The Women's Print History Project

# By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Mini Spotlight Series [Spotlight Introduction]

Authored by Michelle Levy
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# By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Mini Spotlight Series

## *Michelle Levy*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*



**Figure 1.** Richard Gilson Reeve, 1803–1889, The Queen's Library, 1819, Aquatint, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, B1977.14.18164.

"In deciding what and how much [information about the book as a material object] to include, the bibliographer must ask himself repeatedly: 'What is the purpose of the descriptions? Who really needs each item of information? Can anything be abbreviated? Only thus can he avoid burdensome and expensive superfluity, and escape the ultimate absurdity of mistaking the means of bibliography for its end, of practising bibliography for bibliography's sake." (Gaskell 322)

In designing our data model for the WPHP—a process that began in 2014 and is still evolving—we have kept Gaskell's questions very much at the forefront. What is the purpose of our descriptions? Who do they serve? What information is essential and what can be dispensed with? Gaskell's questions are ostensibly gender-neutral. But he assumes a male bibliographer, and as creators of a database intended to capture women's engagement with print over the long eighteenth century, we had to ask ourselves whether extant bibliographical procedures allow us to ask and answer the questions that we are interested in about women's books.

Our response to this issue has always been, yes and no. On the one hand, bibliographical methods and definitions have been developed over decades of intense consideration of books as material objects, and it makes sense to attend to them closely. On the other hand, these methods are not always attuned to the kinds of identifications and descriptions we need to understand how women participated in print culture. Hence the title of this series: instead of doing bibliography "by the book," as it were, we do it "by our books."

In this mini-spotlight series, we offer a set of reflections about the many conversations, debates and second guessing we have done about our data fields, some of which, such as imprint, colophon, and format are foundational to bibliography, and others, such as "signed author," that we have implemented in order to capture information about how women's books signal themselves to the world. Even some seemingly uncontroversial designations, like what constitutes a title, or location, are actually more complicated than they first appear. In these short essays (hence the "mini"), we trace the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices, how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived. The spotlights will be released twice weekly until early August; we hope you join us for this journey through many of the key data fields in our WPHP records.

On July 5, Sara Penn takes us through the "Title" field in her Spotlight "What's in a Title?"

On July 6, Amanda Law's Spotlight, "(Contributor) Role Call," will describe our "Contributors" field.

On July 10, Belle Eist, in "Printed by—": Imprints and Firms in the WPHP," will explore the "Firms" and "Imprint" fields.

On July 12, Kate Ozment's Spotlight, "The Language of Authorship," will attend to the "Signed Author" field.

On July 17, Isabelle Burrows will explain our "Genre" field in her Spotlight, "Making Genre-alizations: Genre Designations in the WPHP."

On July 19, Tammy Tamanna's Spotlight, "Voluminous Decisions," will describe our "Volumes" field.

On July 26, Michelle Levy's Spotlight, "Matters of Format," explains our "Format" field.

On July 28, Julianna Wagar explores the "Pseudonym" field in "What's in a Name?: Pseudonymous Texts in the WPHP."

On August 2, Kate Moffatt takes up the hidden treasure that is the "Colophon" field in her Spotlight, "Colophons Count."

On August 4, the Spotlight Series wraps up with Kandice Sharren's Spotlight, "The Edition Issue," on our edition fields: "Edition Number" and "Edition Statement."

The Women's Print History Project

# What's in a Title? [Spotlight]

Authored by Sara Penn

Edited by Michelle Levy

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada    Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada    Canada    DHIL.

# What's in a Title?

*Sara Penn*

*This post is part of our* By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series*, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*

| ID | 1629 |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** | A New Book of Cookery; or, Every Woman a Perfect Cook; Containing a very great variety of approved Receipts in all the branches of Cookery and Confectionary, viz. Marketing, Roasting, Boiling, Frying, Stewing, Hashing, Baking, Fricassees, Made Dishes, Soups, Sauces, Puddings, Pies and Tarts, Cakes, Custards, Cheese-cakes, Creams, Ragouts, Jellies, Pickling, Preserving, Drying, Potting, Candying, Collaring, English Wines, &c. To which is added, Directions for Clear Starching, and the Ladie's Toilet, or the Art of preserving and improving Beauty: Likewise a Collection of Family Physical Receipts, prepared at a small expence. The Whole calculated to assist the prudent Housewife in furnishing the cheapest and most elegant Set of Dishes in the various Departments of Cookery, and to instruct Ladies in many other Particulars of great Importance. Written by Mrs. A. Smith, of Stafford, Who has been a House-keeper to several Noble Families many Years. |

**Figure 1.**

Titles allow us to see a larger literary field.
– Franco Moretti

Most of the information that we gather from books are collected from their title pages. The WPHP relational data model centres around them for this reason; we can often glean from the title page not only the title and subtitle of the book, but also its author(s), edition, location of publication, genre, price, and possibly even advertisements, printer's marks, and much, much more. As Whittney Trettien reminds us, "The title page is the site of a book's self-presentation to its potential audience, where it informs readers about a text by in-forming—moulding into

structured information—the facts of its production" (41). This blog post will discuss the sometimes forthright, sometimes playful, or sometimes even misleading aspect of the title page – the Title itself – to more fully understand its use in the WPHP.

As defined in our Documentation, the WPHP understands the capital-T Title as the "Full title as it appears on the title page, including subtitle, signed author, and edition statement, where applicable." In other words, the Title, much like the title page on which it rests, can inform our understanding about the textual and material contents of a book, alongside clues to its possible readers and status.

Titles in the WPHP refer to books produced by women Contributors during the years 1700 to 1836 from England, Scotland, Ireland, America, and France. Titles include all Formats and most Genres. We amalgamate Title information from over 100 existing Sources, such as archives, databases, textbases, and physical libraries. At least one out of two sources that we consult to verify the existence of a Title must be digitized. If we are lucky, we can verify books by hand-checking them in-person and manually entering them in the database. The team's visit to the Chawton House Library, where much of the data collection began, is discussed in Season 1, Episode 1 of *The WPHP Monthly Mercury*.

In terms of the WPHP, the Title alone can link us to an array of other metadata fields. Let us use Ann Radcliffe's 1794 *Mysteries of Udolpho* as an example.
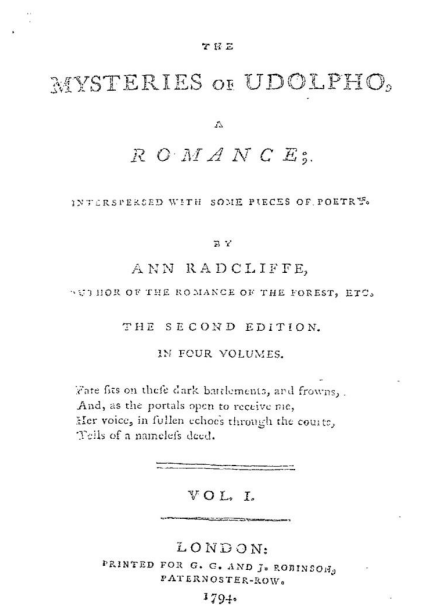


**Figure 2.**

This particular Title is derived from *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*, otherwise known as ECCO. We then transform this information into a Title record, seen below:

| ID | 1787 |
|---|---|
| **Title** | The mysteries of Udolpho, a romance; interspersed with some pieces of poetry. By Ann Radcliffe, author of The Romance of the Forest, etc. The second edition. In four volumes. |

**Figure 3.**

The contents of the full Title can be separated into other Title fields. For example, "Ann Racliffe, Author of the Romance of the Forest" allows us to add Radcliffe as a Contributor (Author) and include her signature in the Signed Author field:

| **Contributors** | Radcliffe, Ann (Author) |
|---|---|
| **Signed Author** | By Ann Radcliffe, author of The Romance of the Forest, etc. |

**Figure 4.**

"The second edition" tells us we can fill out the Edition Statement and Edition Number.

| **Edition Statement** | The second edition. |
|---|---|
| **Edition Number** | 2 |

**Figure 5.**

"In four volumes" allows us to complete the Volumes field:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Volumes** | 4 |

<div align="center">

**Figure 6.**

</div>

And finally, "A romance" allows us to fill out the Genre as a Fiction Romance:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Genre** | Fiction Romance |

<div align="center">

**Figure 7.**

</div>

It is important to note that we always include the full Title, even when it is very long. Our goal is to capture these complete titles, because, as Michelle Levy argues, they are often abbreviated in other sources: "the limitations of print (and even some early computer-based resources, like the English Short Title Catalogue) have impacted not only the usability but the accuracy and completeness of records" (5). We deliberately include all 144 words (!) of Alice Smith's New Book of Cookery, for example, in order to achieve more concise metadata (as seen below).

| ID | 1629 | | Format | Octavo (8vo) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Title** | A New Book of Cookery; or, Every Woman a Perfect Cook; Containing a very great variety of approved Receipts in all the branches of Cookery and Confectionary, viz. Marketing, Roasting, Boiling, Frying, Stewing, Hashing, Baking, Fricassees, Made Dishes, Soups, Sauces, Puddings, Pies and Tarts, Cakes, Custards, Cheese-cakes, Creams, Ragouts, Jellies, Pickling, Preserving, Drying, Potting, Candying, Collaring, English Wines, &c. To which is added, Directions for Clear Starching, and the Ladie's Toilet, or the Art of preserving and improving Beauty: Likewise a Collection of Family Physical Receipts, prepared at a small expence. The Whole calculated to assist the prudent Housewife in furnishing the cheapest and most elegant Set of Dishes in the various Departments of Cookery, and to instruct Ladies in many other Particulars of great Importance. Written by Mrs. A. Smith, of Stafford, Who has been a House-keeper to several Noble Families many Years. | | **Length (cm)** | |
| | | | **Width (cm)** | |
| | | | **Price (pound)** | |
| | | | **Price (shilling)** | |
| | | | **Price (pence)** | |
| | | | **Total Price (in pence)** | |
| | | | **Non-UK Price** | |
| | | | **Genre** | Domestic |
| | | | **Sources** | ESTC: T214796<br>Archive.org: https://archive.org/details/b21526369 |
| **Contributors** | Smith, Alice (Author) | | **Shelfmarks** | |
| **Signed Author** | Written by Mrs. A. Smith, of Stafford, Who has been a House-keeper to several Noble Families many | | **Notes** | |

<div align="center">

**Figure 8.**

</div>

While Titles in the WPHP may not always capture all of these elements, they serve as what Franco Moretti deems "the most public part of a book" (145), directing us to other subfields in our database. Indeed, considering that some books

remain undigitized, we rely on full titles to fill out other fields, as we lack the resources to manually examine every book to determine, for instance, its genre. As Moretti has argued in his analysis of over 7,000 British titles, an examination of titles themselves can reveal themes and tropes of the era, as well as the evolving nature of literary production and the development of the novel. Our metadata therefore facilitates this type of study.

There are over 15,000 Titles to explore in our database, many of which can be moralizing (*The Story of Sinful Sally*); excitable (*The Three Monks!!!*); bizarre (*The Strange and Unaccountable Life of the Penurious Daniel Dancer, Esq. A Miserable Miser, Who Died in a Sack*); or even, as Kate Ozment recently discovered, condescending (*An essay to prove women have no souls*). While it may be easy to overlook Titles as individual datasets, conducting a comprehensive examination of them enables us to endeavour to address Devoney Looser's 2015 question, "Just how much women's writing has been published in English?" (165), and observe a more illustrative landscape of women's contributions to print.

To explore Titles, click here.
To search Titles, click here.
To explore our Project Methodology on Titles, click here.
To explore our Spotlights on Titles, click here.

## WPHP Records Referenced

Documentation (methodology)

Contributors (field)

Formats (field)

Genres (field)

Sources (field)

*The WPHP Monthly Mercury* (podcast)

*The WPHP Monthly Mercury*, Season 1, Episode 1 (podcast episode)

*The Mysteries of Udolpho* (title)

ECCO (source)

Signed Author (field)

Edition Statement (field)

Edition Number (field)

Volumes (field)

Fiction Romance (genre)

*A New Book of Cookery* (title)

*The Story of Sinful Sally* (title)

*The Three Monks!!!* (title)

*The Strange and Unaccountable Life of the Penurious Daniel Dancer, Esq. A Miserable Miser, Who Died in a Sack* (title)

Kate Ozment (team member)
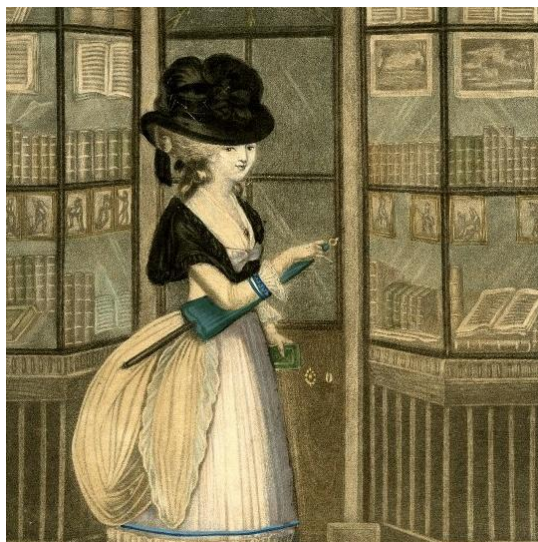
*An essay to prove women have no souls* (title)

**Works Cited**

Levy, Michelle. *Women's Books, 1750–1830.* Unpublished manuscript.

Looser, Devoney. "British Women Writers, Big Data, and Big Biography, 1780–1830." *Women's Writing* 22, no. 2 (2015): 165–171.

Moretti, Franco. "Style, Inc. Reflections on Seven Thousand Titles (British Novels, 1740–1850)." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 36, no. 1, Autumn 2009, pp.134–58.

Trettien, Whitney. "Title Pages." In *Book Parts*, edited by Dennis Duncan, and Adam Smyth, Oxford UP, 2019, pp. 39–50.

The Women's Print History Project

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# (Contributor) Role Call [Spotlight]

Authored by Amanda Law

Edited by Michelle Levy, Kate Moffatt, and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Law, Amanda. "(Contributor) Role Call." *The Women's Print History Project*, 6 July, 2023, https://womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/119.

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# (Contributor) Role Call

## *Amanda Law*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*



**Explore Contributor Roles**

Displaying 1–13 of 13

| Name | Description | Persons |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Author | The person responsible for the creation of the work. | 20321 |
| Bookseller | Indicates the person running the firm that sold the work. This role is included if the firm is female-run. | 1387 |
| Compiler | The person who selected the works contained within a text. Usually applies to anthologies and collections. | 120 |
| Composer | The person responsible for the composition of music, most often in a play or psalm. | 54 |
| Contributor | A person who contributed to a work in some way. Used when no more specific term was supplied. | 3180 |
| Copyright Holder | The person who is identified in the Copyright Statement as owning the copyright. This data has come from the American Antiquarian Society catalogue; titles published outside of the United States usually do not indicate the copyright holder. | 130 |
| Editor | The person who selected, revised, and arranged the work for print. | 840 |
| Engraver | The person responsible for turning an illustration into an engraving. | 1148 |
| Illustrator | The person who created the image from which any engravings were created. Usually different than the Engraver. | 380 |
| Introducer | The person who composed the introduction or any prefatory material for the work. Must be a different person than the author. | 122 |
| Printer | Indicates the person running the firm that printed the work. This role is included if the firm is female-run. | 2024 |
| Publisher | Indicates the person running the firm for whom the work was printed. This role is included if the firm is female-run. | 2803 |
| Translator | The person who is responsible for translating the text from one language to another. | 676 |

**Figure 1.** The thirteen Contributor Roles included in the WPHP.

The Contributors field of WPHP Title records includes the names of the author(s) of the title, and, where applicable, editors, engravers, illustrators, authors of introductory material, translators, compilers, composers, and copyright holders (see Contributor Roles for descriptions of each of these roles). In addition, women involved in the publication, printing, and/or sale of the title are listed as Contributors. While the DublinCore Metadata Initiative (DCMI) defines "Contributor" as "[a]n entity responsible for making contributions to the resource," including organizations, our data model only lists individual persons as Contributors, with each name in the field linking to a separate Persons record. The DCMI also distinguishes between "Creator" and "Contributor," establishing a hierarchy between authorship and other kinds of labour which the WPHP does not.

We source Contributor data from signatures on the title page or in the paratexts, but when authors use Pseudonyms (see Julianna Wagar's spotlight) or attributions that do not include a name (see Kate Ozment's spotlight on Signed

Author), more extensive research is required to identify the author. Sources such as the American Antiquarian Society or *British Travel Writing: Women's Travel Writing, 1780–1840* often note when a pseudonym is in use and attribute the title to the correct author. For example, title 15160, *Sierra Leone; or, the Liberated Africans*, is signed "your most affectionate Sister, Mary Church" at the end of the preface; we know Mary Church is a pseudonym for Catherine Temple, who is attached as the Contributor, because British Travel Writing has included this information in their notes. In other cases, we are able to recognize well-known pseudonyms or trace authorship through other titles referenced in the Signed Author field. If a title is unsigned or anonymous, but the author is known from other sources, we add that Person as a Contributor.



| ID | 15160 |
| --- | --- |
| Title | Sierra Leone; or, the Liberated Africans, in a Series of Letters from a Young Lady to Her Sister, in 1833 & 34. |
| Contributors | Temple, Catherine (Author) |
| Signed Author | Your most affectionate Sister, Mary Church. [preface] |
| Pseudonym | Mary Church |

**Figure 2**. Title ID 15160 Contributors, Signed Author, and Pseudonym.

If we are unable to identify the author of the title, we attach the Unknown Person record in the Contributors field, or, if gender is known, either Unknown, [Man] or Unknown, [Woman]. The Unknown, [Woman] tag is particularly important to us as it allows us to track a woman's involvement in the production of the title even if her identity is uncertain. We see this Contributor most often attached to titles signed by "a lady," such as title 5159, *The Irish Guardian*, or other similar attributions. The WPHP currently contains 490 title records where Unknown, [Woman] is a Contributor. Of course, most of these titles were contributed to by different women, but we have no way of knowing how many. One other point to bear in mind: we typically take title pages and relevant paratexts at face value. If a title page states that the title was written "by a lady," we accept the attribution without further evidence. It may be that a small number of these titles were in fact written by men, and if this kind of misidentification is known, we correct for it. We are, however, chiefly interested in how books were presented to the public, and this is our rationale for assigning gender based on title page and paratexual self-identifications.

**Figure 3.** Title ID 5159 signed "By a lady" with Unknown, [Woman] as the Contributor.

To highlight the involvement of women in the title's production, we include women publishers, printers, and booksellers as Contributors. In addition to attaching them as Firms to the title record, we create separate Persons records for these women involved in firms and attach them as Contributors. The WPHP holds 1632 titles where women are attached to Contributors as publishers, 706 as printers, and 679 as booksellers.

Including a Contributors field allows us to emphasize the personhood of women involved in print during this period. Authorship attribution can often be vague, as we can see from almost seven hundred titles in our database signed "by a lady," and is further complicated by pseudonyms and fully anonymous authorship. When it comes to the book trades, women are often hidden in the imprints of husbands or fathers, or through the use of first initials that do not signal their identities and offer only indeterminate gender identifications. By attaching Contributors, we are able to dig beneath these layers of obscuration to highlight the women behind these titles, and where the woman is unknown, we are at least able to capture the scope of women's labour.

## WPHP Records Referenced

Contributor Roles (field)

Persons (field)

"What's in a Name?: Pseudonymous Texts in the WPHP" (spotlight by Julianna Wagar)

"The Language of Authorship" (spotlight by Kate Ozment)

American Antiquarian Society (source)

*British Travel Writing: Women's Travel Writing, 1780–1840* (source)

*Sierra Leone; or, the Liberated Africans, in a Series of Letters from a Young Lady to Her Sister, in 1833 & 34.* (title)
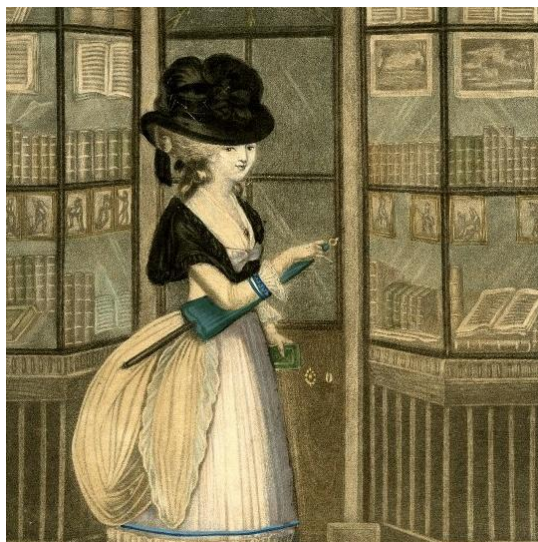
Unknown (person)

Unknown, [Man] (person)

Unknown, [Woman] (person)

*The Irish guardian. A pathetic story. In two volumes. By a lady.* (title)

Firms (field)

# Works Cited

"Contributor." *DublinCore Metadata Initiative*, 20 Jan. 2020,

www.dublincore.org/specifications/dublin-core/dcmi-terms/terms/contributor/.

The Women's Print History Project

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# "Printed by–" [Spotlight]

Authored by Isabella (Belle) Eist

Edited by Michelle Levy, Kate Moffatt, and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

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# "Printed by–"

## Isabelle (Belle) Eist

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*



**Figure 1**. A quote from "'Printed by—': Imprints and Firms in the WPHP."

For our title records, the title page provides the key source of information, with the imprint providing critical information about the actors involved in the manufacture of the book. *ABC for Book Collectors* defines an imprint as "A notification to the reader (and to the legal authorities) of the person or persons responsible for the production of a book" (129). Likewise, in *Book Parts*, Shef Rogers notes that the "basic publisher imprint was the logical development from the colophon" and "consisted of several essential pieces of information: the publisher's name and the location of the shop, the names of other booksellers involved in a book's distribution (joint publication shared the risk and increased market reach), and the place and date of publication" (55, 56). We use the imprint field to identify the publishers, printers, and booksellers involved in the production of the title. Imprints tell us the firm's name and their address or city of operation (which, interestingly, occasionally differs from a title's location of printing), and usually also tell us the role the business played: for most of the period we cover, "printed by" references the printer, "printed for," the publisher, and "sold by," the bookseller. In the earlier eighteenth century, however, these descriptors are less stable, as Kate Ozment has discussed in her spotlight on Ann Dodd. Nevertheless, the imprint provides crucial information for us, which we use to link in our title records. Each title contains separate entries for each firm that can be identified as being part of the manufacture of the title in question.

Most often, this information is taken directly from the imprint and colophon. However, we compare and supplement this information by consulting our firm sources—including the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, The Exeter Working Papers, British Book Trade Index, The Scottish Book Trade Index, The London Book Trades, 1800-1850, A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550-1800,* and *Wikipedia*—which provide additional information, such as start and end dates of operation, specific addresses, and full names, often beyond what may be included in a title's imprint or colophon.

Before we can add links to firms and indicate their roles in our title records, the firm must have a record in our firm table. A list of the information we attempt to capture about firms may be seen in our documentation, copied below. We must be careful to ascertain that we attach the correct firm record in the case of book trade businesses that operated over many years, at multiple locations, or under shifting names. Our firms field links to individual records within our firms table, documenting the book-trade businesses listed across both the imprint and colophon.



> **Firm Fields**
>
> **ID**
>
> Unique ID number for this entry.
>
> **Name**
>
> Most complete name of the firm known. We use square brackets to distinguish between firms at different locations with the same name.
>
> **Gender**
>
> Gender categories include male, female, or unknown. Firms are indicated as female if there is at least one female that has been conclusively identified as such.
>
> **Street Address**
>
> Street address of the firm, if known. Each time a firm moves to a new location, a new firm entry is made. Addresses are usually drawn from imprints.
>
> **City**
>
> City or town in which the firm's street address is located; geotagged.
>
> **Start Date**
>
> The date at which the firm began operations, if known, YYYY-MM-DD.
>
> **End Date**
>
> The date at which the firm ceased operations, if known, YYYY-MM-DD.
>
> **Sources**
>
> Sources consulted to populate the firm fields.
>
> **Related People**
>
> People related to this firm in some way.

**Figure 2.** The WPHP's Firms Documentation.

Including the addresses and the start and end dates of a firm's operations within our firm records (when that information can be found in imprints and through the secondary sources the WPHP consults) helps editors and viewers of the database distinguish between firms; for book trade businesses with especially long and prolific careers—often operating out of a number of different addresses or under changing partnerships across marriages and

deaths—attaching the most accurate firm record to a title entry is an important feature of the WPHP's data model. The city and address fields recorded in imprints help us to pinpoint which specific firm produced a corresponding title. For example, as the following screen capture of Elizabeth Boyle's multiple firm records depicts, she operated at seven different locations over a 21-year period. Using the imprint to see the date and address are often the only way we can discern which firm record to attach to a specific title.

| ID | Name | Street Address | City | Start Date | End date |
|----|------|----------------|------|------------|----------|
| 4857 | Elizabeth Boyle [1 Leicester Square] | 1 Leicester Square | London (GB) | 1823 | 1823 |
| 4856 | Elizabeth Boyle [15 Leicester Place] | 15 Leicester Place | London (GB) | 1818 | 1822 |
| 4854 | Elizabeth Boyle [Vine Street] | 15 Vine Street | London (GB) | 1809 | 1814 |
| 4855 | Elizabeth Boyle [Warwick Street] | 37 Warwick Street, Golden Square | London (GB) | 1815 | 1817 |
| 4858 | Elizabeth Boyle and Son [1 Leicester Square] | 1 Leicester Square | London (GB) | 1824 | 1826 |
| 4859 | Elizabeth Boyle and Son [284 Regent Street] | 284 Regent Street | London (GB) | 1827 | 1830 |
| 4860 | Elizabeth Boyle and Son [290 Regent Street] | 290 Regent Street | London (GB) | 1831 | 1834 |

**Figure 3.** Screen Capture of the WPHP Firms Table for "Elizabeth Boyle" as of June 2023.

Although an imprint typically includes the location and date of publication, we parse these into their own fields. Differentiating the city and date of publication from the remainder of the imprint in our title records enables further refinement through the advanced search feature, increasing the accessibility and discoverability of our data for those looking for bibliographic data on titles published in a specific locale.

Our firm records also note the gender of those involved in the operation of the firm, when known. This is an important designation for firms and persons records alike in the WPHP. Book trade businesses run by or involving women are linked in our title records to both their firms record and their persons record in the contributor field. As our 2022 "Down the Rabbit Hole: Researching Women in the Book Trades" Spotlight Series emphasized, many women working in the book trades throughout the long eighteenth century were hidden behind their husband's names or were only represented by a first initial in imprints, making it difficult to confirm a woman's involvement. The majority of the WPHP's 5143 verified firms maintain an unknown gender designation—this is because our default gender, rather than being male, is unknown. We do this so as not to replicate assumptions about men dominating the book trades. Thus far, we have been able to verify a woman's involvement in 611 firms using our sources or data from imprints and colophons in our title records. Combing through our firm sources has enabled the WPHP to create records for women-run book trade businesses operating between 1700 and 1836 who are not linked to any titles currently in our database. In addition to women working as publishers, printers, and booksellers, some firm records created from our sources also account for women working as stationers, as many performed multiple roles within the book trades sphere.

**WPHP Records Referenced**

"What Does it Mean to Publish? A Messy Accounting of Anne Dodd" (spotlight by Kate Ozment)

## Works Cited

Carter, John, and Nicolas Barker. *ABC for Book Collectors*. 8th ed., Oak Knoll Press and The British Library, 2004.

Rogers, Shef. "Book Parts: Imprints, Imprimaturs, and Copyright Pages." *Book Parts*, edited by Dennis Duncan and Adam Smyth, Oxford UP, 2019, pp. 51–64.

The Women's Print History Project

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# The Language of Authorship [Spotlight]

Authored by Kate Ozment

Edited by Michelle Levy and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Ozment, Kate. "The Language of Authorship." *The Women's Print History Project*, 12 July 2023, https://womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/123.

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

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# The Language of Authorship

*Kate Ozment*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*



| | |
|---|---|
| **ID** | 25240 |
| **Title** | A poem sacred to the immortal memory of Her Most Excellent Majesty, Anne, late Queen of Great-Britain, who Died at her Palace of Kensington the First Day of August, 1714. in the Fiftieth Year of her Age, and the Thirteenth of her Reign. Written by a lady of quality. |
| **Contributors** | Unknown, [Woman] (Author) <br> Dodd I, Anne (Bookseller) |
| **Signed Author** | Written by a Lady of Quality |
| **Pseudonym** | |

**Figure 1.** Screenshot of WPHP Title ID 25240, *A Poem Sacred to the Memory of Her Most Excellent Majesty, Queen Anne*, written "by a lady of quality."

The Signed Author field is unique to the *Women's Print History Project* as a space that captures information about author attributions on the title page or other paratextual material including the preface. It can be found below the Contributors field on title records.

An author attribution is used in the copyright sense to signal the person who has the right to claim ownership over a creative work (*Book Parts* 59–60). However, for most of the long eighteenth century, attribution was more constructed and textual than claiming legal rights that more reliably rested with the publisher than the author until the late 1700s (see Rose, *Authors and Owners*).

The WPHP is interested less in who has legal access to reproduce an object and more so in how the book presents its attribution textually. This is what the Signed Author field captures. This information is manually added by WPHP editors by copying it from the title page transcription in metadata sources like the *English Short Title Catalog* or viewing digital surrogates of the documents and looking for signatures in paratext. If no attribution information is

included, we put "[Anonymous]" to signal anonymous authorship, with brackets to indicate this is not transcription. Authorship language is captured no matter the level of detail, and this field contains everything from initials to full sentences.

We capture this information in a separate field because it allows for a targeted search for the language of authorship, which is textually constructed in complex and interesting ways. The language of self presentation is distinct from information included as an author in resources like the ESTC or *WorldCat*, which tend to rely on verified information. Attribution language does not need to signal a concrete person and can instead be quite expansive and rich. Attribution information in the Signed Author field includes relational language that signals family ties and backgrounds, gendered language, such as the ubiquitous "by a lady" (appears in 1,126 records) and attribution chains signaled with "by the author of" (appears in 2,719 records).

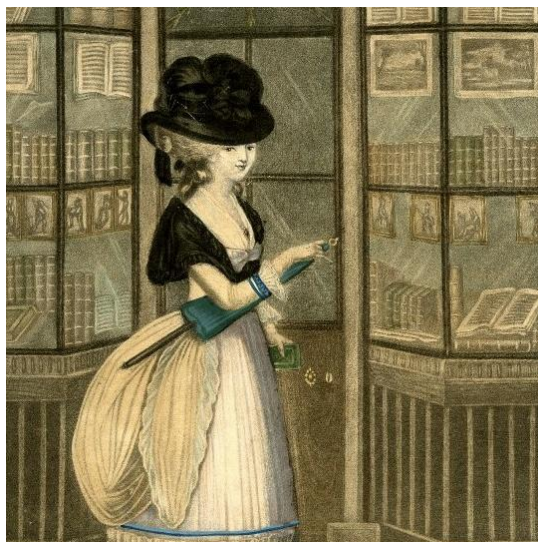| ID | 11864 |
|---|---|
| Title | The Woman of Colour, a Tale. By the author of "Light and Shade," "The Aunt and the Niece," "Ebersfield Abby", &c. In two volumes. |
| Contributors | Black, Hannah (Publisher)<br>Unknown, [Woman] (Author) |
| Signed Author | By the author of "Light and Shade," "The Aunt and the Niece," "Ebersfield Abby", &c. |
| Pseudonym | |

**Figure 2.** Screenshot of WPHP Title ID 11864, *The Woman of Colour, a Tale*, written "by the author of 'Light and Shade,' 'The Aunt and the Niece,' and 'Edersfield Abby,' &c."

This field allows users to access a newly created dataset of authorial language in the long eighteenth-century with a special emphasis on attributions that are gendered feminine–as they are more likely to end up in the database. Because it separates this language from the Contributors field, it creates a new pathway for accessing how authorship was textually created rather than legally assigned.

## Works Cited

Duncan, Dennis, and Adam Smyth, editors. *Book Parts.* Oxford UP, 2019.

Rose, Mark. *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright.* Harvard UP, 1993.

The Women's Print History Project

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# Making Genre-alizations: Genre Designations in the WPHP [Spotlight]

Authored by Isabelle Burrows

Edited by Michelle Levy

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

Burrows, Isabelle. "Making Genre-alizations: Genre Designations in the WPHP." *The Women's Print History Project*, 17 July 2023, https://womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/125.

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

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# Making Genre-alizations: Genre Designations in the WPHP

## *Isabelle Burrows*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*
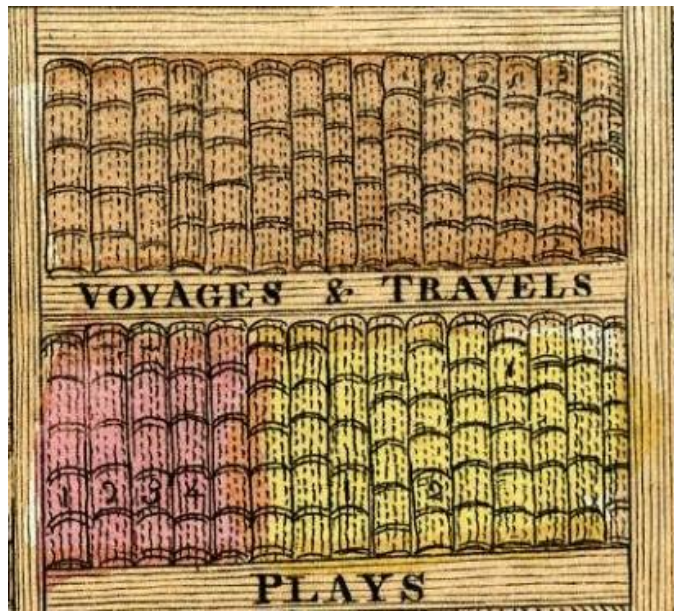


**Figure 1.** Detail from "The Circulating Library," published by Laurie & Whittle, 1804. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Genre is one of the fields used in WPHP metadata to describe a book's intellectual content rather than its features as an object. Along with the title, which often helps us to identify a book's contents at a glance, the genre field is the place where our data describes a book's contents and purpose. The authors whose works our data describes wrote in varied genres, from Juvenile Literature (our most populated genre category, with 3888 titles) to Poetry Dramatic (our least populated genre category, at just seven titles).

As our genre attribution system stands, we assign one genre per title from our list based on features of a book like title, preface, and chapters or verses which inform a research assistant's assessment of that book's genre. We briefly allowed multiple genre designations per title but found that complicated the genre issue as much as resolved it. So many titles can occupy two, three, or more genres, that to list every possible genre association would render the process of distinguishing titles by genre futile. The folks at *Books and Borrowing: An Analysis of Scottish Borrowers' Registers, 1750-1830* discuss their own genre challenges with multiple genre labels in a blog post, while the WPHP's own Kate

Moffatt, Tamanna T., and Michelle Levy dive further into the problem in their spotlight, which uses the work of Anna Letitia Barbauld as a case study.

Given the 31 diverse categories we offer as options in the WPHP's genre list, it might seem a simple task to attribute the right genre description to a work. Nevertheless, genre is one of the WPHP's most hotly-debated data fields because, while other data fields such as Format or Volume are objective assessments of an item, genre is a subjective interpretation which compresses information into a single category. The process of selecting a single genre is further complicated by the ambiguity of genre labels during the eighteenth century (a period in which genres were themselves being formulated), and by the unresolved debate between form and subject—both of which our genre labels must attempt to capture.

### CONTENTS.

**Figure 2.** List of genres available at the Parthenon Circulating Library and Reading Rooms in New York. From the 1834 *Catalogue of the Parthenon Circulating Library and Reading Rooms* by Charles Francis.

Our genre list comprises one group of descriptors which emphasize form (Letters, Works, and Poetry, for example); one group which emphasizes subject (such as Science/Natural History/Medicine or Religion/Biblical); and another group which confounds this division entirely (Education, for example, is neither a form nor a subject, but an indicator

of a work's purpose, and may include works that have little in common with one another in form or subject). Fiction, as a category, further complicates the designation process, as it takes into account not only our assessment of a book's contents, but also the author's intended categorization of their work based on their chosen title (as with Fiction Romance, a label only applied to books whose titles include the word Romance).

The genre question is underlined when the WPHP collaborates with other databases who treat genre differently, as when we added relevant data from *The Drawing Book Project*. As the name suggests, this is a catalogue created to prioritize a subject genre: art. The WPHP genre list has no specific genre label for books about art; therefore, when adding TDBP titles, we had to categorize such books using form-specific genre labels like Essays, for books of art criticism, or adjacent subject labels like Science/ Natural History/Medicine, for botanical illustration books, even though a researcher looking through the WPHP for books about art might prefer a subject heading for Art rather than the far broader genre category Essays.

Given the complexity of ideas that unfold within the pages of a book, it is currently possible only to provide an accurate, rather than a comprehensive, genre designation. Stay tuned, however, as our genre category is due for a revision which may amalgamate some of our less populated categories and attempt to separate out the subjects from the genres. It remains to be seen, however, whether this revision will lead to a resolution, or to many more complications.

## WPHP Records Referenced

Juvenile Literature (genre)

Poetry Dramatic (genre)

Genre (field)

Anna Letitia Barbauld (person)

Letters (genre)

Works (genre)

Poetry (genre)

Science/Natural History/Medicine (genre)

Religion/Biblical (genre)

Education (genre)

Fiction (genre)

Fiction Romance (genre)

*The Drawing Book Project* (source)

## Further Reading

Moffatt, Kate, Michelle Levy, and Tamanna T. "Anna Letitia Barbauld's Writing and the Problem of Genre." *The Women's Print History Project*, 1 April 2022, https://womensprinthistoryproject.com/blog/post/104.

Sangster, Matt. "Some Notes on Book Hierarchies and Genre Classification." *Books and Borrowing 1750-1830: An Analysis of Scottish Borrowers' Registers*, 12 June 2023, https://borrowing.stir.ac.uk/some-notes-on-book-hierarchies-and-genre-classification/.
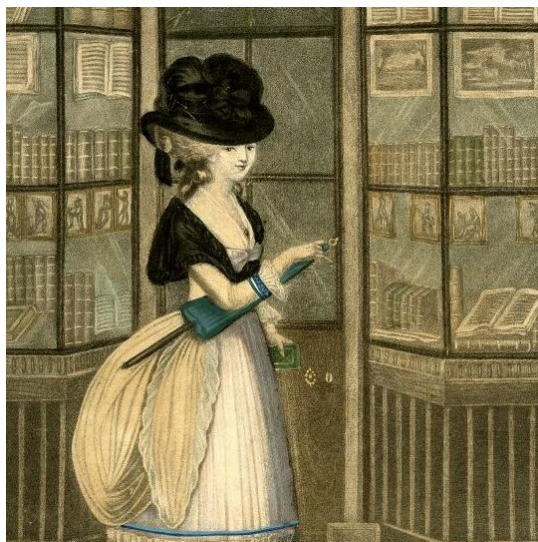
The Women's Print History Project

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# Voluminous Decisions [Spotlight]

Authored by Tamanna (Tammy) T.

Edited by Kandice Sharren, Michelle Levy, and Kate Moffatt

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

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# Voluminous Decisions

## *Tamanna (Tammy) T.*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*

**Volumes**

Number of volumes that the edition was published in, using Arabic numerals.

**Figure 1.**

The *Women's Print History Project* uses the "volumes" field to capture the number of volumes an edition of a book has been published in, using Arabic numerals (for example, 3). Each volume contains its own title page, pagination and contents page. Multi-volume works functioned in two ways—the first was to break up a completed work into parts for improved organization and accessibility, and the second to add additional volumes to an existing work after its initial publication. Navigating and finding specific topics of interest becomes easier when a large book is broken into multiple volumes. "By this division of the work, the buyer may gratify his curiosity, or his ambition, as he wishes; he may buy only the Grammar, if he pleases, and yet gratify himself with the thoughts that he can, at any time, complete the whole," says Samuel Johnson in the preface to the 1755 *Dictionary of the English Language*. Authors and publishers had a financial incentive to split books into multiple volumes, as it allowed them to increase the overall price and maximize profits. It was also possible to add volumes to an existing work after its initial publication. This method allows the authors to elaborate upon their ideas and incorporate new insights or research. It also creates a sense of continuity and engagement with the readers.

The WPHP keeps track of the number of volumes of a title, which can prove essential in knowing when a book and its various parts (and editions) were published, and whether they were printed at one address and printing shop. Different printers could print different editions of the same text, but they could also print different volumes of the same edition of a work. This is particularly relevant to the standardized three-volume structure of fiction, James Raven explains this in *A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles* when he describes a five-volume work where "Longman employed four printing firms to produce the different volumes as quickly as possible ... Baldwin, who printed volumes one and five, was significantly more expensive than the others" (Raven, 2000 I: 95).

The multi-volume format was also advantageous for circulating libraries, which played a major role in book distribution, especially fiction. They primarily acquired novels in bulk, allowing them to accommodate longer sets within their budget (Garside, 2000 II: 90). Libraries with extensive sets could display books as retail items, attracting potential subscribers. Lending books by volume allowed for better access to newer and popular books.



| ID | 15910 |
|---|---|
| Title | Belinda. By Maria Edgeworth. In Two Volumes. |
| Contributors | Edgeworth, Maria (Author) |
| Signed Author | By Maria Edgeworth. |
| Pseudonym | |
| Firms | Wells and Lilly (Publisher) *(unverified)* <br> Eastburn, Kirk and Co. (Publisher) *(unverified)* |
| Self-published | No |
| Volumes | 2 |

**Figure 2.** Screenshot of the title record for the American edition of *Belinda*, which was published in two volumes rather than the original three (WPHP, ID 15910).

Volumes of the same work can be published together or separately, and WPHP organizes these different forms of publication differently. If multiple volumes are published in the same year, and share the same bibliographic information, the volumes share one record. For example, the first edition of Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* has 3 volumes. They were released together (as is stated in the full title itself), which is why it is one record. It is important to note, however, that different editions of the same work may contain different numbers of volumes. As long as they were released in the same year with the same edition, they are in one record. For instance, the Irish (Title ID 8512) and Boston (Title ID 15910) editions of *Belinda* have two volumes each.

If the volumes published span over multiple years, or each contains different bibliographic information, every volume will have its own record. For example, Charlotte Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets* was originally published as a single volume released in 1784, but a second volume was added 13 years later, in 1797. The two volumes look like they were published at the same time at first glance, but the title pages confirm that they were published at different times and hence are different editions. Multiple editions of Volume One were released in the time between the publication of the

first and second volume of the book. This is why we have a 1797 record for Volume One and two 1797 records for Volume Two, which were designed to be uniform with the first volumes printed in 1789 and 1797, respectively.
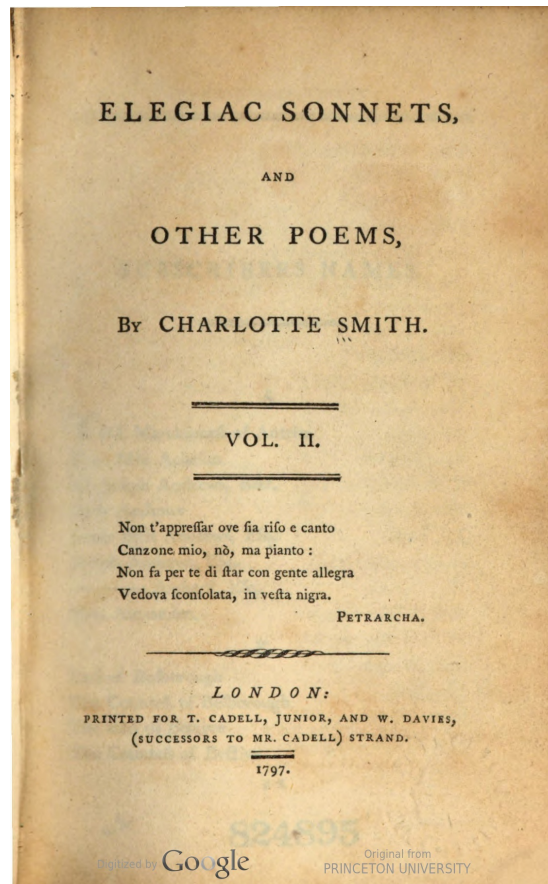


**Figure 3.** Title page of one of the 1797 editions of Volume Two of Charlotte Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets* (Image from *HathiTrust Digital Library*)

Both methods for publishing works in separate volumes show practical and commercial advantages. Dividing a work into volumes facilitates organization and improves overall reading experience for the readers. It might also have an impact on the publication's profits, with multiple volumes bringing in revenue. Adding volumes to an existing work also allows authors to maintain relevance and capitalize on the success and popularity of their previous works.

**WPHP Works Referenced**

Volumes (title field)
*Belinda. In Three Volumes.* (title, first edition)
*Belinda. By Maria Edgeworth. In two volumes.* (title, Irish first edition)
*Belinda. By Maria Edgeworth. In two volumes.* (title, Boston edition)
*Elegiac sonnets, and other essays. By Charlotte Smith, of Bignor Park, in Sussex.* (title, first edition)
*Elegiac sonnets, and other poems, by Charlotte Smith. Vol. I. The eighth edition.* (title, 1797 edition)

*Elegiac sonnets, and other poems, by Charlotte Smith. Vol. II.* (title, 1797 edition; uniform with first volume printed in 1789)

*Elegiac Sonnets, and Other Poems. By Charlotte Smith. Volume II.* (title, 1797 edition; uniform with the first volume printed in 1797)

*Elegiac Sonnets, By Charlotte Smith. The Fifth Edition, With Additional Sonnets and Other Poems.* (title, 1789 edition)

## Works Cited

Garside, Peter. "The English Novel in the Romantic Era: Consolidation and Dispersal." *The English Novel, 1770–1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles*, edited by Peter Garside et al., vol. 2, Oxford UP, 2000.

Raven, James. "The Novel Comes of Age." *The English Novel, 1770–1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles*, edited by Peter Garside et al., vol. 1, Oxford UP, 2000.
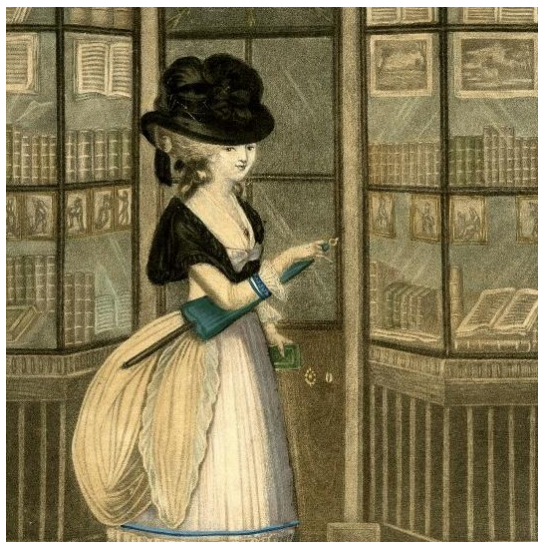
The Women's Print History Project

# Matters of Format [Spotlight]

Authored by Michelle Levy

Edited by Kate Moffatt and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada    Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada    Canada    DHIL.

# Matters of Format

## *Michelle Levy*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*
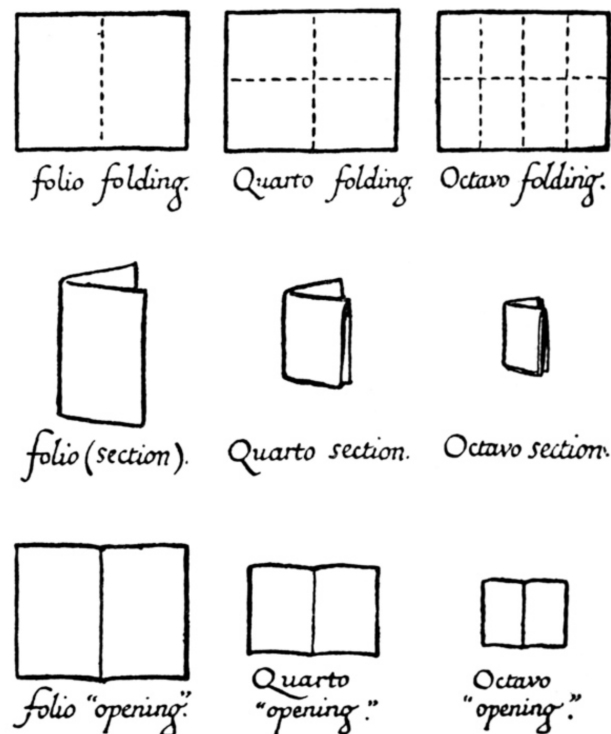


**Figure 1.** Edward Johnston, Project Gutenberg's Writing & Illuminating, & Lettering.

Format is defined by John Carter and Nicolas Barker as "the structure of a volume in terms of the number of times the original printed sheet has been folded to form its constituent leaves . . . Thus in a folio each sheet has been folded once, in a quarto twice, in an octavo three times" and so on (109).

In the WPHP, each title record may be assigned one of the following formats. In the "format" section of the database, you find a list of all formats, their common abbreviations, a description and the number of titles assigned to each format:

| Name | Abbreviations | Description | Titles |
|------|---------------|-------------|--------|
| Folio | fo | Each sheet is folded once to make two leaves and four pages. | 129 |
| Quarto | 4to | Each sheet is folded twice to make four leaves and eight pages. | 599 |
| Sexto | 6to, 6mo | Each sheet is folded to make six leaves and twelve pages. | 20 |
| Octavo | 8vo | Each sheet is folded to make eight leaves and sixteen pages. | 3084 |
| Duodecimo | 12mo | Each sheet is folded make twelve leaves and twenty-four pages. | 5701 |
| Sextodecimo | 16mo | Each sheet is folded four times to make sixteen leaves and thirty-two pages. | 214 |
| Octodecimo | 18mo | Each sheet is folded to make eighteen leaves and thirty-six pages. | 196 |
| Vicesimo-quarto | 24mo | Each sheet is folded to make twenty-four leaves and forty-eight pages. | 117 |
| Trigesimo-secundo | 32mo | Each sheet is folded to make thirty-two leaves and sixty-four pages. | 37 |
| Quadragesimo-octavo | 48mo | Each sheet is folded to make forty-eight leaves and ninety-six pages. | 0 |
| Sexagesimo-quarto | 64mo | Each sheet is folded to make sixty-four pages and one hundred and twenty-eight pages. | 0 |
| Broadside | bs | A document printed on one side only of a single sheet of paper. | 154 |
| Unknown | | The format is unknown. | 3274 |

**Figure 2**. Screenshot of the WPHP "Format" page as of 7 June 2023.

As of early June 2023, we have a total of 13525 title records; of these 10251 have been assigned formats, and 3274 have unknown formats, or 76% of our title records have known formats and 24% of title records have unidentified formats. Of the known formats, the most common by far is duodecimo, at 5701 titles, or 42% of all title records, and 56% of title records with an identified format, followed by octavo, at 3084 titles, or 23% of all title records, and 30% of title records with an identified format. On the one hand, the popularity of these formats is in keeping with what we know of the long eighteenth century, as consumers demanded books in more portable, accessible and inexpensive forms; on the other hand, the large number of duodecimo and octavo titles may reflect bias in our data sources. We have used *The English Novel* extensively, for example, and most novels were published in duodecimo or octavo. On the other hand, broadsides and other more ephemeral forms of print are far less likely to survive and be included in the ESTC (see Tolonen), our foundational dataset that is a source in nearly 9000 title records, and this may explain why there are comparatively so few of these (154) in our title records. We are also still looking for our first quadragesimo-octavo (48mo) and sexagesimo-quarto (64mo). Please reach out to us if you have any leads!

According to *The Oxford Companion to the Book* (2010), "at the heart of a bibliographical description is a statement of format and a collational formula." Both of these tasks require access to the physical books and, given constraints on resources, our location in Canada, and the scale of our dataset, we are rarely able to generate information on format ourselves (and do not include collation formulas) as we are able to hand-verify only a small percentage of our title records. Mostly, we rely on existing sources, including library catalogues, bibliographies, and publisher advertisements and catalogues. Fortunately, from these sources, we have been able to attach formats to over three-quarters of our title

records, another example of the importance of aggregating existing bibliographical knowledge for large-scale projects like the WPHP.
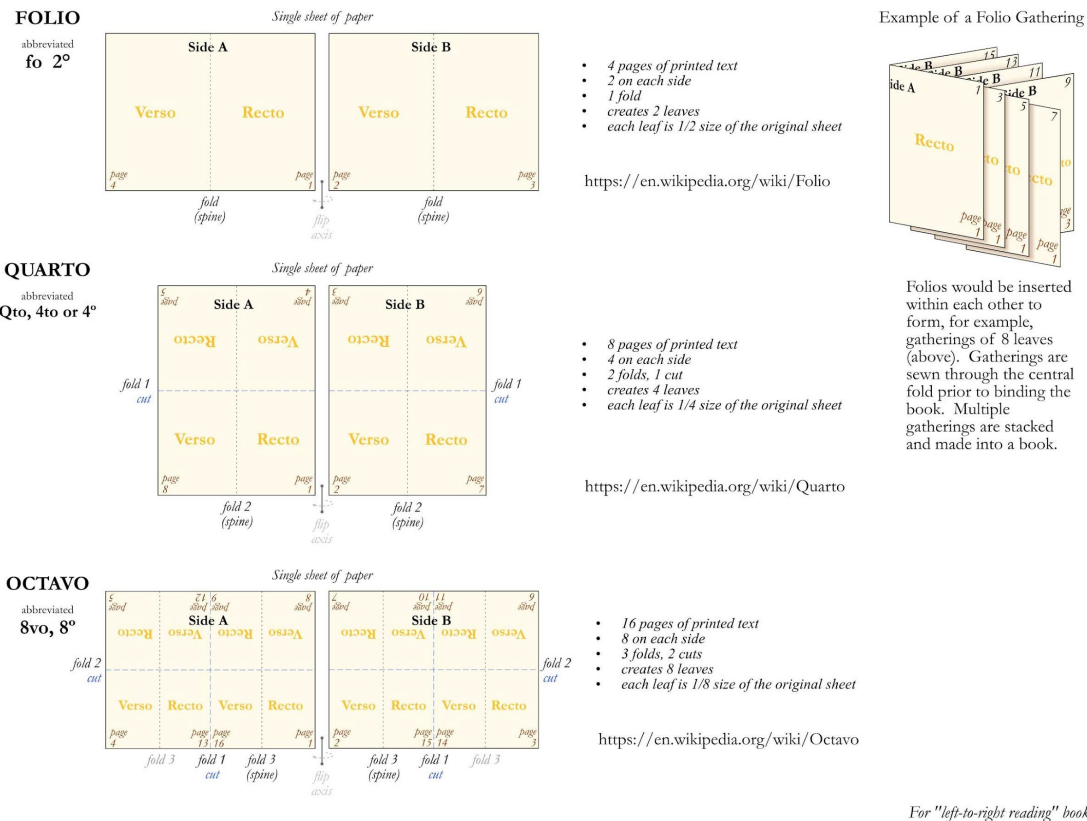


**Figure 3.** Created by *Wikipedia Commons* user Skaalr and shared under a Creative Commons license: (CC BY-SA 4.0).
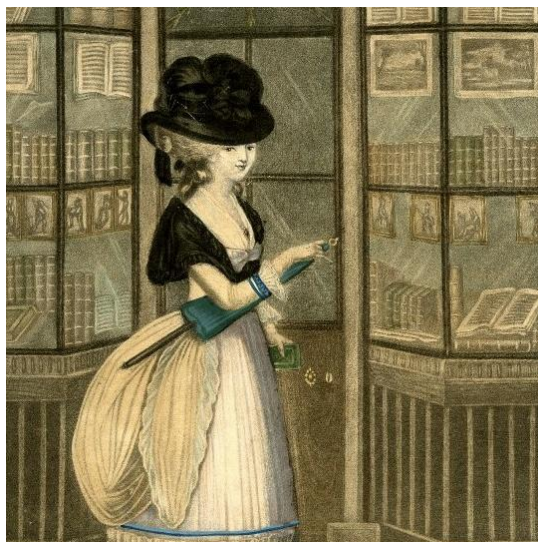
## WPHP Records Referenced

Formats (field)

*The English Novel* (source)

## Works Cited

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Tolonen, Mikko, et al. "The Anatomy of Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 56 no. 1, 2022, p. 95–123.

The Women's Print History Project

# What's in a Name?: Pseudonymous Texts in the WPHP [Spotlight]

Authored by Julianna Wagar

Edited by Michelle Levy, Kate Moffatt, and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

PDF Edited: 3 July 2023

# What's in a Name?: Pseudonymous Texts in the WPHP

## *Julianna Wagar*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*



**Figure 1.** *"Unidentified Female Silhouette, 1797."* National Gallery of Art.

The pseudonym field in our WPHP title records is used to capture the "false or fictitious name; an alias" (OED) that an author has published under for a particular title. It is used in addition to the signed author field, which Kate Ozment has discussed in further detail in her Spotlight, "The Language of Authorship." Household pseudonyms such as Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell (used by the Brontë sisters) are now recognizable as pseudonyms—their novels were published under their real names after their original publications were successful (Whitehead 59). This is common with pseudonyms: authors who originally published under a pseudonym begin publishing under their own name as their work grows in popularity.

Hannah More is one such example, as she originally published under a pseudonym but eventually published under her own name. Some of her earliest work is published "by a Lady" or simply "Z." While "by a Lady" would not be classified as a pseudonym, as it is not a fictitious name, "Z." hints at a name other than More's own. Based on these

signatures alone, it would be difficult to attach a person to any of these titles; however, More was one of the most popular writers in the late eighteenth century and her anonymously and pseudonymously published works have long been linked to her. In particular, "Z." was the pseudonym More used for her contributions to the *Cheap Repository Tracts* (Hole xlvii), although it typically appears at the end of the preface, rather than on title pages. Thus, the WPHP captures that More used a pseudonym early on in her career by adding "Z." to the Signed Author field and the Pseudonym field and attaching More as the author.

| ID | 18603 |
|---|---|
| Title | The history of Mr. Fantom, the new fashioned philosopher, and his man William. |
| Contributors | More, Hannah (Author) <br> Anderson, Alexander (Engraver) |
| Signed Author | Z. [From AAS: Signed on p. 22] |
| Pseudonym | Z. |

**Figure 2.** WPHP Title Record.

There is an assumption that women took on pseudonymous names in order to hide their gender (Ezell 63), but that is not always the case. There are many reasons that one may decide to use a pseudonym; as Mark Vareschi writes, "when presented with the name of the author, we typically come to characterise and know the text through the figure of the author: we have formed a named agent ostensibly responsible for the text; we have a name under which to catalogue the text" (1). As the WPHP data shows, pseudonyms weren't only or even primarily used to disguise an author's gender—they could contribute to an author's textual performance or to shield an author from public recognition.

Pseudonyms could be used to communicate the genre of a book. Priscilla Homespun is the author of *The universal receipt book; being a compendious repository of practical information in cookery, preserving, pickling, distilling, and all the branches of domestic economy. To which is added, some advice to farmers.* Her last name, "Homespun," is directly related to the topic of her work, domestic work, which both communicates the genre she publishes in and textually performs knowledge in the area to her audience. An author name that aligns with the topic of the text is also an obvious cue that it is a pseudonym, even though we have not yet been able to identify the author behind "Priscilla Homespun."
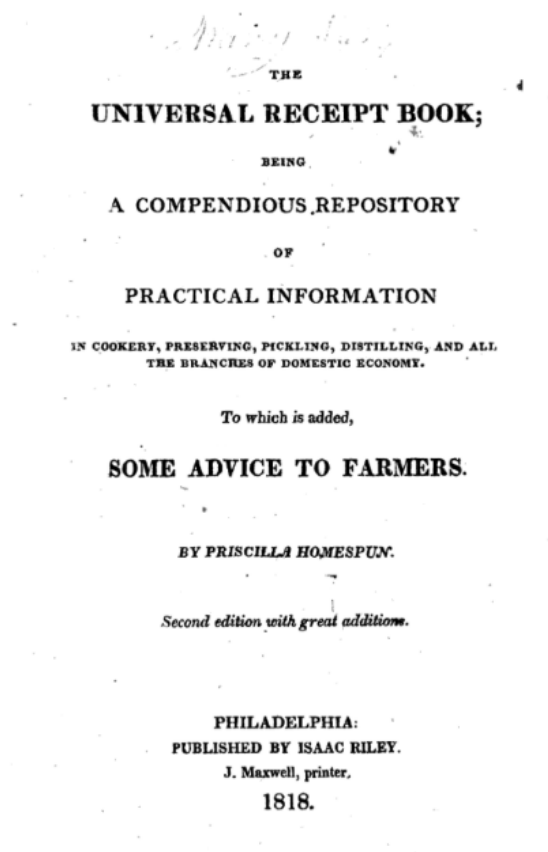
THE
UNIVERSAL RECEIPT BOOK;
BEING
A COMPENDIOUS REPOSITORY
OF
PRACTICAL INFORMATION
IN COOKERY, PRESERVING, PICKLING, DISTILLING, AND ALL
THE BRANCHES OF DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

To which is added,

SOME ADVICE TO FARMERS.

BY PRISCILLA HOMESPUN.

Second edition with great additions.

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY ISAAC RILEY.
J. Maxwell, printer.
1818.

**Figure 3.** The Universal Receipt Book. *Google Books*.

Mrs. Meanwell is another example of textual performance by a pseudonym—her works are lessons for children, such as *The Entertaining History of Master Billy, and Miss Polly Kindly: written for the entertainment and instruction of all the little good boys, and girls, who are able and willing to read it*. The fictitious name literally states that the author "means well," which aligns with the genre of her educational and instructional texts.

Uncovering a pseudonymous author can be done in a myriad of ways. The most obvious way is only applicable to those who have published widely. For example, Emma de Lisle is the signed author of *Eva of Cambria; or, the Fugitive Daughter*. Her later works are published "by the author of Eva of Cambria," and also by Amelia Beauclerc, which is her real name. Because these titles are associated through the signed author field, we learn that Emma de Lisle was a pseudonym and attribute all of these works to Beauclerc in the WPHP. When authors use a real name as a pseudonym, it can be much harder for us to determine their true identity.

In many instances, this research is time intensive; we rely on research available through the resources we use to verify titles—*Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, *English Short Title Catalogue*, American Antiquarian Society, etc.—that contains detailed information on the publication of a title. For example, *A Letter to the Women of England on the Injustice of Mental Subordination* claims to be authored by Anne Francis Randall on the title page, and in one or more of our resources. But in this case, the British Library attributes this pseudonym to the author's real name: Mary

Robinson. We can take that information and apply it to our data, noting that this research was done by an external source. In the case of Mary Robinson, Anne Frances Randall was one of the many names she published under; Daniel Robinson notes that she "employed various pseudonyms for periodical publications, but she rarely used them to disguise herself. Instead, when attached to poems in newspapers, they were ways of showcasing her poetic virtuosity" (142). She had different personas that allowed her to link particular pseudonyms to particular genres or poetic voices. By the time that her *Letter* was published, Robinson was already famous and may have wanted to separate the essay's argument from her notorious celebrity. Regardless of her intention, the disguise was short-lived: the second edition was published under her real name.

If you are interested in pseudonyms in the WPHP, here is a list of some to explore. Try searching the following names in quotations in the Pseudonym field in the Advanced Title Search.

- Mrs. Bridget Bluemantle (Elizabeth Thomas)
- Prudentia Homespun (Jane West)
- Carolina Petty Pasty (Elizabeth Cobbold)
- Peregrine Reedpen (C.F. Adderley)
- Mira (Eliza Haywood)
- Explorabilis (Eliza Haywood)
- Mrs. Lovechild (Ellenor Fenn)
- Hannah Heartwhole (Hannah More)
- Will Chip (Hannah More)
- Joan Plotwell (True identity unknown)
- Mother Shipton (Ursula Southeil)
- Mrs. Teachwell (Ellenor Fenn)
- Theresa Tidy (Elizabeth Graham)
- Mother Bunch (Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy)
- Mrs. Sharp-Set O'Blunder (Elizabeth de Franchetti)
- Madame Panache (Frances Moore)
- Miss Aimwell (True identity unknown)
- Lucretia Lovejoy (True identity unknown)
- Mrs. Artlove (True identity unknown)

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"The Language of Authorship" (spotlight by Kate Ozment)
Brontë, Curer/Charlotte (person, author)
Brontë, Ellis/Emily (person, author)
Brontë, Acton/Anne (person, author)

More, Hannah (person, author)

*Cheap Repository Tracts* (title)

Homespun, Priscilla (person, author)

*The universal receipt book; being a compendious repository of practical information in cookery, preserving, pickling, distilling, and all the branches of domestic economy. To which is added, some advice to farmers* (title)

Meanwell, Mrs. (person, author)

*The Entertaining History of Master Billy, and Miss Polly Kindly: written for the entertainment and instruction of all the little good boys, and girls, who are able and willing to read it* (title)

*Eva of Cambria; or, the Fugitive Daughter* (title)

Beauclerc, Amelia (person, author)

*A Letter to the Women of England on the Injustice of Mental Subordination* (title)

Robinson, Mary (person, author)

*Thoughts on the condition of women, and on the injustice of mental subordination* (title)

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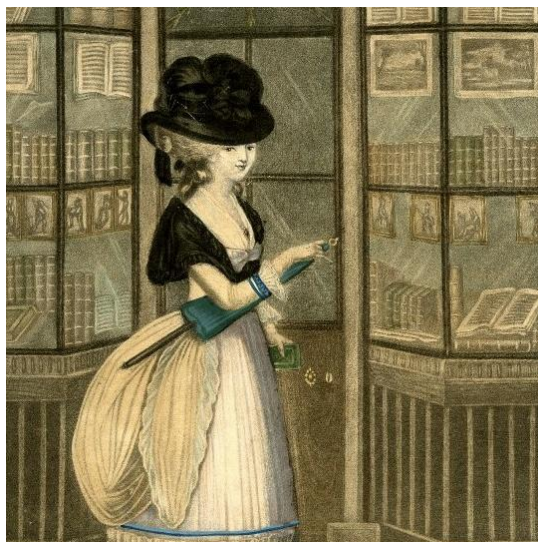
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The Women's Print History Project

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# Colophons Count [Spotlight]

Authored by Kate Moffatt

Edited by Michelle Levy and Kandice Sharren

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

PDF Edited: 3 August 2023

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# Colophons Count

## *Kate Moffatt*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*

On the last page of Mary Pilkington's *Marvellous Adventures, or, The Vicissitudes of a Cat: In Which are Sketches of the Characters of the Different Young Ladies and Gentlemen into Whose Hands Gramlkin Came* (1802) there are two short lines of print near the bottom edge, reading

> W. Blackader, Printer,
> 10, Took's Court, Chancery Lane.

These two lines are a colophon. During our period, a colophon is a small, imprint-like line or two containing information about the printer of a book, typically located on the verso of a title page or on the last page. Prior to the eighteenth century, however, the definition of the term 'colophon' was less stable, and it often held a wide variety of information, most of which we would expect to find in an imprint in the eighteenth century. In Shef Rogers' "Imprints, Imprimaturs, and Copyright Pages" in Dennis Duncan and Adam Smyth's *Book Parts* (2019), Rogers outlines the history of the colophon: "From the mid-fifteenth century . . . the colophon became a more formal collocation of essential information to indicate who had published a work, where it could be purchased, and, because the book was normally sold unbound in sheets, a statement called the register that told the binder the order of the sheets for binding" (54). Rogers goes on to trace how the information in fifteenth-century colophons began to be distributed across printed materials in the following centuries; by the early sixteenth century, title page imprints had become more common, and by the seventeenth, colophons had been "supplanted by imprints" (55).

Rogers' description of the colophon's varying elements throughout history is helpful for understanding how changeable this particular book part has continued to be—but our data suggests that the shift from colophons to imprints was still not as tidy as it may seem. While Rogers acknowledges that colophons have "remained a feature of fine press printing, to acknowledge the book's makers, to highlight the quality of the materials used to make the book, and, in limited editions, to record the book's place in the numbered series" (55), our bibliographical work for the WPHP establishes that the colophon survived intact beyond the seventeenth century. In fact, our colophon data demonstrates that the long eighteenth century presents an interesting period in which to consider the inclusion of printers' information on books.

The colophon was delightfully unpredictable in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—a printer might include a colophon on some of the works they printed, but not all of them, for example—but they are present on a significant portion of printed materials. Searches in the WPHP for "printer" and "printed by" in the colophon field reveal more than 2300 titles with colophons. But the colophon also, I would argue, gained consistency during this period. The colophons we are working with always contain printer information, including, albeit in varying combinations, a name, trade address, and the city of operation and printing.

The colophon field in the WPHP transcribes the colophons we find on the physical and digital facsimiles of our titles. It was a field added to the WPHP in 2016 when I discovered, while final-checking some of our *English Novel* titles against digital facsimiles, that printer information was consistently included on the verso of title pages or on the last page of a book. These often became the means for determining the printer of a work, which allowed me to add that firm to the database and attach it to the title in the firms field, and I wanted to capture where that information came from on the book in our title records. With no dedicated field for colophons at that stage of the project, I added them to our "Notes" until a conversation with the project director, Michelle Levy, and project manager, Kandice Sharren, resulted in the decision to add a "Colophon" field to our title records, allowing us to more strategically capture the information that was in the colophon.

Rogers' suggestion that the colophon was supplanted by the imprint illustrates how such scholarly assumptions affected—and continue to affect—our data model. If colophons were replaced with imprints before our period, there was no need to include a field to capture that information. But in looking closely at our objects of study, which takes us beyond the title page and the information included there, we were able to see that the colophon did not quietly disappear. They appear on at least 10 percent of our titles—a number that would likely be higher if we had access to digitizations for every book in the database, more RA labour, and the ability to search for colophons in our resources. What our data suggests, in fact, is that colophons are ubiquitous.

Colophons and imprints have a complicated history, as shown above, and it is no simpler in the WPHP data. Printer information, when it is included on a book, can appear in any of the following places: on the verso of the title page, on the verso of the page before the title page, on the last page of the book, on the verso of the last page of the book; and in any of the following combinations: only in the imprint, in the imprint and in a single colophon (any location), in the imprint and in multiple colophons (multiple locations), only in the colophon. The WPHP captures any and all information included in the imprint and colophon(s) in a book.
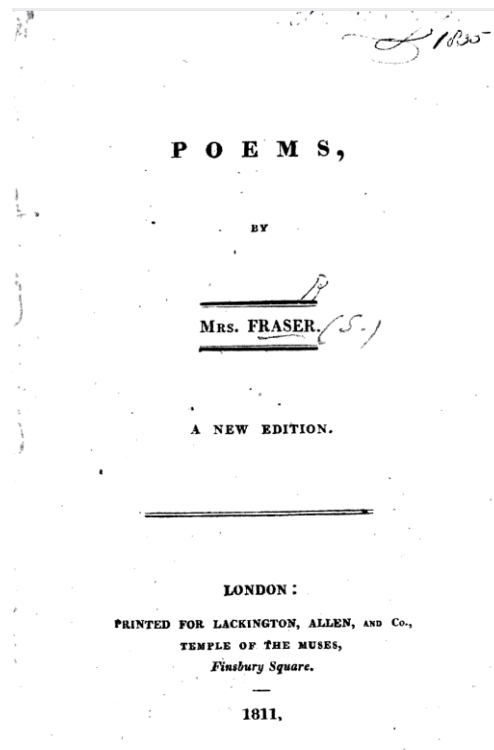
**Figure 1.** Title page of Susan Fraser's *Poems* (1811), which features an imprint without any identifying printer information. *Google Books*.

Colophons can hold additional information about a printer that is not included in the imprint, such as full names or addresses, and perhaps even more importantly, can name a printer who is absent from the imprint altogether. This means our colophon field allows us to capture those printers who otherwise go unseen in databases and resources. Most of our resources, including the field-changing *English Short Title Catalogue* and the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* database, do not capture colophon information in their metadata with anything approaching consistency—it is the imprint that is considered one of the best sources for identifying the tradespeople involved in the making of the book and so it is the imprint that is captured in metadata far more reliably. The problem, of course, is that the imprint does not always include the printer. One such example in the WPHP is printer Elizabeth Blackader, who took over her husband Walter's business (the "W. Blackader" named in the first colophon example of this Spotlight) in 1804 until her retirement in 1817. She printed the 1811 "new edition" of Susan Fraser's *Poems*. The imprint on the title page (figure 1) indicates that the work was

> PRINTED FOR LACKINGTON, ALLEN, AND CO.,
> TEMPLE OF THE MUSES,
> *Finsbury Square*.

There is no mention of a printer—only that it was published for Lackington, Allen, and Co. On the last page of the book, however, there is a colophon, which reads "E. Blackader, Printer, Took's Court, Chancery Lane" (figure 2).
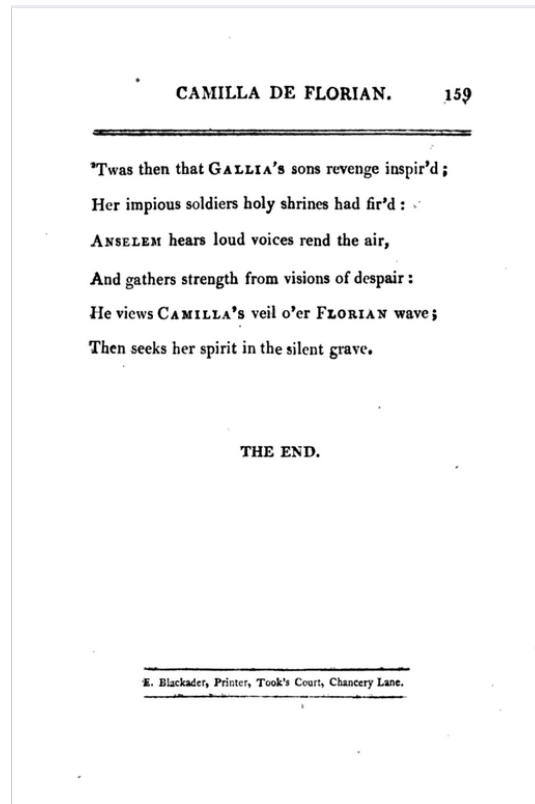
**Figure 2.** Last page of Susan Fraser's *Poems* (1811), which includes a colophon naming "E. Blackader" as the printer. *Google Books.*

The "E." in "E. Blackader" stands for Elizabeth, and her involvement in producing this book is only captured in its colophon. She is not named in the metadata of the British Library record, or in the *Google Books* record. Without inclusion of the colophon in our database, which results in her firm and person records being linked to this title, Elizabeth Blackader would remain invisible, and it would be impossible for us to connect her to the other titles she printed (there are currently eleven in total in the WPHP).

Imprints have been, and remain, a main source of information for identifying who published, printed, and sold a book during this period. As Isabella Eist outlines in her spotlight on our firms and imprint fields, imprints are clearly visible on title pages and contain identifying information about the businesses and the individuals who ran them. But what about the individuals whose contribution to a book's production are captured beyond the title page of the book itself, just not where we expect to find it? Further research on the colophon has the potential to radically change the landscape of eighteenth and early nineteenth century printing as we know it. If searching a printer's name in the ESTC returns one hundred titles based on a search of the imprint field, how many names might it return if the ESTC included searchable colophon metadata. My PhD research focuses on the visibility of women in the eighteenth-century book trades, and their (in)visibility bibliographically. The colophon is one space in which women, and printers more generally, have been bibliographically and archivally elided. Including the colophon in the WPHP is one such attempt to capture a book part that has the potential to allow for a different, and fuller, view of printers' output during the period.

**WPHP Records Referenced**

Mary Pilkington (person, author)

*Marvellous Adventures, or, The Vicissitudes of a Cat: In Which are Sketches of the Characters of the Different Young Ladies and Gentlemen into Whose Hands Gramlkin Came* (title)

Elizabeth Blackader (firm)

Walter Blackader (firm)

Susan Fraser (person, author)

*Poems* (title)

Lackington, Allen, and Co (firm)

"'Printed by—': Imprints and Firms in the WPHP" (spotlight by Isabelle Eist)

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The Women's Print History Project

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# The Edition Issue [Spotlight]

Authored by Kandice Sharren

Edited by Michelle Levy and Kate Moffatt

Project Director: Michelle Levy (Simon Fraser University)

PDF Edited: 3 August 2023

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# The Edition Issue

## *Kandice Sharren*

*This post is part of our By Our Books: Bibliography in the WPHP Spotlight Series, which will run through July 2023. This series attends to the bibliographical fields of the WPHP title records, tracing the history of our thinking about our descriptive practices and how they are informed by the sources available to us and by our feminist ambition to recognize and reconstruct women's labour in print, broadly conceived.*
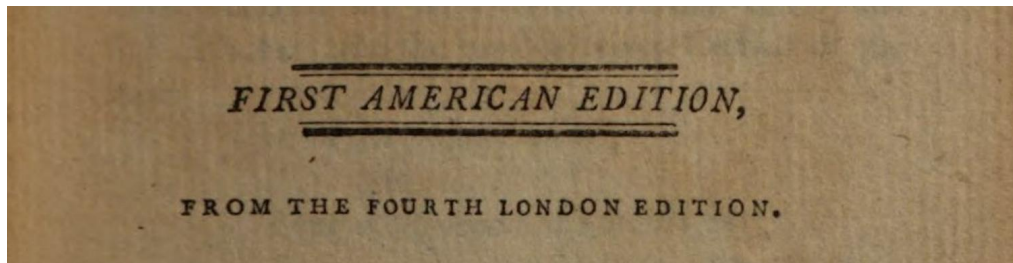


**Figure 1.**

Because they are not constrained by the physical limitations of print, digital bibliographies have the potential to break space-saving conventions. Elsewhere, Michelle Levy, Kate Ozment and I have noted that the medium of the WPHP allows the project to "eschew a key strategy of print bibliography, known as the degressive principle" (893), which, according to Michael F. Suarez, S.J., involves "characterizing variant issues and states—and subsequent impressions too—in lesser detail for the sake of economy" (211). The degressive principle was on display to varying degrees in the two resources I relied on in my first months working on the WPHP: the *English Short Title Catalogue* (ESTC) and James Raven, Peter Garside, and Raven Schöwerling's bibliography, *The English Novel, 1770–1829*. The ESTC is a digital catalogue supported by the British Library; it includes subsequent editions, but often omits some of the detail in full titles and imprints. By contrast, The English Novel is a print bibliography that provides detailed bibliographic information about the first edition of a work, but only lists years and places of publication for subsequent editions. As a digital bibliography, the WPHP has followed the ESTC in capturing multiple editions, but it aims to make the metadata as complete as possible for all editions of a work that appeared within our date range. Identifying and capturing metadata for all of the editions of each work authored by a woman gives us important insight into the relative success of a given work as measured by its longevity in print as well as how its marketing changed over time. It also refuses to privilege first and lifetime editions, and therefore authorial intent and copyright, by giving unauthorized and authorized editions equal weight.

The choice to include all known British, Irish, and American editions requires a working definition of edition that can be consistently applied across the WPHP. G. Thomas Tanselle defines "edition" as "all copies resulting from a single

job of typographical composition" (18), and identifies "impressions," "issues," and "states" as three possible sub-categories. "Impression" describes "those copies of an edition printed at any one time" (18), while "issue" and "state" refer to the different types of variations that occur "[w]hen alterations, corrections, additions or excisions are effected in a book during a process of manufacture that may continue after publication day" (Carter and Barker 133-4). In particular, "issue" describes a variation that has implications for how we understand the book as a whole, because it has "some connection with the progress of the edition," including "variant title-pages, usually in respect of the publisher's imprint" while "state" refers to less momentous changes, such as the insertion of a leaf or an errata list (Carter and Barker 134).

The distinction traditional bibliographers draw between "edition" and "issue" causes practical problems for a project engaged in large-scale bibliography that relies on digital surrogates because it requires detailed examination of the book, with attention to minor differences in typesetting and production. In addition to requiring access to physical copies of all books that appeared in multiple editions, it would simply be too time consuming to go through each of the 16,000-plus titles in the database to ensure we have correctly identified their editions. Instead, we have adopted a policy of what we term "radical descriptiveness," through which the WPHP "captures as fully as possible information found in the objects of our study—the books themselves—as a means of representing how books appeared to their first readers" (Sharren et al. 893). In the case of tracking editions, this means that we rely on the information in the book itself, especially the title page, to determine the edition. On the rare occasion when a resource identifies what appears to be a new edition as a reissue or a false edition statement, we still create separate records in the database and include that information in the "Notes," as we did for Alicia Margaret Ennis's *Ireland; or the Memoirs of the Montague Family*, an 1820 reissue of remaindered copies of the 1817 first edition. The exceptions to this rule are variant title pages that do not claim to be a distinct edition, as in the case of those noted in the record for Bradford and Inskeep's 1810 Philadelphia reprint of *The Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montague*.
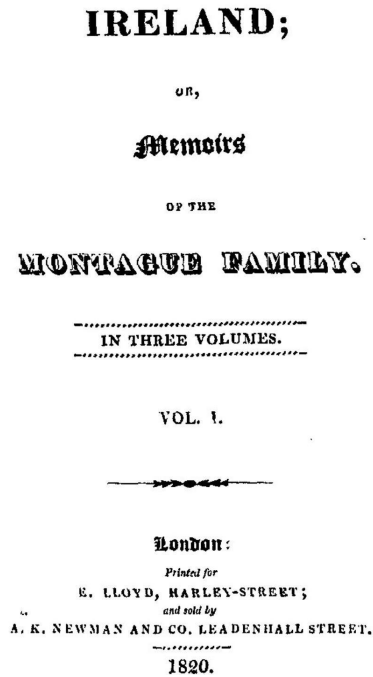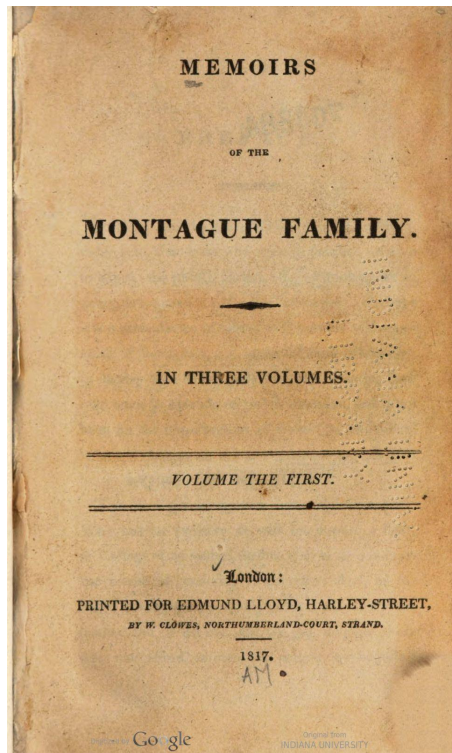
**Figure 2.** Title pages for Alicia Margaret Ennis' *Memoirs of the Montague Family,* retitled *Ireland* for the 1820 reissue. *HathiTrust* and NCCO.

As with the signed author, imprint, and colophon fields, our approach to recording edition information privileges the book-as-object. To capture information about editions, the WPHP relies on two fields: "Edition," which is a numerical expression of a title's edition, and "Edition Statement," a transcription field that records the language used to describe the edition on the title page. These fields came into being to capture some of the ambiguities of how subsequent editions can be identified, after we discovered that a single numerical field was insufficient. While many subsequent editions of a work simply identify themselves as the second or third edition on the title page, which allows us to enter both the numerical "Edition" and the "Edition Statement," not all editions are identified by a number. Searching for the phrase "new edition" in the "Edition Statement" field brings up 407 results. In these cases, it is difficult to be certain that we have not missed an earlier, numbered edition, so we leave the "Edition" field blank and enter the text into the "Edition Statement" field, as we did for the so-named "new edition" of Maria Susanna Cooper's *The Exemplary Mother* that was published in 1784. Unauthorized reprints further challenge our ability to construct a clear chronology of editions. The 1793 Boston edition of *The British Album* describes itself as the "First American Edition, from the Fourth London Edition." This title is a rare instance of one that offers us a precise textual genealogy, but does not offer us a straightforward number to enter into the "Edition" field. As with *The Exemplary Mother*, we leave the "Edition" field blank.
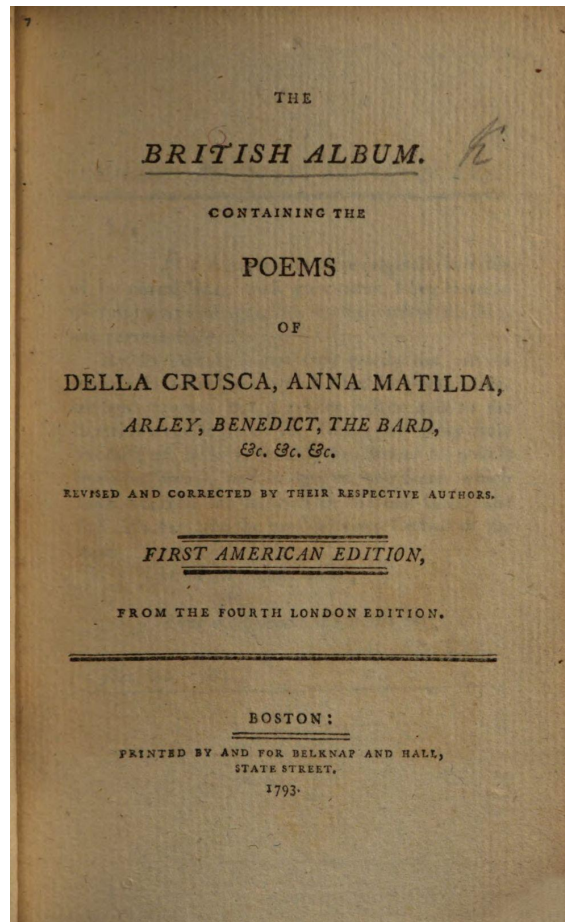
**Figure 3.** Title page of the first American edition of *The British Album* (1793), which features an unusually detailed edition statement. *Google Books*.

Both Ennis's *Ireland; or The History of the Montague Family* and *The British Album* present us with an additional challenge in grappling with editions; they have different titles from their first editions. While the relationship between *Ireland; or The History of the Montague Family* and the first edition's title, *The History of the Montague Family*, is self-evident, The British Album is more challenging. *The British Album* was originally titled *The Poetry of the World* when it was published in 1788, but renamed for the second edition in 1790. The second London edition captures this shift by noting that the poems "were originally published under the title of The Poetry of the World" in the full title, but the third and fourth editions—as well as the first American edition—do not, meaning that they would not appear in a search for the original title, although we do note the change in the "Notes" field. One feature that we do not have (yet) is the ability to link editions of the same work, which would allow the relationships between titles to be clear, even when the title changed. Integrating this feature will better allow us to create clear relationships between different editions with different titles, enabling us to explore the changes in how books were represented to the world between their first and subsequent, whether authorized or unauthorized, editions.

As a project, we aim to include all editions of books that women were involved in producing between 1700 and 1836. However, the WPHP continues to be shaped by the degressive principle because it is so embedded in the resources we

use. In the podcast episode "Oh, Those Fashionable Burney Novels!" Kate Moffatt and I explore how we discovered that we were missing a number of British editions of Evelina and Cecilia after 1800 simply because they were not identified in any of the resources we had used. We noticed this gap because Frances Burney is a canonical writer, but doubtless there are many other similar cases of works by lesser-known writers. If you notice any editions we are missing, don't hesitate to let us know!

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Alicia Margaret Ennis (person, author)

*Ireland; or the Memoirs of the Montague Family* (title)

*The History of the Montague Family* (title)

*The Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montague* (title)

"The Language of Authorship" (spotlight by Kate Ozment)

"'Printed by—': Imprints and Firms in the WPHP" (spotlight by Isabella Eist)

"Colophons Count" (spotlight by Kate Moffatt)

Maria Susanna Cooper (person, author)

*The Exemplary Mother* (title)

*The British Album* (title; first American edition)

*The Poetry of the World* (title)

*The British Album* (title; second London edition)

"Oh, Those Fashionable Burney Novels!" (podcast episode)

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