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Electronic Texts in American Studies

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Electronic Texts in American Studies

Fifth Biennial Conference
of the Society of Early Americanists
June 9, 2007

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Need

- The field of early American studies has long been hampered by the relative unavailability of primary materials, and this affects both teaching and scholarly research.
- Traditional commercial and academic publishers are not interested in less-than-book-length works with limited audience.
- Many works that are not anthologized cannot be effectively taught; and no anthology ever corresponds exactly to an instructor's syllabus and aims.

Potential of electronic texts

- Many universities now use electronic courseware that allows instructors to assign and distribute electronic texts
- A wide range of texts and formats are available
- Some work better than others

Some problems / issues

- MS Word files may not be readable by Mac-based students
- Proprietary files (passworded or limited access) may not be available from all locations
- html files look different on every screen, depending on browser settings
- Online files have a tendency to move or disappear – every time a site does a re-design or update

Commercial Databases

- Recently, online commercial databases have been developed that present many previously unavailable works, including
 - EEBO (Early English Books Online),
 - ECCO (Eighteenth-Century Collection Online),
 - the digital Evans and Shaw-Shoemaker,
 - the digital Sabin, etc.

However,

- their expense limits them to major universities (costs > \$100,000).
- their presentation of materials (as page-images rather than text) limits their usefulness to students and researchers.

hateful and an odious sin, and usually the fruit and punishment of impure thoughts and fancies in the day-time. It seemeth that these Impostors were so addicted to lasciviousness, (as our *English* Annotators observe) that they did not onely practise it being awake, but also dreamed of it, and defiled themselves in their sleep. Yea, the truth is, their Spiritual dreams (which I think are properly intended). viz. their Erroneous and Heretical Opinions, were unclean speculations, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, ver. 4. *in dreamis*, into profuseness in Luxury and Uncleanness, and issued in all manner of carnal pollution.

2. *Whoredome*, the viciating of a single woman. *Deut. 23. 17. There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel. Lev. 19. 29. Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore, lest the land fall to whoredome, and the land become full of wickedness. Ephel. 5. 5. This ye know, no whoremonger, nor unclean person — hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God.*

3. *Adultery*, the violating of the Marriage-bed. This is a heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the Judges. It is a sin, that consisteth in destruction, *Job 31. 11, 12. The Adulterer and his adulteress shall surely be put to death, Lev. 20. 10. Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge, Heb. 13. 4.*

4. *Incest*, Uncleanness committed by parties that are near of Kin; between whom there is Consanguinity or Affinity, within the degrees prohibited by the Law of God. *Lev. 18. 6. None of you shall approach to any that is near of Kin to him, to uncover their nakedness, as I have commanded the Lord. This was the sin of Reuben, for which he was degraded from his Dignity, and deprived of his Birth-right, Gen. 49. 4. 1 Chron. 5. 1. Amnon, and Absalom, and Herod the Tetrarch, made themselves infamous by this kinde of wickedness. The Corinthians were required by the Apostle to deliver the incestuous person to Satan, 1 Cor. 5. 4.*

5. *Sodomy*, filthiness committed between parties of the same Sex: when Males with Males, and Females with Females work wickedness. *If a man lieth with mankind, as he lieth with a woman; both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death, their blood shall be upon them, Lev. 20. 13. This sin raged amongst the Sodomites, and to their perpetual Infamy, it is called Sodomy. Against this wickedness, no indignation is sufficient. The Athenians put such to death. Theodosius and Arcadius adjudged such to be burnt. Amongst the Germans, it was lawful for a man to kill him that made such an assault upon him.*

6. *Befiality*,

- S. Danforth, Cry of Sodom, p. 4



MILK FOR BABES.

Q. What hath GOD done for you?

Ans. GOD hath made me, [a] He keepeth me, and He can save me.

Quest. What is GOD?

A. God is a Spirit of [b] himself, and for himself.

Q. How many Gods be there?

Ans. There is but one God in three persons. [c] the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Q. How did God make you?

A. In my first Parents [d] holy and righteous.

Q. Are you then born holy and righteous?

A. No, my first Father [e] sinned, and I in him.

*1 Gen. 1.
26. 27. 41
Eccl. 7. 29.*

*1 Tim. 2.
37.
Rom. 5. 12.*

- John Cotton, *Spiritual Milk for Babes* (1656 ed.), p. 1

Free Open-Access databases

- The Making of America series
 - page-images only; requires downloading 1 page at a time
- Project Gutenberg and BlackMask collections
 - ascii format
 - inconsistent textual policies
- Documenting the American South (UNC Libraries)
 - html/xml format
- Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library
 - sgml/xml format
- Library of Congress, American Memory
 - pages images, html, sgml

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/>

Electronic Texts in American Studies

- The series presents works in a
 - text-based
 - screen-friendly
 - PDF format
 - Open-access: available to all
 - easily printable and linkable
 - replicate the look and “feel” of the original documents
 - permanently preserved online digital format

Text-based

- Allows searching, including Google & Google Scholar
- Allows excerpting
- Allows data-mining

Screen-friendly

- 2-page landscape layout fits 1 book spread onto single screen
- 1 click downloads the whole document

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/>

- s* Isa 58.13, 14.
Exo. 32.6.
- and much more from play on (*s*) the Lords day, that we may draw nigh to God in holy duties.
- Quest.* *What is the fifth Commandement?*
Answ. Honour thy Father, and thy mother, (*t*) that thy dayes may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
- t* Exod 20.12.
- u* Prov. 23.22.
1 King. 5.13.
and 2.12.
1 Cor. 4.15.
2 Chr 29.11
1 Ti. 5.1
1 Sa. 25.8
Gen 4.20, 21
- Quest.* *Who are here meant by Father and mother?*
Answ. All our superiours, whether in (*u*) Family, School, Church, and Commonwealth.
- Quest.* *What is the honour due to them?*
Answ. Reverence, (*w*) obedience, and (when I am able) Recompence.
- w* Mal. 1.6
Heb. 12.9.
Eph 6.1.
1 Tim. 5.4
- Quest.* *What is the sixth Commandement?*
Answ. Thou shalt do no (*x*) murder.
- x* Exo. 20.13.
- Quest.* *What is the meaning of this Commandement?*
Answ. That we should not shorten the (*y*) life, or health of our selves or others, but preserve both.
- y* Math. 5.22.
2 Cor. 7.10.
1 Sam 26.24.
Mar. 3.4.

- Quest.* *What is the seventh Commandement?*
Answ. Thou shalt not commit (*z*) Adultery. *z* Exo. 20.14.
- Quest.* *What is the sinne here forbidden?*
Answ. To defile ourselves or others (*a*) with unclean lusts. *a* Gen. 38.9, 10.
Lev. 18.24.
- Quest.* *What is the duty here commanded?*
Answ. Chastity, to possesse (*b*) our vesels in holinesse and honour. *b* Tit. 2.5.
1 Pet. 3.2.
1 Thes. 4.4, 5.
- Quest.* *What is the eighth Commandement?*
Answ. Thou shalt not (*c*) steale. *c* Exod. 20.15.
- Quest.* *What is the stealth here forbidden?*
Answ. To take away (*d*) another mans goods, without his leave: or to spend our own without benefit to our selves or others. *d* Luk. 19.8.
1 The. 4.6.
Pro. 21.20.
- Quest.* *What is the duty here commanded?*
Answ. To get our goods (*e*) honestly, to keepe them safely, and to spend them thriftily. *e* Pro 13.11.
Ioh. 6.12.
Luk. 19.16.
& 15.13.

PDF format

- Now a standard way of furnishing & exchanging documents (used by everyone from Elsevier to the IRS)
- Readable & printable with free Adobe Reader
- Can be generated from most software applications
- Fonts can be embedded, so documents always look the same
- High resolution
- Small file size
- Accommodate images as well as text
- Don't re-flow

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- Files are available to any user via the Internet
- No registration, no passwords required to view, download, save
- Worldwide access
- 24/7 availability

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Printable

- 2-page landscape format prints on letter-size paper on any printer
- Can be read in bed or in the bathtub

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- Link to any document's cover page by pasting its unique & permanent URL:

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/8/>

- hyperlinks can be pasted in any web page, email, vita, or other electronic document

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THE
CONSTITUTIONS
OF THE
FREE-MASONS.

CONTAINING THE
History, Charges, Regulations, &c.
of that most Ancient and Right
Worshipful FRATERNITY.

For the Use of the LODGES.



LONDON Printed; *Anno 5723.*
Re-printed in *Philadelphia* by special Order, for the Use
of the Brethren in *NORTH-AMERICA.*
In the Year of Masonry 5734, *Anno Domini 1734.*

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Currently available: 17th century

- John Cotton, *Milk for Babes. Drawn Out of the Breasts of Both Testaments* (1646)
- Samuel Danforth, *An Astronomical Description of the Late Comet or Blazing Star* (1665)
- Samuel Danforth, *Almanack Poems and Chronological Tables 1647-1649*
- Samuel Danforth, *A Brief Recognition of New-Englands Errand into the Wilderness* (1671)
- Samuel Danforth, *The Cry of Sodom Enquired Into* (1674)
- Daniel Denton, *A Brief Description of New-York: Formerly Called New-Netherlands* (1670)
- John Easton, *A Relation of the Indian War* (1675)
- John Eliot, *The Christian Commonwealth: or, The Civil Policy Of The Rising Kingdom of Jesus Christ* (1659)
- Increase Mather, *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England* (1676)
- John Miller, *New Yorke Considered and Improved A.D. 1695*
- Joshua Scottow, *Old Mens Tears for Their Own Declensions* (1691)
- Joshua Scottow, *A Narrative of the Planting of the Massachusetts Colony Anno 1628.* (1694)
- Joshua Scottow et al. (John Winthrop, Thomas Dudley, John Allin, Thomas Shepard, John Cotton), *Massachusetts: or The First Planters of New-England* (1696)
- Capt. John Smith, *A Description of New England* (1616)

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Currently available: 18th century

- James Anderson (& Benjamin Franklin), *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons* (1734)
- John Filson, *The Discovery, Settlement and Present State of Kentucke* (1784)
- Jupiter Hammon, *An Address to the Negroes in the State of New-York* (1787)
- Georg Wilhelm Steller, *De Bestiis Marinis, or, The Beasts of the Sea* (1751)
- Charles Wolley, *A Two Years Journal in New-York* (1701)

Currently available: 19th century (i)

- Mathew Carey, *Appeal to the Wealthy of the Land*, (1833)
- Calvin Colton, *Lecture on the Railroad to the Pacific* (1850)
- David Cusick, *Sketches of Ancient History of the Six Nations* (1828)
- Gabriel Furman, *Notes Geographical and Historical, Relating to the Town of Brooklyn, in Kings County on Long-Island* (1824)
- Henry Highland Garnet, *An Address to the Slaves of the United States of America* (1843)
- Henry Highland Garnet *The Past and the Present Condition, and the Destiny, of the Colored Race* (1848)
- Horace Greeley, *An Address on Success in Business* (1867)
- John McLean, *Dissent in Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1856)

Currently available: 19th century (ii)

- Herman Melville, *John Marr and Other Sailors: An Online Electronic 'Facsimile' Text of the First Edition* (1888)
- Herman Melville, *Timoleon, Etc.: An Online Electronic Text of the First Edition* (1891)
- Charles Nordhoff, *The Perfectionists of Oneida and Wallingford* (1875)
- Robert Dale Owen, *Labor: Its History and Its Prospects* (1848)
- Theodore Parker, *Strauss's Life of Jesus* (1840)
- Theodore Parker, *Primitive Christianity* (1842)
- Theodore Parker, *A Discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Christianity* (1841)
- Mary Ann Talbot, *The Life and Surprising Adventures of Mary Ann Talbot, in the Name of John Taylor* (1809)
- Nat Turner & Thomas R. Gray, *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (1831)
- Peter Williams Jr., *An Oration on the Abolition of the Slave Trade* (1808)

Forthcoming / In process

- Thomas Hariot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* (1588)
- Cotton Mather, *The Negro Christianized* (1706); *Theopolis Americana* (1710)
- James Albert / Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, *Narrative* (1780)
- William Smith, *Indian Songs of Peace* (1752)
- Jonathan Edwards, *Expostulatory Letter ... to Rev. Mr. Clap* (1746)
- Increase Mather, *Life and Death of ... Richard Mather* (1670)

Principles for Selection

- significant works
- preference for those not generally available or commonly anthologized
- not online already in PDF format
- short to medium length (usually <100 pages)
- no copyright issues

Note: all but the last are flexible

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Principles for Textual editing:

- full-text: complete—not excerpts
- not “modernized”
- text represents an actual edition—not a composite (although additional materials can be presented as annotations or appendices)
- source edition identified; down to actual copy if possible
- typographical errors corrected and emendations listed (so that the original reading can be reconstructed)

Annotation

- minimal editorial intrusion: endnotes, not footnotes
- identify references, provide context, suggest further sources
- active inks to other online sources or sites of interest

Dissemination

- Documents can be linked-to from any web site or page
- Documents are listed in
 - Online Books Page
 - Digital Books Index
 - Wikipedia
 - Intute: Arts & Humanities

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Usage

Downloads counts are provided monthly, some examples:

	<i>Date Posted</i>	<i>No. of Downloads</i>	<i>Annualized</i>
Anderson, <i>Constitutions</i>	13-Feb-06	7,789	5,954
Smith, <i>New-England</i>	30-Aug-06	1,512	1,975
Mather, <i>Brief History</i>	2-Apr-06	1,607	1,366
Cusick, <i>Sketches</i>	23-Jan-06	1,211	887
Easton, <i>Indian War</i>	30-May-06	868	853
Danforth, <i>Errand</i>	20-Jun-06	727	757
Furman, <i>Brooklyn</i>	21-Mar-06	726	600
Danforth, <i>Cry of Sodom</i>	9-Jun-06	571	577
Eliot, <i>Commonwealth</i>	16-Dec-05	804	547
Nordhoff, <i>Perfectionists</i>	27-Nov-06	263	504
Steller, <i>Bestiis</i>	30-Nov-05	754	498
Talbot, <i>Life</i>	24-May-06	487	471
Scottow, <i>Narrative</i>	3-Nov-05	432	272

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An invitation to scholars of early American studies to contribute and publish materials

- One advantage of the institutional repository setting is that it allows for long-distance collaboration and submission of materials.
- As one person, working alone, I can manage to post perhaps 35 to 40 documents annually.
- A series editor, however, could review, accept, format, and publish up to ten times that number.
- Outside scholars could select and prepare texts that they wished to see published or wished to assign for courses, and these could have fast and worldwide electronic publication, and a permanent online home.
- The greatest potential of the Internet lies in this sort of decentralized access to the means of production.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/>

Who benefits ?

- The scholar gets
 - A publication
 - Name associated with those primary materials
 - Enhanced reputation as an “expert”
- The field gets
 - Access to an important primary document
- The series gets
 - Another document

How would it work ?

- Email an MS Word file of text, with notes, & abstract; include any design or layout suggestions
- Receive back a PDF file for approval or alterations
- Document is uploaded and posted upon approval

A proposal to enlist scholars to help develop a peer-review process for the series.

- To provide additional motivation and incentives for scholars to undertake such editorial projects, I am here to appeal for help in making such publications peer-reviewed; *i.e.* to make a call for volunteers to an editorial board that would review and provide certification for these electronic editions.
- Such peer-reviewed texts would have greater authority in the field and would also carry substantial weight in the tenure considerations of the respective editors and scholars.
- Members of the SEA are clearly the professional group most qualified to provide such guidance and certification.

How would peer review work ?

- New documents are uploaded to a “holding” area (along with necessary source materials) & reviewers are notified & given access
- Reviewers decide if document meets agreed standards, or what modifications are needed
- When approval is given, final PDF file is created & posted
- All correspondence & materials shared electronically

How to respond:

- To view and browse the series:

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/etas/>

- To contribute materials:

email: proyster@unl.edu

- To volunteer as a peer-reviewer:

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