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## Between Subject and Tech Expertise: Collaborating with Faculty for Digital Humanities Projects [presentation]

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Between Subject and  
Tech Expertise:  
Collaborating with Faculty  
for Digital Humanities  
Projects

# The Gothic Archive

[http://epublications.marquette.edu/  
gothic/](http://epublications.marquette.edu/gothic/)



Introduce the Archive:

Includes English Gothic chapbooks from the late 1700s until early-mid 1800s. Many of them digital reproductions of the original chapbooks, though some are transcribed versions. The Archive also includes supplemental material giving background on each chapbook. A glossary of terms rounds out the collection and connects the books thematically. Finally, the collection is rounded out by images.

We've been working on it for a couple of years. It sees use from all around the world.

## Seed Collection Development

- Approached by Dr. Diane Hoeveler
  - Professor of English at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI, where she has taught since 1987. She publishes on gothic, romantic, and women's literatures.



She was looking for somewhere to mount digital materials related to her research on late-18<sup>th</sup> century, early-19<sup>th</sup> century British gothic chapbooks

Wasn't something that was appropriate for our Special Collections and Archives

She wanted to continue to work with the materials and to accumulate more of them, and was especially interested in acquiring grant funding for her research

## Seed Collection Development

- First question was how to fit an essentially archival collection into repository software
- Next challenge was how to go about getting the collection ready to pursue grant funding
- Started by loading simply the chapbooks
- First chapbooks were loaded in October 2012 and the project went live that month

We use Digital Commons by bepress as a platform. While well-suited to repository work, it still lags products like CONTENTdm when it comes to digital collections. Digitized chapbooks were of variable quality as Dr. Hoeveler digitized the chapbooks herself so the quality was not always ideal. Some chapbooks are presented as transcribed versions because quality of digital copy was too poor to include or because she could not get access to the original, but it was still important to her research.

## Deepening the Partnership

- Digital Humanities conversations on campus
- What can liaison librarians offer?
- ENGL 6400
- Dedicated Research Assistant



How HJ & WF came onto project

HJ approached by Dr. H

Unaware the project had already started and an initial grant had been submitted and rejected

WF part of the initial class that created supplemental material.

Took on additional responsibilities for uploading materials to the Archive

Gain skills in DH that aren't available to learn in any other venue at MU

Sharing subject knowledge

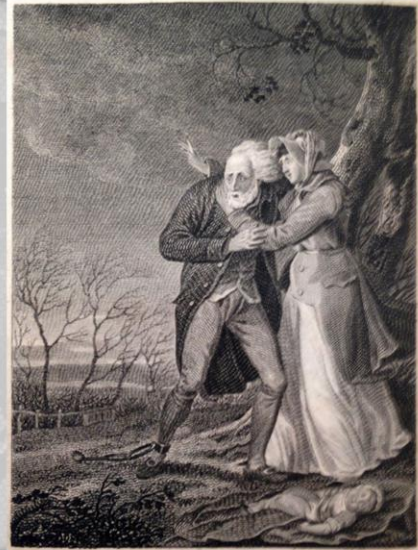
This work bridged between the tech side (metadata) and the subject side (Gothic lit)

Subject liaison librarian contributed because DP librarian did not necessarily know the right questions to ask

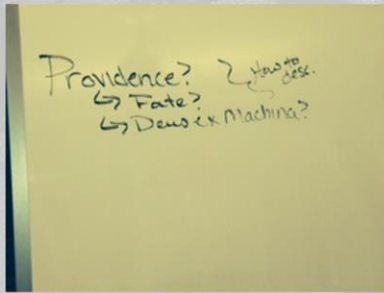
Led to work on NEH grant application submitted 2014

## What's so DH about it?

- Synthesis of materials
  - Beyond the digital collection
  - Connections must be drawn to elevate it to DH
    - In this case, thematic connections between chapbooks
    - Also search across formats, themes, metadata
  - We never know how/why our end users will be interacting with the collection so must plan accordingly



# Developing the Glossary



Original terms determined by students of ENGL6400 without specific guidance or parameters. Had to be condensed, altered, and structured...

Subject Librarian and Research Assistant:

Librarian - Knowledge of lit theory and elements along with knowledge of CV and thesauri structures

RA – specific genre knowledge and particulars.

The problem with disciplines that share the same terms but different definitions

i.e. thesaurus

Interesting moments – what does this term mean in the Gothic? Are you sure it doesn't mean this other thing it can sometimes mean in other genres? (i.e. Providence, which in the Gothic is often not of divine origins.)

Developing Glossary

Locked in a room with every term on pieces of paper

Controlled vocabulary

Decide upon the best term and discard synonyms. – Example: Is a



lamia enough like a succubus to share an entry?

Define genres and subgenres within the Gothic – Example:

“Burgverliess Gothic” - a ‘no-exit’ style story in a castle, in which the only escape is death... but you can also have a “Burgverliess Gothic” story that is also a “Monastic Shocker” because there’s an evil monk in the cellar.

Structure terms into hierarchy to determine relatedness and broader/narrower relationships

# Developing the Glossary

The screenshot shows a digital workspace for developing a glossary. It features three main columns of text:

- Subjects:** A list of categories with handwritten annotations. For example, 'The Haunting Past' is annotated with 'leave where it is 6-11-17'. 'Revenge' is annotated with 'SUBJECT'. 'Witchcraft' is annotated with 'WITCHES'.
- Character List:** A list of names including Ferdinand, Henrietta de Bellgrave, Rodomond, and Zoa.
- Character Traits:** A list of traits such as Beauty, Catholic, Chivalry [RT Romantic Paradigm], Otherness [RT Xenophobia], African, Banditti, Banyan, Deformity, Gypsy, Infidel [used for Pagan], Moor, Pagan [use Infidel], Purity, Queer, and Virginity.

On the right side, there are three columns of hyperlinks under the heading 'Gothic Literary Techniques':

- Gothic Literary Techniques:** Bifurcated Ideology, Dislocation, Doubling, Ecce, Foreboding, Interpolated Narratives, Intertextuality, Plot Devices.
- Gothic Subjects:** Character Traits, Character Types, Character List, Effects of Evil, Family, Historical Context, Motifs, Settings, Supernatural, Workings of the Mind.
- Gothic Themes:** Eighteenth Century, British Empire, Emotions, Madness, Rationality, Society, Supernatural Explained.

At the bottom of the screenshot, a URL is displayed: [http://epublications.marquette.edu/english\\_gothic/](http://epublications.marquette.edu/english_gothic/)

So what do we have now...

One index became insufficient for collecting all the significant terms. Developed a tree structure with 3 main branches

This is how we DH'ed our project – at least to start

Provides the underpinnings to illustrate the connections between chapbooks

Literary techniques

Subjects

Themes

More than a controlled vocabulary or an annotated list of words. We focused on creating multiple linkages among materials using the above structures.

Glossary demo: Start with Almagro & Claude, click on Anti-Catholic to see term with description, related term, and other chapbooks with that theme.

# Synthesis of Materials

- Supplemental Materials
  - Information about each chapbook
- [http://epublications.marquette.edu/english\\_gothic\\_supp/1/](http://epublications.marquette.edu/english_gothic_supp/1/)

Gathered using traditional English literature research methods

The class used traditional literature research methods to track down the publication history of each chapbook, gather information on their intertextual relationships, and wherever possible, confirm authorship. Each researcher also generated a list of keywords they felt were important to each chapbook. The assignment was to create a 'constellation of knowledge' that mapped out everything we could find about each chapbook. Unfortunately, in a literature class, this became a series of lists of written information.

When we uploaded the files, however, we were able to add the linkages to make them digital constellations, at least.

Demonstration of the chapbooks' "Constellation of knowledge" using Duchess of C\*\*\* Supplemental Material.

Each supplemental piece includes: Linked table of contents, citation guides, full title, summary, related works (sources, inspirations), works inspired by, bibliography of other editions, bibliography of articles and info related to the chapbooks, keywords (official glossary terms), visual images.

## Limits

- bepress
  - Creates a problem for multi-modal, interactive, and crowd-contributed materials
  - We will need to create an interface that is external to the current project
- Funding
  - Money for a developer would help alleviate the platform issues

Not created to be dynamic, works best with static materials. No way to list fuzzy dates, for example. Heavily mediated by the vendor.

Can use our current platform as a basis from which to start, but we need something else to lay over the information/metadata.

## Whatever shall we do next???

- More chapbooks
  - Multi-lingual chapbooks
- More interactive analysis tools
  - TEI
  - GIS
  - Faceted searching
  - Interactive timelines
  - Translations
- Social media interaction
- Crowd-sourcing
  - Transcription and translation



Adding chapbooks: A few major libraries have the bulk of these materials in existence. We'll start by working with domestic libraries then hopefully cross the pond.

Partnering with other projects that digitize rare/fragile genre materials so that any titles they have can be added/linked to our collection.

Translations: While researching our NEH grant application, we found Gothic chapbooks in numerous other languages.

GIS: Use for all sorts of cool stuff! Track the locations of the various stories as well as the publication of the chapbooks.

Faceted searching: Another limitation of the software. This functionality would greatly improve searching of the resource, especially as it grows larger.

# TEI

- Marking up the text will allow for text-mining
- Will provide machine-readable materials for visualizations

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</pgenes>
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of writing to you again this evening<lb/>
hoping to hear in return that you have got<lb/>
over your sickness and enjoying yourself well<lb/>
you must excuse me for this miserable attempt<lb/>
at writing for the last three months I<lb/>
have not worked enough to amount to any<lb/>
thing and how school is out I have been<lb/>
awing wood as hard as I could and<lb/>
made my hands lame so I cannot write<lb/>
My will is good enough not to work (and<lb/>
that is the case of most of <persName><surname>Cravath</surname><reg>Cravath</reg></persName>) but I<lb/>
have to. <persName><foreName>Amanda</foreName><reg>Amanda</reg></persName> in her letter praised her<lb/>
teacher up so I will have to praise you our<lb/>
School <choice><size>am</size><corr>am</corr></choice> when I write to her next<lb/>
I hope you enjoyed yourself first rate at your<lb/>
party I thank you very much for your wishing I would<lb/>
be there. I do not think I shall ever see the<lb/>
Eastern States for if we should ever leave here<lb id="p2"><ref target="
" http://dlib.hamilton.edu/dl/diget.php?imp-ope-01v-mis-02133002.jpg">PAGE IMAGE</ref> it will be to go farther
west where people<lb/>
can get sick with out working hard<lb/>
Father went out to <placeName><region type="state">Minnesota</region><reg>Minnesota</reg></placeName> last
spring<lb/>
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Marked up text from *Civil War Letters* digital humanities project at Hamilton College: <http://cwl.dhinitiative.org/>

# Interactive timelines

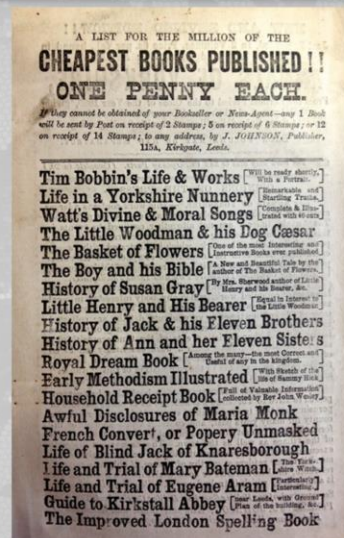
## Gothic Archive Timeline



This was generated using a metadata spreadsheet downloaded from Digital Commons and tweaked in Google Spreadsheet. The software used was Timeline JS.

## Value of the Gothic Archive

- Contribution to the scholarship
- Contribution to Digital Scholarship
- Use as an instructional tool
- Preservation of rare and fragile materials



Scholarship: Sheds a lot of light on the novels that have been studied up to this point. It changes our understanding of the canon.

As it grows, it will give us a better view of what lower and middle classes were reading, so it has definite social sciences impact as well.

Link backward that previously didn't exist for those who study pulp fiction and "penny dreadfuls".

Digital Scholarship: Serves as a model. Unique materials with a wide range.

Increases accessibility to the work, not just because of the fragile nature of the items, but also to those with disabilities.

We don't know what people will do with the materials down the road, all we can do is provide the best and most complete collection, connections, and information to support future uses.

In effect, it becomes a large data set that researchers from a wide range of disciplines might use in various ways, but it's also a contextualized collection of primary sources for use by literary scholars.

Instruction: Already we've heard from some educators using the collection as content for curricula



More information on the Gothic Archive  
project

Fortier, Rose and Heather James. "Becoming the Gothic Archive: From Digital Collection to Digital Humanities." *Supporting Digital Humanities for Knowledge Acquisition in Modern Libraries*. Ed. Sara Parme, Scott Richmond, Katie Sacco, Kerrie Wilkes. IGI Global. Forthcoming May 2015.