books Online or Eighteenth Century Collections Online are third-generation images, so legibility of text is sometimes a problem; images may not have been captured with good detail, when included

● Books of the hand-press era (c. 1450-c. 1800), either as e-books or physical books, are products of their time, with inherent problems. Page order in one book may differ from another, a broken piece of type will skew automated searches, errors in printing may have been corrected later in a print run. These examples, and others of the non-mechanized book trade industry, will affect the source book in a digital database or a physical book available for examination.

● Checking more than one copy of a text is a wise decision!
Suggestions for Teaching about Complementary Study of E-Books and Rare Books in Courses

1. Create specific assignments that introduce students to using both media. Discrete assignments work better than simply requiring students to use both types of sources in term papers. A smaller assignment exploring the use of e-books and rare books can be part of a scaffolded assignment leading to a term paper.
2. Schedule a Library instruction session in Special Collections to train students how to use historical books and learn what to look for when using this type of source for research. Contact Greta Browning.
3. Schedule a Library instruction session to train students how to use digital surrogate databases. Contact your discipline’s Library Subject Specialist or request an instruction session through the Library website.
   Subject Specialists http://library.appstate.edu/about/personnel/subject-specialists
   Request an Instruction Session http://library.appstate.edu/services/faculty/instruction

Selected Library Databases containing Historical E-Books
   Contact a Library Subject Specialist to Learn about More

   African-American Poetry, 1750-1900
   America’s Historical Imprints, 1639-1900
   Early English Books Online, 1473-1700
   Eighteenth Century Collections Online, 1700-1799
   Making of the Modern World, 1450-1900
   Nineteenth Century Collections Online, 1796-1910
   Sabin Americana, 1500-1926

Selected Open-Access Online Sources for Historical E-Books

   Hathi Trust Digital Library (https://www.hathitrust.org/)
   Google Books (https://books.google.com/)
   Digital Public Library of America (dp.la)
   Internet Archive (https://archive.org/)
   Rare Book Room (rarebookroom.org)
   Biodiversity Heritage Library (http://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/)
   Europeana Collections (http://www.europeana.eu/portal/)

Library Rare Book Collections in Special Collections
   Contact Greta Browning to learn rare book search strategies or for more information

   Appalachian Regional Rare Books (C18-C21) / http://collections.library.appstate.edu/appalachian
   British Studies, including areas of history, literature, art, religion (C16-C19) / http://collections.library.appstate.edu/rare/british
   Children’s Literature (C19 and C20) / http://collections.library.appstate.edu/rare/children
   American Literature, specifically Hawthorne and Beat poetry (C19-C21) / http://collections.library.appstate.edu/rare/american