III. NARRATIVE

A. Significance

Statement of Purpose

In July of 2014, the University of California-Santa Barbara plans to launch an important fifth stage of its digital English Broadside Ballad Archive (EBBA), http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu, and begin mounting online the 1,237 early printed ballads held at Harvard University’s Houghton Library—all but 45 of which cannot now be found via the Library’s own advanced search database. Even knowing exact titles (unlikely given how long and convoluted ballad titles often are) reaps few results. EBBA’s archiving of the Houghton ballads will thus considerably expand the Library’s own access to its sizeable ballad holdings and further deepen EBBA’s already significant database of difficult-to-access ballads printed in the seventeenth century—the heyday of the English broadside ballad.

The Houghton Library has granted UCSB unprecedented permission fully to archive its early ballad holdings in EBBA. With generous funding from the NEH for 2012-14, we are currently archiving the 1,754 ballads at the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. This project will be completed on schedule in the summer of 2014. The NLS ballads, when added to EBBA’s already digitized Euing, Huntington, Roxburgh, and Pepys collections, allow EBBA to make publicly accessible on one site over 60% of the estimated 10,000 extant ballads printed in 17th-century Britain.1 With the inclusion of the Houghton ballads, the number archived will increase to over 70% and advance the EBBA database close to completion (indeed, we will achieve the 85% mark this year once the estimated 1,600 pre-1701 broadside ballads at the Bodleian Library are included in EBBA via an interoperable database we are collaboratively creating with the Bodleian and JISC funding, 2012-13). Due to the continuing expansion of EBBA, users will not only be able to cross-search many collections but will have access to a significant majority of extant ballads, allowing them confidently to trace developments in formal features, variant editions, and clusterings of ballads over time. Following well-established EBBA standards, we will provide facsimile reproductions in varying sizes of collection albums (either bound volume pages or large, loose sheets onto which trimmed and cut ballads were pasted) as well as of ballad sheet facsimiles (reconstructions that offer a close approximation of how the ballads would have looked before being manipulated by the collectors); and facsimile transcriptions of the difficult-to-read early modern print that preserve the original ballad ornament and formatting (providing easy readability without sacrificing aesthetic appreciation). We also deliver recordings of all extant tunes (allowing users a fuller sensory experience); extensive cataloguing; TEI/XML encoding; MARC records; and introductory essays about early modern ballad culture and individual collections. Under our current NEH funding for 2012-14, we are also implementing a major upgrade of EBBA’s search engine. Collaborating with WordHoard, http://wordhoard.northwestern.edu/userman/whatiswordhoard.html, we are creating an index that accounts for word variants and semantics. In the process, EBBA is advancing its goal of freely providing scholars, students, and the general public with the opportunity of enjoying and understanding these multifaceted cultural artifacts in ways unavailable through traditional print media or other websites.

EBBA’s goal of recreating not only the physical features but also the cultural experience of broadside ballads is crucial to a full appreciation of why they were so important in their time. Called “broadsides” because they were printed on one side of a single large sheet of paper (hence broad-side), these ballads represented a major new cultural phenomenon distinct from the oral ballad of tradition. They were multi-

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1 In our last grant proposal, EBBA estimated roughly 8,000 extant pre-1701 English broadside ballads. With our surprising discovery of the ballad hoard at Harvard, we have had to revise that figure upward to 10,000. The exact total of extant ballads will naturally fluctuate with ongoing research, but with every collection we archive—and we are nearing completion—our predictions become more accurate.
media artifacts—simultaneously text, art, and song. In their heyday of the 17th century, they sported black letter or gothic type, with multiple woodcuts and accompanying tunes. As cheap print—costing on average just a penny—they were peddled in shops or on the streets likely by the millions and bought by all levels of society. They were the equivalent of today’s newspapers, magazines, or pop songs, and like those popular media, they were a highly valued medium of mass communication.

But if millions of ballads were disseminated, almost as many were lost to posterity when they were pasted on walls or recycled as pie lining, pipe kindling, toilet paper, and the like. Ballad collectors thus engaged in an extremely important feat of preservation. Most of the Houghton Library collections were assembled in the 19th century by now anonymous antiquarians. But their ballads, like those of other collectors featured in EBBA, confirm the representativeness of the thematic categories by which Samuel Pepys grouped his own impressive collection. These categories reflect the ballad’s expansive range of topics—extending from the serious, political, and religious, to the trifling, domestic, and profane. The Houghton collectors also favored the 17th-century “heyday” tradition of black-letter print with woodcuts and tunes that voice these multifarious topics. At the same time, they include many political ballads (mostly printed later in the century) in white letter or roman type without illustrations or tune titles, which are significantly absent from most of the other collections we have archived. In this regard, the Houghton ballads affirm the wide popularity of yet another later white-letter ballad format, which so far in EBBA has seemed primarily favored by Pepys: broadside ballads with musical scores printed on them. Finally, since the Houghton holdings will greatly expand the content of the EBBA archive to include over 70% of extant pre-1701 English ballads, they will expose the popularity of early ballads around particular dates, events, and themes as well as offer more variants of the “same” ballad. Adding the Houghton broadside ballads to EBBA, in sum, will help to open up further an illuminating window onto an otherwise limited view of 16th- through 18th-century culture.

Yet full access to the Houghton Library holdings is drastically limited. Due to the fragility of the originals, the Library naturally restricts their availability and, even when access is allowed, travel to Boston can be expensive. Professor Fumerton, Director of EBBA, was privileged to be awarded a two-month fellowship ($6,000) by the Houghton to ferret out their pre-1701 ballads for inclusion in EBBA. She spent all of July 2013 at the Library searching furiously (looking at dozens of album books and over 3,400 broadsides). With the help of the Library staff and her EBBA team back home (to help track down items without call numbers), she created a spreadsheet detailing every item, noting the Library’s Hollis shelfmark (if available), its title, author, date, imprint, and whether it was black letter, had a tune title, musical notation, and/or woodcut(s)—and, finally, whether it should be archived in EBBA. Needless to say, such an opportunity is rare, and the enormous time Fumerton expended on this initial weeding was extensive beyond what available to the average scholar.

But what about Early English Books Online (EEBO), you might ask? Is not that a reliable resource for the Houghton Library’s broadside ballads? Even disregarding that the subscription to EEBO is too costly for many institutions, problems arise. While in many ways a valuable resource, EEBO can be misleading. First, its images are often poorly digitized from low-quality microfilm. Second, it provides only minimal citation information. Third, as compensation for a missing ballad, EEBO often lists entries and images for the “same” ballad from other libraries. But this strategy is very problematic. Based on the viewed result(s), the EEBO user has no idea that libraries not listed might also hold a version of the ballad. Fourth, and most importantly, the ballads listed and not listed together (some with images, some not) might not even be what we would today call a “duplicate.” Early modern printers regularly corrected and thus changed text during the same print-run; they also commonly reissued a ballad with the same title and imprint but with significantly different text and even woodcuts. For instance, in EEBO, only one entry is given for “The Languishing Young Man” (Roxburghe 2.274). But there are at least two other extant ballads with the exact same title and even imprint (all are in EBBA). The EEBO editors might have thought that the Roxburghe ballad stood as representative for these other copies. But this isn’t the case.
Pepys 5.312, for example, is also titled “The Languishing Young Man” and has the same imprint as the Roxburghe ballad in EEBO (“Printed for J. Deacon, at the Angel in Gilt-spur-street, without Newgate”); however, in other key ways the Pepys is very different from the Roxburghe: unlike the Roxburghe ballad, the Pepys is printed in white letter, without illustrations, and without a 4-stanza “Answer” by the young man’s lover. Clearly, one ballad image does not fit all. Mounting all printings—EBBA’s goal—is a must.

Most problematic about EEBO’s archiving of the Houghton Library ballads, however, is that it does not include their shelfmarks. Without a shelfmark, someone searching through the Houghton Hollis database by keyword or even title to locate the original item might turn up multiple listings. They would have no idea which item was the one they had seen in EEBO without laboriously calling up each ballad and checking it, sometimes line-by-line, against the original. And this requires that EEBO’s microfilm copy be legible in the first place. In many cases the digitized ballad microfilm makes even worse the blurring of lines in black letter and in the crude woodcuts typical of cheap broadside ballad printing. EBBA is in open dialogue with EEBO—hoping in the future to create links to our open-access archive so as to freely provide high-quality images and granular cataloguing of all extant 17th-century ballads—and both Jo-Anne Hogan, Publisher at Proquest (owner of EEBO) and Rebecca Welzenbach of EEBO-TCP (a project that transcribes EEBO texts) are members of our Advisory Board. But the need for full and accurate access to all ballads in all versions within an independent, comprehensive ballad website is high.

Most surprisingly, the Houghton ballads have not even been fully catalogued by the online English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), traditionally the gold-standard scholars have relied on to find extant pre-1800 works printed in Britain. The ESTC also shows no listings of Houghton ballads by shelfmarks, so we are left, as in the case of EEBO, with the fact that a user knows only one thing: the item, if listed, is somewhere in the Houghton Library at Harvard University, but where? Dr. Brian Geiger of the ESTC, North America, has eagerly agreed to serve as consultant to our proposed fifth phase of EBBA, in order to ensure that the Houghton and other EBBA ballads are fully catalogued in the ESTC and also linked to EBBA (see Appendix 22). But for the moment the situation with the Houghton ballads is a bit of a mess; they are partially but not altogether accessible via the ESTC, EEBO, and the Library itself. Given the invaluable trove of ballads that the Houghton holds, there is an urgent need for EBBA to include them in its comprehensive database, making them accessible via proper cataloguing, imaging, and recording.

Eager to make its collections publicly accessible, Dr. William Stoneman, Director of the Houghton Library, and John Overholt, Curator of Early Modern Books there, are keen to work with EBBA. A Letter of Commitment from Dr. Stoneman is attached (Appendix 22). Both Stoneman and Overholt are happy with the simple license EBBA uses and, as Stoneman’s letter indicates, the Houghton Library is not only committed to free public access to its ballads but has pledged to deliver EBBA high-resolution color images on a cost-only-recovery basis ($8 an image)—extraordinarily low. He has furthermore pledged cost share of curatorial time in the amount of $17,322. Curator Overholt and his staff have already devoted dozens of hours to the EBBA project during Fumerton’s month at the Houghton—not to mention funding her two-month fellowship. She took the first month in July 2012 to do the groundwork of locating the ballads. Once we have news of receiving an NEH grant, she will return in May 2014 and spend more time studying the located items and addressing specific questions of cataloguing them.

EBBA’s archiving of the Houghton ballads answers a pressing need for scholars of popular culture, literature, art, and music. As with its previous collections, EBBA will provide high-quality digital facsimiles of ballads in varying sizes and formats. As with the National Library of Scotland, Roxburghe, Euing, and Huntington ballads, we will photograph all of the Houghton album pages as high-resolution digital color photographs rather than working from black-and-white microfilm, as we necessarily did with the Pepys ballads. We will thus provide users with excellent surrogates for the originals. The color images will allow users clearly to see where the yellowed ballad page ends and the differently shaded album page begins, and thus make out exactly how the broadsides have frayed and been trimmed over time. As is
EBBA policy, we will also offer two manipulated viewings of the originals: “ballad sheet facsimiles”—wherein we remove most of the backing paper and restore margins to approximate the look of the ballads when they came off the press—and “facsimile transcriptions”—wherein we grayscale and adjust the ballad facsimiles in preparation for replacing the early modern with modern text. Transcriptions are made according to EBBA rules that render the early modern font into easily readable modern type, but without sacrificing all the features, and thus the character, of the original language (see also “Mounting the Ballad Images”). Furthermore, even as they render the text more accessible for the modern reader, the facsimile transcriptions will preserve the ballads’ formal features, especially the illustrations, so that viewers will not lose sight of the fact that ballads are multiply viewable as both texts and art. Additionally advancing access to the ballads' multi-disciplinarity, EBBA will provide recordings of sung versions of the Houghton ballads wherever a tune is found to be extant and not yet recorded, estimated at about 300 songs (we currently have 2,500 ballad recordings in the database). The tunes will be researched and recorded under the direction of our experienced music specialist, Caroline Bennet (see also “Recordings”). Through graduate coursework and curatorial assistance, essays will be offered about the Houghton holdings. Woodcut impressions will be catalogued. Finally, the ballads will be extensively catalogued and digitally represented in TEI/XML and MARC to ensure maximum searchability as well as the archive’s longevity.

Already usage of EBBA is high and growing every year, almost doubling from an average of 1,598 unique visitors per month in 2010, to 2,756 unique visitors per month in 2012 (see Appendix 1). Our logs show the growth of EBBA not only in numbers but also geography, with IP addresses from Romania, Italy, France, Indonesia, and China, among other countries. Moreover, the popularity of EBBA has spread amongst scholars to the general public. We are both the subject matter and the agent of popular media, reaching a wide audience at the same time as we engage in traditional outreach via presentations, publications, and coursework; we receive emails of thanks on a regular basis (see Appendix 2a-2f).

The Significance of an Expanded EBBA for the Study of Popular Culture

It is most fitting that EBBA has become a focus in popular media, as ballads were intended for a mass audience. The single most printed medium in the literary marketplace of London, they were hawked on the city’s streets and sent into the provinces in the packs of peddlers by the hundreds of thousands, if not millions (Tessa Watt, Cheap Print, 11). Indeed, one could not travel from point A to point B in London without hearing ballads sung on street corners or seeing them posted on walls. Ballads thus touched all levels of society. Shakespeare, for one, cited ballads in every play he wrote. Still, ballads were decidedly aimed at and embraced by the “low.” They were printed on the cheapest paper using recycled, worn woodcuts so as to be affordable to all but the very poorest of society. Indeed, they cost on average a mere penny. To increase their audience to include the semi-literate, well into the 17th century (when other texts were being issued in white letter or roman type), ballads were still being printed in black letter or gothic type, which was the print by which children learned to read and was also associated with homey “Old England.” To increase their allure, ballads towards the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century became increasingly ornamental, with decorative lines and illustrations. People of the lower to middling sort would buy ballads to put them up on their walls as art. Finally, ballads of this period were sung to simple, well-known tunes (so well-known that usually just the tune title was printed), which made them even more accessible to the less educated. Examples of the “high” broadside ballad form are Pepys 1.124-125, “Anne Wallens Lamentation” (1616), shown as ballad facsimile image digitized from high-quality microfilm (Appendix 3) and, in its later, half-folio size, the Houghton’s “The Surprizd Shepherdess,” shown as album facsimile from Fumerton’s low-resolution color snapshot (PF 25242.67; Appendix 4).

To add icing to the visual and aural cake of the ballad, the subject of ballads expanded at the beginning of the 17th century to include all kinds of topics of interest to all kinds of people. But the singular importance of such printed ballads began to wane toward the end of the 17th century, as reflected in their format. With
some significant exceptions (noted below), printed ballads became smaller—often just slips of paper—the decorative black letter was increasingly displaced by simple white letter or roman print, and much of the ornament as well as tune titles disappeared. Furthermore, some ballad sheets began to print the first few bars of music, suggesting a lost common knowledge of old tunes and/or increasing competition from newly fashionable songbooks. Thus, after 1700 the ballad ceases to be as dominant a popular form and its functions are overtaken by other media, such as songbooks, cheap engravings, newspapers, chapbooks (cheap-books of only a few pages), and finally romance novels. The subject of ballads also shifts, becoming less topical and more narrative, often in a sentimental or romantic mode—the ballad we know today in Country and Western songs or strange tales, such as the Headless Horseman.

Most of the Houghton ballads derive from the ballad’s “heyday” tradition. Though smaller sheets, they are in black letter with woodcut illustrations and tune titles. Like other ballads in this tradition, they address a smorgasbord of popular and often topical issues. Houghton’s “A true Character of Sundry Trades and Callings” celebrates the different “cries” by which sellers sold their wares on the streets (EBB65H); “The Cruel Land-Lord: Or, the Fortunate Husband man,” warns of God’s vengeance against those wealthy who take advantage of the laboring poor (PF 25342.67, no. 32—previously not catalogued by the Houghton); “A lamentable ballad on the Earl of Essex’s death” subtly criticizes Elizabeth I for the execution of the popular Earl, though it safely does so c. 1690, well after the Queen’s death (EB65 A100 69016); and “A Caution for Scolds: Or, A true way of Taming a Shrew” (EEB65H) touts a most brutal way to tame a shrewish wife, whereby a doctor strips her naked, ties her to a bed, beats her, and then applies abrasive “herbs” until she submits—all of which makes the controversy over the strategies used by Shakespeare’s Petruchio seem quite uncontroversially “tame.” The Houghton ballads will increase EBBA’s ability to offer academics of many disciplines the opportunity to gain fresh perspectives on the culture of all classes and especially of the “masses” in early modern England. Furthermore, in providing accurate tunes and easy-to-read facsimile transcriptions, they will bring alive popular culture not only to scholars and students but to the general public, for whom, as we have seen, ballads were originally marketed. Ballads speak not just to academics but to men and women on the street.

Perhaps most importantly for the study of popular culture, in adding many “duplicates” to EBBA, the Houghton ballads will greatly aid in exposing not only differences and likenesses between versions of ballads but popular trends of the times. At the most basic level, for instance, by increasing EBBA’s holdings of “The Catholick Ballad: Or, an Invitation to Popery” from ten to fourteen, the Houghton ballads (of c. 1674 and later) confirm our suspicion that this topic was well liked during the Restoration as a satirical expression of frustration with the Catholic leanings of Charles II and then James II’s court. It is a white letter ballad, with no illustrations other than—in some versions—a few lines of musical notation. Recognizing EBBA’s unique position to expose just such popularity, Dr. Christopher Marsh of Queen’s University, Belfast (author of Music and Society in Early Modern England [Cambridge, 2010]), approached us for help in creating an EBBA page or linked website dedicated to the “top ten” most popular ballads in the 17th century. Our two-year collaboration with the Bodleian Library funded by a JISC grant to make our database interoperable with the Bodleian’s (and with other broadside ballad databases) will advance this cause. Such interoperability will add to EBBA an estimated 1,600 pre-1701 English broadside ballads from the Bodleian Library (and, to the Bodleian’s database, over 6,100—and growing—pre-1701 English broadside ballads in EBBA). An example of what such an interoperable search would look like can be seen in a title search for “The Catholic Ballad,” where, with the addition of the Bodleian holdings, our results of fourteen such ballads would swell to twenty-one (see Appendix 5). That’s a very high survival rate, suggestive of significant popularity. With the addition of the EBBA-Bodleian interoperability as well as duplicate and unique Houghton ballads, we look forward to better situating popularity in cross-period themes as well as more specific, temporal or spatial “hot spots.” Ballads, one might say, are the social Twitter of their time or, as Pepys writes (quoting John Selden), they are lightweight social “straws” that, when cast up, show “which way the wind is.”
The Significance of an Expanded EBBA for the Study of English Literature

The addition of the Houghton ballads to EBBA will make a major contribution to various approaches to literary studies as well. Foremost, they will further advance the current interest in the study of literary texts as cultural phenomena. Though initially focused on upper class or high culture, literary cultural criticism has more recently turned to cheap street literature, such as pamphlets about rogues or crafty vagrants. In previous grant proposals, we have lamented that there has been little activity on ballads. This quiescence, we noted, was largely due to the difficulty of accessing materials. While two important literary books devoted to broadside ballads appeared in the 1960s, by Albert Friedman and Leslie Shepard, and two more appeared in the 1990s, by Tessa Watt and Dianne Dugaw, but that is a poor showing given the fact that broadside ballads were the most published form of literature in 17th-century England! And yet, even as we submitted our latest proposal, we sensed subtle changes in the way the critical straws were blowing. Since just 2010, there have been a significant number of books published solely on broadside ballads, by Steve Newman, Angela McShane, and Patricia Fumerton (one single-authored and another in collaboration with Anita Guerrini). As significantly, we have seen a surge of ballad chapters in books, most importantly by Bruce Smith and Christopher Marsh, as well as a multitude of articles on broadside ballads (which often presage books on the way), and, even more significantly, many dissertations and books-in-progress by junior scholars, such as Eric Nebeker (UCSB), Mark Hailwood (University of Exeter), Una McIlvenna (University of Sydney, Australia), Sarah Williams (Barry University, Florida), and Angela McShane (V&A Museum, London).

In all modesty, we at EBBA can only attribute this explosion of serious research on broadside ballads to their becoming publicly available through EBBA, founded in 2003 but making a real impact with its expansion via NEH funding starting in 2006. Early English Books Online has surely played some role, but as EBBA’s AWStats show, unique visitors to EBBA website consistently grow. There is no other single site where a user can freely access over 6,000 early broadside ballads in multiple images, with deep cataloguing and tune recordings. We proudly see EBBA’s influence in our increasing interactions with the academic and general community, noted above. The expansion of EBBA will make it an increasingly valuable research tool for ballad-focused cultural critics but also for those more generally interested in popular literature, since ballads address just about every topic. For example, the huge number of ballads about gender, love, and marriage will prove especially important to feminist literary critics. The addition of multiple editions of ballads will also greatly benefit literary scholars of print history. Consider the Houghton ballad, “A Third Merry Ditty of Cold and Raw: Being The Fierce Encounter between Roger the Plow-man, and the bonny Scot, who met with him when he was at A Fair with the Farmer’s Daughter” (Appendix 6). Here again EEBO is insufficient for the print historian. It shows only one result for this ballad and attributes it to the Bodleian Library (Appendix 7). As the Houghton version proves, however, the Bodleian’s is not the only extant copy (and perhaps not the only extant edition as well). For the book-history critic, furthermore, the textual differences between the two ballads are intriguing, appearing at the ends of the 4th column of verse: in the Bodleian text, at the end of the 5th line of the first stanza, we see “tow” instead of “town,”; in the 7th line of the same stanza, we read “brow” instead of “brown”; and in the 1st line of the 2nd stanza, the final word is “ri” instead of “ride.” Questions for the scholar of print history: Do we here face an instance of poor inking in one copy and not in the other? Or has the typesetter’s attention wandered off at the ends of these lines? Or has the collector simply too closely cropped the Bodleian ballad, thus losing text? (The low-resolution microfilm image leaves the sheet edges unclear.) Whatever the answer to this mystery, we are lucky that we have the Houghton copy, since a reader of the Bodleian version alone might well have misread the letters “ri--” in the Bodleian as “ti--” (the “t” is very smudged, due to poor inking and poor microfilm). One might thus think the full word is “tide”: “Then near Night they home wou’d tide.” But the correct word, in fact, is “ride,” as the reference to readying “Roan” in the next line confirms (for those who know their 17th-century colloquialisms, Roan is a common name for a horse). Even more fortunately, EBBA has another image of the “same” ballad in the NLS Crawford ballads, which we are currently archiving. Thus the critic of print history will have three
ballads to compare and more of a chance of discerning the cause and ramifications of such variant printings.

This kind of textual scholarship works together with EBBA’s refined search engine proposed in this grant. Users interested in print history will be more readily able to find and compare ballad variants and to study how popular literature evolves. Even more excitingly, search results calling up similar editions will show for the user a series of related ballads when such exist. For example, one Houghton ballad is titled “The Third Merry Ditty of Cold and Raw.” Where are the first two “ditties”? We suspect that they are already in EBBA, as comparisons of texts, illustrations, and tunes show. The two ballads we have in mind are printed close to the same date as the “Third Merry Ditty”: 1685-1688. A most certain predecessor—whether the first or second in the series—is “The Northern Ditty: Or, The Scotch-man Out-witted by the Country Damsel” (Roxburgh 2.374 and Euing 258, e.g., http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/31817/transcription). The “Third” ballad opens with a specific reference to this “The Northern Ditty,” and both ballads figure simple country plow-men and maids putting down a prideful and lascivious Scotsman. A possible other member of the trio is “Roger’s Delight: Or, the West-Country Christning, and Gossiping” (Pepys 4.290), http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/21952/transcription. Though “North” here becomes “West,” the plowman’s name is again Roger, and the ballad shares other similarities of tone, text, and tune with the other two Northern ballads. It is up to the literary scholar, likely calling upon the expertise of other disciplines, to decide the printing history of these merry ditties. But one thing is certain: all three ballads are examples of English Nationalism and a simultaneous interest, increasing in the 17th century, in “regionalism”—in ballads about the Scots, Welsh, Irish, North, or West, or just the country town. Such geo-specific ballads abound in many of the EBBA collections and especially in the Houghton ballads, thus promoting the study of nationalism/regionalism that has become of special interest as part of the recent global culture movement in literary studies.

The Significance of an Expanded EBBA for the Study of Art History

Even as broadside ballads expand our understanding of literary history, they can widen the field of art history. Unfortunately, though, few art historians have talked in any sustained way about ballad woodcuts or “impressions” (EBBA’s term for the printed images, since we don’t have the actual woodcuts; we have only the images or impressions made by them on a ballad sheet). To date, the popular art of the ballad has been overshadowed in academia by prints for the upper end of the market. And yet, the visual content of ballads—which, like their texts and tunes, ranges widely—appealed to members of all classes and was part of their lived appreciation of art. Ballads were not only read or sung but were passed from hand to hand as keepsakes, and posted proudly on walls as decoration. For some, the pictures appear to have been the most important feature, as suggested by Euing 173, http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/ballad/31928/album. Close inspection of this ballad, pasted on a backing board by the collector, indicates that it consisted of four cut apart pieces that have been put back together—but in the wrong order! Here is one instance where it is especially helpful to have multiple versions of a ballad in a single database as well as both album facsimiles and reconstructed ballad sheet facsimiles. Consulting other EBBA versions has allowed us to reconstruct the maimed Euing ballad and see that we are actually missing a part: a large ornamental woodcut impression, as evident in another copy, Pepys 4.110 (Appendix 8). We had archived over 3,000 ballads before discovering such an audacious (if admittedly imaginative) act of reconstruction by a collector, creating a “ballad-like” sheet out of dislocated pieces, even to the extent of placing illustrations at the top. Since we had not before noticed such imaginative recreations, it would appear that most aficionados of ballads didn’t bother. If someone had cut out an illustration, that is, they simply threw

2 The biggest exception to this glaring absence of interest has been the published work and presentations by the EBBA team and sections of a wonderful new collection, Studies in Ephemera: Text and Image in Eighteenth-Century Print, ed. Kevin D. Murphy and Sally O’Driscoll (Bucknell, 2013).
away the remaining pieces as no longer forming a meaningful “whole”—and perhaps as now missing the most important part. The person who cut out the Euing illustration may have shown it to others for its own sake, or pasted it into a miscellany book, or pinned it up on a wall. Now on alert, we hope to find other such cut-apart and reconstructed ballads in the Houghton and future archives, and thus more fully explore what this cultural phenomenon says about contemporary attitudes to cheap art.

The case of the missing Euing picture contributes to recent art historical inquiries into the social uses of print in England. So does the phenomenon by which ballads get smaller and less ornamental towards the end of the 17th century. Cyprian Blagden attributes this aesthetic diminishment to a loss of popular appeal—to the ballad’s “guttering out.” But there is also evidence that the broadside ballad kept experimenting aesthetically in an effort to stay competitive. Most surprisingly, in looking at the Houghton ballads, Fumerton found that not all ballad sheets get simpler and smaller as we approach the end of the 17th century. Some are quite large, with elaborate woodcuts and even engravings. Whereas the largest 17th-century ornamental “heyday” ballad is about 11"H x 15.5"W (before being trimmed), these ballads are on average an enormous 15.5"W x 21"H. And much of that space is occupied by the illustration! When Fumerton first saw these broadsides, with their unusually large and elaborate illustrations, she was tempted to dismiss them as not ballads. But then she found no less than five that named the tune to which they should be sung! Houghton’s “A true narrative of the horrid hellish Popish Plot” (1682), by John Gadbury, for example, is “To the tune of Packington’s pound”—a very popular ballad tune (Appendix 9). Ballad printers were clearly experimenting with ballad aesthetics throughout the 17th century and especially towards the end of it—in this instance, apparently trying to catch some of the upper end of the lower market, since engravings would be more expensive than woodcuts. The point is that, rather than aesthetically guttering out, the ballad kept re-inventing its aesthetics to attract the popular market.

There is a whole new area of art historical research waiting to be explored on ballad impressions, and even on black-letter print as an aesthetic feature, which EBBA is encouraging by making high quality digital images of the ballads available for examination. All but the microfilm-based Pepys ballads are photographed in color (and even in the case of the Pepys, the microfilm is high caliber). Users can thus detect subtle nuances in ink colors and in the strokes made in the woodcut impressions. An expanded database of images also allows EBBA to build its corpus of “impression groups”—images linked by close similarity if not necessarily produced by the same block. It is important to be able to make impression associations, since similar impressions often reappear dozens of times on broadside ballads. This is why EBBA applied for and received an NEH Start-Up Grant to expand its cataloguing of woodcut impressions and develop a digital tool for matching “like” impressions. With these visual enhancements the potential for meaningful aesthetic research, not only of ballads but of cross-genre impressions is great.

Finally, the oft-heard dismissal of ballad impressions as “meaningless,” because they reappear so often from ballad sheet to ballad sheet, should be reconsidered. Again and again we see printers playing most meaningfully with old woodcut images, using them as substantiation, counterpoint, or mockery of the ballad’s text or tune. A very amusing example is Houghton’s “The Parliament Routed: or, Here’s a house to be let. . . . O Lord protect the General, that He May be the Agent of our Unity” (Houghton 6469001; Appendix 10). Dated 1653, the ballad’s “General” is Oliver Cromwell and the ballad text is a celebration of his turning over (and out) the royalist government of Charles I and his followers. The point is driven home by the printer’s literally turning upside down two woodcut impressions—the first of a palace, likely meant to represent Whitehall, topped with a very prominent bust of the king, and the second of the trial of Charles I that took place within Parliament. The two inverted images sit atop the first two columns of verse. Since ballad printing is rushed, upside-down printing of text is common, and it is tempting to assume that such a mistake had been made here, even as the upside-down images catches one’s eye. But how likely is it that such a mistake could be made by a printer twice in a row? Lured into reading or listening to the ballad—exactly what the printer had in mind—the early modern consumer would know for sure. No chance. This is a satire, a picturing of the Civil War’s turning the world upside down but in a
positive way—making room for a new master of the “house.” The strategy is both funny and brilliant.

The Houghton ballads are full of such wonderfully “telling” impressions that talk to each other and to us, and, with sophisticated means of associations, can be read together by art historians and even by more lowly appreciators of art (for whom they were intended). Who, after all, cannot “get” the message of two woodcuts figuring Charles I turned upside down? The message is sent home at an almost visceral level.

The Significance of an Expanded EBBA for the Study of Music

The addition of the Houghton’s ballads will further enhance EBBA as an invaluable research tool for anyone studying the music of late 16th- through 18th-century England. Currently, one who wants to hear ballad texts and tunes together has to find the ballad and its tune in separate sources, and then put the two together themselves. For most music scholars this is not a particularly difficult process, but it is laborious and time-consuming. Our music specialist estimates that it takes about 2 ½ hours to find the correct tune for a ballad, learn it, and record it. By providing on a single site both text and tune, whenever extant (adding c. 300 Houghton tunes to our current 2,500 recordings), an expanded EBBA will save thousands of hours of research time for others and provide instant accessibility for use in research and the classroom.

The addition of the Houghton ballads will further expand EBBA’s holdings of ballads with musical notation printed on them by at least 30%. Indeed, the number of musical-notation ballads held by the Houghton (over 75) is second only to the Pepys collection. Greater representation of musical-notation ballads promises to enhance our sense of the musical repertoire available to ballad writers. A case in point: many ballads were printed in formats both with and without musical notation and access to the sheet with notation can supply tunes that would otherwise be lost to time. EBBA, for instance, currently holds a copy of “The Lord Chancellors Villanies Discovered” (Pepys 2.288). It is said to be to the “Tune of, Hey brave Popery, &c.”; however, no recording exists because we could not identify the melody. Fortunately for ballad scholars and especially ethnomusicologists, the Houghton holds a copy of this same ballad with musical notation (EBB65) (Appendix 11). Of course, we will not always encounter such luck and not all musical notation is helpful. Many scores are described by ethnomusicologists as “meaningless” or “nonsense”—unable to be read as music or to be sung to the rhythm of the text. Many ballads were indeed deliberately printed with “nonsense” musical notation. But the oddities do not end there. In several cases, one ballad edition contains nonsense musical notation while another contains correct music even though they were printed about the same time (see Appendix 12). One wonders whether some social game is at play here, one in which the musically literate may have approached these ballads very differently from the non-literate. Certainly, the upper classes were increasingly incorporating ballad tunes into their theater after the Restoration, which ultimately led to full-blown “ballad operas,” such as Thomas Gay’s The Beggar’s Opera. But the masses were catching on to the concept of social appropriation, or perhaps simply the printers of broadside ballads saw a new middle to low interest in wanting musical notation that normally sat only on the books of their betters. In response to popular demand, printers produced cheap songbooks in imitation of the more expensive courtly kinds, and often tapped into playhouse tunes to promote broadside ballads. One ballad among many in the Houghton Library in the EBB65 collection, for example, is titled “A New song, being the Tories tryump . . . to a new theatre tune.” The actual tune can sometimes be discerned by the date of the ballad or the lines of the song, which place the ballad in a particular dramatic performance. Indeed, a number of song writers wrote for both stage and street, such as Thomas D’Urfey, who composed the tune to the “Cold and Raw” ballads we have discussed (a tune first titled by the uncourtly name “Stingo”). Increased availability to more of these ballad sheets may make sense of what can seem like a chaotic or whimsical practice.

Perhaps the greatest benefit for musicologists and ethnomusicologists, however, is EBBA’s usefulness as a teaching tool. Many students (not just those who study music) are far more comfortable conducting research on the Internet than they are in working with actual book sources. But most websites that deal
with English balladry are unreliable, often designed by hobbyists with the folk singer in mind rather than by experts for the researcher of broadside music. EBBA provides teachers with a site of accurate tunes that is dependable and consistent in quality to which they can send their students. And it allows those listening to the song to quickly change over to the “facsimile transcription” if any words or phrases are unclear. By connecting the ballads with their tunes, EBBA will also encourage more students and scholars to use this extremely important collection as a resource for the greater understanding of the music and culture of the time. This is especially important as the real-time tunes lengthen the experience of the ballad—an average ballad song lasts 8-12 minutes, unlike today’s typical song of 3-4 minutes. The song slows down time and invites the audience to inhabit the experience of the ballad in a way neither the text nor the art alone can. Without the ballad tune, the ballad experience is literally diminished.

The Significance of an Expanded EBBA for the Study of Ballad Collectors/Owners

The addition of the Houghton collections to EBBA will also offer a much broader perspective on ballad collecting in the 16th through the 19th centuries. Joining such 17th-century collectors as Samuel Pepys, Robert Harley (who began the Roxburghe collection), Narcissus Luttrell (who favored white-letter political ballads), and William Fitch (the Ipswich postmaster who first assembled the Britwell collection), as well as the 18th-century collectors who expanded upon Harley’s collection (Major Thomas Pearson and, of course, the Duke of Roxburgh)e as well as the 19th-century collector who completed the Roxburge collection but fell into relative obscurity, Benjamin Heywood Bright, we can now add three more named collectors of the 19th century from the Houghton collections: A. H. Huth, George Daniel, and William Hazlitt. Daniel is especially interesting because he forms a bridge between Fitch and Huth.

Daniel bought the Huth ballads from Fitch in 1830, after which the ballads were divided almost equally in half, with one half going to the British Museum (now the British Library) in 1903, where they became known as the Huth ballads, and the other half to the Huntington Library in 1919 (via R. Heber, W.H. Miller and Christie-Miller, and the Britwell court), where they became known as the Britwell ballads.

Most interestingly, in searching through album books at the Houghton Library, Fumerton discovered a small volume of twenty-one mostly 17th-century black-letter ballads with ornamentation and tune titles that “opened” with a mid-18th-century Dicey copy of an earlier popular book, A Collection of Old Ballads (1723-25). It is as if the collector were here saying, “what makes these 17th-century ballads precious is their age—being "Old Ballads.” Most exciting, we can now identify the collector of this album book as likely George Daniel because Fumerton found a hand-written note on one ballad dated 1847 saying, “I purchased it of Mr. Andrews Book[seller] Bristol”; signed “George Daniel, Canonbury, October 1847.”

Particularly important is how the collecting practices of Huth, Daniel, and Hazlitt as well as of the other collectors archived in EBBA, decenter the mammoth 19th-century influence of Francis James Child on histories about ballad collecting and definitions of ballads. Child disparaged printed ballads, calling the Pepys and Roxburgh collections “veritable dunghills.” He had his own idea of what a “true” ballad was: it was a purely oral form that existed before print and reflected a communal society which passed on its traditions solely by word of mouth. But the fact is that orality and print have been intricately intertwined since print came on the scene, and any idea of recovering a “pure” oral form can only be fantasy. Fascinatingly, many of the Houghton ballads have handwritten notes on them almost proudly attributing copies of them to the Pepys collection, citing both Pepys volume and page. Also, when one looks at Hazlitt’s collection one is struck by the age not so much of the texts or tunes but of the woodcuts, as in this very old copy of a specially-drawn cut, full of wormholes, on an 18th-century text of “Titus Andronicus” (Appendix 13). Like Pepys, but unlike the folklorist Child, Hazlitt seems to have prized this ballad as a visual record of an age-old past not of orality but of print. All the collectors represented in EBBA looked primarily to the heyday of the printed ballad, recovering black-letter ornamental broadside ballads of the 17th century and earlier, if possible. They valued the tune titles on these ballads which made them readily singable, but they as clearly, if not more, valued the ballads’ decorative, curling black-letter print and many woodcut illustrations, the more worm-eaten the better. Without collectors in the 19th
century like Huth, Daniel, and Hazlitt, who rejected Child’s idea that printed ballads were “veritable dunghills,” a huge record of early modern popular history would be lost, indeed, to history’s dunghills.

Just as an expanded EBBA encourages us to think more about developments of the broadside ballad as a cultural, literary, artistic, and musical phenomenon as well as about ballad collecting and antiquarianism, so it prompts more work on other valuable collections of the time. EBBA’s long-term goal is to archive all 17th-century broadside ballads (see “Duration of the Project” and “Work Plan”), thus making the printed ballad “heyday” fully and freely accessible to scholars, teachers, students, and the general public.

B. History, Scope, and Duration

An expanded EBBA will be amply supported intellectually, technically, and institutionally by the Early Modern Center (EMC), http://emc.english.ucsb.edu, of the English Department at the University of California–Santa Barbara. Founded in 2000 by Professor Fumerton, Director of EBBA, the EMC is a fully-equipped, endowed Center populated by eight English Department faculty and fifteen in-residence English Department graduate students, as well as about a dozen undergraduates specializing in early modern English studies. Emeritus and affiliated faculty as well as affiliated graduate students are also active in the Center’s programs, especially from Art History, History, and Music. Many are part of the large EBBA team that is historically over 200 people strong: http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/team. The EMC also draws on the rich resource of Transcriptions, a studio in the English Department devoted to the intersection between literature and technology founded by Alan Liu. In addition, the English Department has a full-time staff person (Brian Reynolds) who manages all our computer-related equipment. Thus supported, the EMC maintains a strong cyber presence. EBBA is its largest project.

With a modest UCSB Instructional Improvement Grant of $5,000 for 2003-04, a seedling EMC ballad team began research into gaining permissions for EBBA and how best to structure the database for mounting ballad images and other relevant information. In early June of 2003, we successfully obtained unprecedented permission rights from the Pepys Library to mount online their more than 1,800 ballads. The EMC then worked hard to procure $133,000 in UCSB and UC funding for 2004-06 to advance this first phase of EBBA, including a UC-Humanities Research Institute Grant which, together with cost-share from UCSB, provided us with $20,000 for a two-day conference featuring distinguished and new-to-the-field scholars working on broadside ballads. An edition (Ashgate 2010) including seventeen critical essays emerged from that conference, co-edited by Fumerton and Anita Guerrini (History, Oregon State University). We were awarded an NEH Reference Materials Grant for 2006-08 to complete our archiving of the Pepys ballads, consisting of $325,000 from the NEH and co-support of $192,899 from UCSB.

Due to Pepys Library restrictions, EBBA necessarily had to work from microfilm (though, we located the highest quality film of the time and digitized it to the then highest standards of 400 ppi). Unfortunately, Pepys’s album books were unbound when the microfilm was made, so we were unable to show “album facsimile” viewings of the Pepys ballads. But this loss was compensated for by the recent gain of a teaching publication edited by Professor Fumerton, with ten EBBA contributors, to serve as a “guide” to EBBA’s archiving of the Pepys holdings, Broadside Ballads from the Pepys Collection: A Selection of Texts, Approaches, and Recordings, published by MERTS in 2013.

For subsequent holdings we secured permissions to digitally re-photograph the Library’s ballads in color at 600 ppi, thus allowing viewers to see variations in the ballad ink and papers used, especially the difference in the color of the ballad sheet and album paper (so that the line where the cropped ballad ends and the album page begins is clearly visible). With a second NEH grant for 2008-10, we color photographed the over 1,500 ballads in the four Roxburghe album books held at the British Library, and with a third grant in 2010-12 archived the approximately 1,000 ballads in the important Euing collection at the University of Glasgow and all the pre-1701 ballads at the Huntington Library, Pasadena. The
Huntington subsequently awarded Fumerton $25,000 to mount a two-day international conference April 4-5, 2014. This promises to be a landmark event, and will include a lunch-time “Taste of Song,” as well as costumed ballad singers wandering the Huntington grounds singing and handing out ballads.

We are currently now half-way through our fourth NEH grant for 2012-14 to archive the 1,754 National Library of Scotland ballads in Edinburgh, which will be completed on time. All ballads subsequent to the Pepys are archived in color and in three formats—album facsimile, ballad sheet facsimile, and facsimile transcription (viewable in adjustable sizes) together with an additional view purely of the “text transcription,” from which page the user can also click on a link to “View Raw XML,” and see the TEI/XML markup. Also available are detailed citation entries for each ballad, both in regular and in MARC format (created in consultation with Henry Snyder, then Director of ESTC, North America, and now Brian Geiger, current Director); standardized keywording of the ballads; standardized cataloguing of all ballad impressions (“woodcuts”); recordings of all extant tunes; simple and advanced search mechanisms (including an ongoing implementation of WordHoard to allow for searching across word variants); and background essays on ballad culture and individual collections. Carl Stahmer, EBBA Associate Director, continues to update EBBA’s website and search mechanisms; we launched an upgraded site in 2010 and plan a major improvement to the search engine and interface with a new grant.

The next phase of EBBA, however, cannot go forward without NEH funding. The University of California is in dire financial straits and has suffered four years of crippling budget cuts. However—and this is an extraordinary show of support for EBBA—UCSB has pledged cost share toward the new grant in the sum of $231,244. Also impressive, the University of Texas-Dallas, though itself hit hard financially in recent years, has re-pledged $10,000 in faculty and graduate student support (in 2009 UTD hired as tenure-track faculty a key EBBA team member, Jessica Murphy, who now serves as UTD EBBA Project Manager), and the Houghton has pledged cost share in curatorial work of $17,322. In sum, significant co-support for this new grant is there; but it will disappear without NEH funding.

Completion of the Houghton ballads in EBBA will take 24 months of work by a ballad team consisting of 11 graduate students working half-time during the summer months and 10 graduate students working part-time during the academic years. These students will be led by myself and Charlotte Becker, Assistant Director of EBBA, as well as by Caroline Bennet, EBBA’s Music Specialist. Brian Geiger, Library Catalogue and ESTC expert will serve as consultant. In addition, Stahmer will add a complete FRBR hierarchy layer to the EBBA database, cataloguing interface, and front-end search and browse functions, and create an API to provide RESTful machine access to the entire catalogue. The number of ballads we propose to catalogue—over 1,200—is fewer than the 1,700 of the current grant, but being from so many different sources at the Houghton, and often as yet uncatalogued by the Library itself, each will require much time.

Upon the complete archiving of the Houghton ballads specified for this grant, we will have reached the 70% mark in EBBA’s archival goal. With the further inclusion of the Bodleian ballads via our interoperable database, that percentage will rise to 85%. We are almost there! We wish next to move to include in EBBA the remaining, in many cases small but still important, collections of difficult-to-access black-letter broadside ballads. These include the Halliwell-Phillips collection at Chetham Library, Manchester; ballads held by the Society of Antiquarians, London; another set of Britwell ballads at the Chapin Library, Williams College; and those at the Beinecke Library, Yale University. With co-operation from the British Library, we could also include the remaining broadside ballads in their holdings.

C. Methodology and Standards

Mounting the Ballad Images
From the Houghton’s 600 ppi color digital TIFF images, EBBA will create JPEGs of “album facsimiles,” “ballad sheet facsimiles,” and “facsimile transcriptions.” The album facsimiles will reflect the ballad as it appears assembled in the collection, showing the loose backing paper onto which each ballad is pasted or any album border and binding if the ballads are bound. The ballad sheet facsimile will crop out most of the backing paper so that it can be seen as it might have appeared when originally printed. Finally, the facsimile transcriptions transform the color images to grayscale and remove the original print, replacing it with modern type so that users can easily read the ballads without sacrificing understanding of the relationships between the illustrations and the texts (the three views can be seen for Houghton’s “Cold and Raw” ballad in Appendix 14a-14c2). By toggling between all three image views, a user gains appreciation of the way the ballads were collected over time (via the album facsimile), of how they emerged from the printing press in their own time (via the ballad sheet facsimile), and of how a literate contemporary might have read them—that is, with the same ease we read modern print—while also admiring their ornament (via the facsimile transcription). Finally the ballad transcription is viewable as “text transcription” (linkable to “raw xml”) and integrated into the database for full text searching.

Cataloguing the Ballads

As with the Pepys, Roxburghe, Euing, Huntington Library, and NLS ballads, the Houghton additions to EBBA will be catalogued using the ESTC as our starting point, whenever an entry is available. However, in keeping with careful decisions made in developing EBBA, we will add important information that supplements current MARC records. The following aspects of each ballad will thus also be catalogued: “refrain”; “imprint”; “license”; “page”; “ornament”; “location”; “black letter”; and “keywords” (via a check-box list to ensure consistency and transparency of the keywording system, though additional keywords can also be added by the cataloguer should the need arise). Our cataloguing retains original spellings for titles, first lines, and refrains. We modify the “long s” or “f” but maintain vv for w, and i for j. However, we have also catalogued titles with modern spelling so that a user may search for "frolic" or "frollic" and find the ballads they are interested in, no matter the spelling (with WordHoard this step will no longer be necessary). This cataloguing system ensures granularity for the XML metadata accompanying each ballad. For a sample citation result, see Appendix 15. All ballads will also be catalogued according to EBBA’s newly created interoperable FRBR data model (described in more detail in the Digital Technology section below) which captures information about each ballad according to the FRBR Level 1 hierarchy. Tunes are additionally catalogued and separately searchable by imprint, tune title (in original and modern spellings), and standard tune title (the title assigned to variant names of the same tune); for a sample tune result, see Appendix 16. Woodcut impressions are separately catalogued and searchable by keywords (via a checkbox list) and are treated like independent objects that can be associated with each other and with multiple ballads. We are in the process of expanding the woodcut impressions user interface including an impression matching digital tool, under our current NEH Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant.

Essays on Ballad Culture & Printing and on Specific Collections

The essays on ballad “Culture & Printing” (under “Resources”) are the product of graduate courses taught by Fumerton and cover ballad circulation, papermaking, sheet sizes, black-letter print, woodcuts, music, and ballad measure as well as the broadside ballad heyday and social function. Each essay is meant to familiarize the reader with issues surrounding the cultural production and appreciation of ballads in early modern England (see http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/ballad-culture). Also already online in EBBA are extensive essays on the Pepys collection, http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/pepys, as well as introductions to the Roxburghe collection, http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/roxburghe, and to the Euing and Huntington ballads, http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/euing and http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/huntington. Once the Houghton ballads are archived, more informative essays will be created in graduate courses taught at UCSB (by Fumerton) and at UTD (by Murphy).
Further essays on the Houghton ballads will be generated once we begin archiving them.

**Ballad Transcriptions**

The objective of EBBA is to provide four-pronged textual access to the Houghton ballads: via album facsimiles, ballad sheet facsimile reconstructions, facsimile transcriptions, and text transcriptions/XML encodings. By “facsimile sheet transcriptions,” we mean reproductions of all the ornament and formatting of the ballads (pictures and border decoration as arranged on the original broadsheet), but with a conversion of the older (usually black-letter) font into modern roman type. Thus, in viewing a facsimile transcription, users will get a very good sense of what the ballad originally looked like while at the same time being able to read the text with ease. A readable print-out of the ballads will also be producible for inclusion in class Readers. Since most early ballads are in thick black letter or gothic font, and since browning of the cheap paper and blotched or faded print is common, the texts are very difficult, at times, impossible, to read. This is especially the case for modern readers unfamiliar with the peculiarities of early modern type. For instance, in black letter and even in most early modern white letter (or “roman” font) an “s” is often printed as “ſ,” which can easily be confused with an “f” or a “t”; “sitting” or “selling” might thus be mistaken for “fitting” or “telling,” leading to mis-readings of the ballad’s meaning. Making the decision of just how much to “modernize” the original text was difficult and time-consuming. We consulted other modern editions of early broadside ballads, and concluded that they were often too free in altering the punctuation and spelling of the originals, or in not indicating when words were being guessed at or reconstructed from another edition. In the end, we decided that it was important to preserve most of the original spelling of the ballad, so as to capture a “feel” of the original text, while at the same time converting to modern print the features of the original type that impede readability for the non-expert. After extensive discussion, we adopted a set of rules for transcribing the original text to modern font (see [http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/transcriptions](http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/page/transcriptions)). To ensure the highest level of accuracy, we use the transcription industry practice of “double keying.” Each ballad is independently transcribed by two people, and the transcriptions are then compared by a third person using Microsoft Word’s Merge Documents feature.

**Recordings**

In performing the Houghton ballads, we will employ the same standards established for the previously archived collections. We have carefully considered a number of factors that impact the interpretation of the ballad as song. It is impossible for us to know exactly how ballads were sung during the 16th through the 18th centuries. What we do know about the vocal timbre and inflection of British ballad singing, as it has survived in contemporary tradition, comes from field recordings made in the mid-20th century. While these recordings inform our vocal production, we want to avoid imitation, especially in regards to accent, making pronunciation choices sometimes difficult. While we do not attempt to imitate English accents, we find that certain rhyme schemes and scansion work better when we adopt archaic speech patterns. We have chosen to use a comfortable, “natural” speaking tone, tending towards clear articulation, with minimal ornamentation and vibrato, so as not to obscure the basic melody or text. In some cases we use conventional ornaments when we feel they would enhance the effect of the lyrics. We also record most of the ballads a cappella, for several reasons. The ballad tradition is a singer’s tradition, and we want to highlight the art of unaccompanied balladry. A solo voice, furthermore, gives the most unadorned version of the melody, so as to clearly illustrate the connection between the text and the melody. As part of that oral performance, you will sometimes notice slight variations in what the singer sings and the words on the page; this is a natural part of oral performance that we embrace.

There are only a handful of works on tunes of broadsides, starting with the foundational *Popular Music of the Olden Times* (1858) by William Chappell. Today, however, the most comprehensive and well-researched work is still Claude Simpson’s *The British Broadside Ballad and its Music* (1966), which
provides transcriptions of unadorned melodies, painstakingly researched and reconstructed, combined with detailed references to the historical sources of the tunes. The goal of EBBA is to provide sound recordings of every Houghton ballad for which there is a known tune—estimated at 600 ballads.

Of these estimated 600 ballads, we will likely only record about 300, since our policy is in most cases not to re-record a ballad if a duplicate recording already exists in the archive. We use the rough rule that ballad texts that are 80% similar are, for the purposes of the tune, duplicates. In these cases, we link to the already recorded ballad. But if no recording exists, or if there are significant variations in the way the tune could be sung beyond our extant recordings (Packington’s Pound, for instance, has several known versions), the ballad tune is recorded. Tunes are sung by graduate and undergraduate students trained in singing as well as in ethnomusicology, UCSB provides EBBA with a state-of-the-art recording studio and staff support; the songs are thus recorded to the highest recording standards.

Digital Technology

The technical component of EBBA is managed by Stahmer, not only Associate Director of EBBA but also Web/database/XML program specialist. Stahmer works in consultation with Alan Liu, Founder of the UCSB Transliteracies Project and professor of literature and technology, as well as with other members of the EBBA Advisory Board, such as Elaine McCracken, Serials & Electronic Resources Librarian, Davidson Library, UCSB, and Brian Geiger, Director of the Center for Bibliographic Studies and Research at UC Riverside and Director of the English Short Title Catalogue.

Information Architecture

The information architecture for this project builds upon that developed for the NEH funded National Library of Scotland collections and, through an NEH Start-Up Grant, for the development of image recognition software to better catalogue the woodcut impressions that appear on the broadsides. Since its early days, EBBA has utilized a four-pronged Image/Recording/Database (SQL)/XML backbone to ensure the scholarly value of the collection, a web-based user interface, and a webservice that allows interchangeability of resources across users and platforms. The archive proper is comprised of a collection of high-resolution images of each ballad, sound recordings of associated tunes, a database catalogue, and corresponding XML files of holdings that include both formal markup of texts and human and machine-readable metadata. Under the aegis of our recent Start-Up award, the infrastructure for an additional, integrated catalogue of individual woodcut impressions was added to this backbone. Access to the archive is provided in both human and machine readable formats. An advanced web gateway allows users to search, browse, and view archive holdings. Ballad facsimiles are delivered via I-Size, a custom JSP application developed by Stahmer specifically for EBBA. I-Size eliminates the need to produce multiple versions of a single image in order to deliver the image to users in the various sizes typically required by a web application—thumbnail, screen-shot, print resolution, etc.—by creating digital images of various sizes on-the-fly based on user request parameters. I-Size also automatically inserts relevant metadata, including licensing and terms of use data as well as cataloguing information directly into delivered JPEG files in the form of XMP data. Additionally, raw TEI/XML, including a thick metadata header section, and MARC-XML records for all broadsides in the archive provide web-service/object exchange capabilities. TEI/XML files are generated using the X-Ballad application, created by Stahmer specifically for EBBA as part of EBBA’s earlier rounds of NEH funding. Now in its 3.0 version, X-Ballad allows editors to generate TEI/XML for ballads by identifying textual units using a simple point-and-click interface (Appendix 17). The application then generates TEI/XML for the ballad. With X-Ballad, textual editors thus need not have direct knowledge of TEI or XML. New funding will allow us to enhance existing functionalities and add new capabilities at both the human and machine readable levels as well as to augment EBBA’s production infrastructure.
Data: “RESTSql”

A relational, MySQL database lies at the core of EBBA’s information architecture. Because the aggregate nature of the broadsides as collections of reusable text, image, music, and ornamentation call for a cataloguing strategy that is more flexible than the traditional MARC record, and because best practices in data architecture strive towards a separation between data storage and presentation models, EBBA’s database was designed to be as object-oriented and non-format-specific as possible. At the data level, each ballad is considered as a collection of sub-objects (text, image, score, etc.), each of which has its own unique entry in the database. This has allowed EBBA to easily present citation data via the website with a level of granularity that exceeds the MARC standard, to easily present the same data as a TEI file, including a thick metadata header, and at the same time produce a standard MARC record. All discreet objects (text, image, score, etc.) are catalogued individually, and MARC, TEI, Web, etc. views are constructed either as associated tables in the database that store a map of relationships (for example, Ballad A is composed of Impressions A and C, Tune G, Textual Unit Z, etc.) or on-the-fly as needed via computational logic, as is the case with our generated MARC records. Since its inception, at the database level, EBBA has been ballad and collection “centric.” The only associative structures that are stored at the data level are those that comprise object maps of individual ballads and of the historical collections (Pepys, Roxburghe) of which they are a part. Recent advances in best practices for library cataloguing, specifically the increasing acceptance of both FRBR and RDA as universal standards, as well as work lately completed by EBBA in collaboration with the Bodleian Library, has led EBBA to develop a new, FRBR-based model for representing not just individual ballads (the FRBR Item level at which the current EBBA database is currently focused) but also the FRBR Manifestation, Expression, and Work levels as well (Appendix 18). Implementation of this model will result in a RESTful data architecture. This will allow human users to quickly and easily identify all extant broadsides that were printed from the same print run, that are the same ballad but were printed in different print runs, and that are textual and visual variants of the same basic Work. And it will dramatically increase the interoperability of EBBA’s catalogue with other library catalogues, both ballad specific (as in the case of the Bodleian Library) and not (such as, for example, the ESTC, which is also currently migrating its data structure to a FRBR model) by allowing machine users to easily access data at all node levels. Because EBBA’s existing database is relational by design, implementation of FRBR layers will not necessitate a complete re-design of EBBA’s data model. Rather, FRBR modeling will be added to the data model at the associative level.

Cataloguing Interface: “Weaver”

EBBA’s cataloguing effort is currently performed using a combination of custom-developed, stand-alone software for automatically generating TEI (X-Ballad) and a web-based cataloguing interface. Substantial work will need to be completed on the cataloguing interface in order to allow cataloguers to work with the new FRBR structure. Administrative interfaces for managing each of the FRBR layers will need to be added to the interface. Additionally, EBBA will create computer-assisted systems for both backward-cataloguing all records currently in the system and cataloguing all new entries. This assisted technology will build upon work completed in our recent, image-recognition Start-Up Grant and in our most recent NEH grant for the Crawford collection in which we integrated WordHoard into our full-text indexing system in order to enhance text searching. We will apply these two technologies to the FRBR problem by coding a tool chain in which the computer, starting a ballad selected by a human cataloguer, compares the selected ballad facsimile image with all images in EBBA and also conducts a full-text comparison. The results of these two comparisons will be combined to return to the cataloguer a ranked list of likely matches (exact at the Manifestation level and with various levels of variation at the Expression and Work level) from which to work. The cataloguer can then select the appropriate match at each level and automatically associate the current ballad, along with metadata, as appropriate.

Human Web Gateway: “Screenside”
As part of our previous round of NEH funding EBBA continues to enhance its search gateway to provide users with more flexibility both in constructing queries and viewing results, and we are about to release a new “Query Builder” interface that allows users to build complex, boolean queries of the archive. As part of this round of funding, the interface will be enhanced in order to add the ability for users to search and browse for ballads based upon the FRBR hierarchy. This would, for example, allow a user looking at a particular ballad to see all other ballads that are part of the same FRBR Manifestation, Expression, and/or Work node, or to browse by FRBR entities as a means of locating ballads (Appendix 19).

API: “Cyberside”

As part of this grant, EBBA will also enhance its machine-readable, data-exchange capabilities. We will create a new, fully-fledged, javascript-based, RESTful API for exchanging cataloguing data. A RESTful gateway is a machine-readable gateway that provides access to information at the object level, as opposed to simply at the whole record level. A RESTful MARC-XML gateway would, for example, allow users not just to acquire whole records of holding items, but to, for example, easily retrieve all, or some filtered subset of all fields in the collection. EBBA’s new API will allow users to complete access to the FRBR group 1, 2, and 3 data structures in the catalogue and to retrieve results in a machine-readable RDF-RDA format (Appendix 20). The javascript API will provide access to this data in a way that easily allows users to run queries directly from and display results directly within their own web interfaces or download results for later use. This functionality will be implemented as an addition, and not a replacement, to a user's current ability to download MARC-XML and TEI renditions of catalogue items.

Preparation and Digitizing of Ballad Images

The ballads will be made available by the Houghton Library photography department in 600 ppi color TIFF format. Although these ballads are simple works artistically, there are gradations in the tone of the ink and paper and even subtle shadings of gray that can be enhanced via color photography. In addition, the act of trimming and sometimes dividing ballads to insert them into albums becomes much more apparent when looking at a color photograph. The raw TIFF files produced by the Houghton will be processed by EBBA’s technical team and turned into JPEGs for final web deliverability. These will be saved as album facsimiles and ballad facsimiles. These TIFF files will also be converted to grayscale and turned into JPEGs saved as facsimile transcriptions. The JPEG album pages will look very much like the TIFF files delivered by the Houghton photographer. For the ballad facsimiles, however, we will use Adobe Photoshop to trim away any excess border beyond the ballad sheets themselves in order to recreate the ballad as it looked when it came off the press. To create the facsimile transcriptions, or modern type images, an image team has been trained to use Adobe Photoshop to grayscale and adjust the image, and then cut out the early modern text of each facsimile, replacing it with the appropriate transcribed text. The team follows line breaks and text-size convention in the original as closely as possible so that the resulting facsimile transcription resembles the layout of the original ballad. All illustrations adorning the ballad are left untouched, thereby creating a version of the ballad that is easily read, even by those untutored in earlier printing styles, without losing the ballad’s aesthetic impact. Finally, each distinct woodcut impression image that appears on each broadside will be extracted using Photoshop and saved as its own file for cataloguing and inclusion in the new Ballad Impression Archive (BIA) recently added to EBBA through NEH Digital Humanities Start-Up Grant funding.

Storage, Maintenance, and Protection of Data

Previous grant funding has allowed the EBBA project to upgrade its server infrastructure. EBBA is now housed on an 8-core high-performance server that serves not only the website in a linux-apache-MySql-php (LAMP) virtualized environment but also all file server and development server needs (via
virtualization) for the project. All project data is backed up nightly to disk and weekly to tape that is then stored offsite. The physical server, virtualized operating system environments, local network, and backups are all managed by the UCSB English Department Systems and Network Administrator, Brian Reynolds. In addition, UCSB's Davidson Library, a member of the Association of Research Libraries, has committed to using its digital infrastructure and expertise to sustain the ballad archive over the long term (see UCSB Library letter of commitment in Appendix 2). The Davidson Library is the site of one of the original NSF-funded digital library projects, the Alexandria Digital Library, and as an outgrowth of that work, the library now supports through its regular budget over 40 servers and 5 terabytes of digital text and images. Library technical staff have extensive experience with metadata ingest, persistent archivability, multiple digital object formats, and the application of relevant national standards. The library has three levels of frequently scheduled on- and off-site digital back-up, and is also an active partner in the networking and content management of UC's collaborative California Digital Library.

D. Work Plan

EBBA’s plan of work is based on its extensive experience to date with cataloguing ballads; transcribing them; creating facsimile transcriptions; and finding, learning, and recording authentic tunes. We have determined that it will take on average 30 minutes per ballad to fill out the citation information (which will be facilitated by previous research on the dates and names of authors, printers, and publishers of the 17th century and access to available ESTC catalogue in consultation with Brian Geiger, Director of the ESTC, North America); 2 hours to double-key transcribe a ballad and compare transcriptions; 30 minutes per ballad to review bibliographic information and produce the TEI/XML in X-Ballad; 40 minutes to create a facsimile transcription of a ballad; 2 1/2 hours to research and record a ballad song; 30 minutes per ballad to catalogue the Impressions; and a year for Stahmer working half-time, to develop and implement on the back-end EBBA’s new, interoperable, FRBR cataloguing system and, with another year, working at quarter-time, to implement the web-based front-end and API to the new system.

The image and text work will be led by Charlotte Becker (EBBA Assistant Director) and Jessica Murphy (EBBA Project Manager at UTD) directing a team of many graduate students and some undergrads who are specialists in early modern studies. These students also have the advantage of being familiar with the EBBA project and with early modern ballad culture generally. They are perfectly positioned to continue work on the project and to train new students. Graduate students are also especially well-suited to the kind of detail work involved in transcribing ballads and in creating facsimile transcriptions because such labor is tedious, requiring high levels of concentration, and cannot be maintained full-time. Working part-time during the academic year fits the needs of EBBA as well as of the graduate students’ own schedules. We have also found that advanced undergrads can be excellent at image manipulation and enjoy learning about printing practices in making facsimile transcriptions; we thus often offer work on EBBA in the form of Independent Study courses for such students, which are very popular. In the case of singing and recording songs, undergraduates from the Music Department will continue to be encouraged to participate in EBBA under the direction of Caroline Bennet (EBBA Music Specialist), who will herself also record songs; we expect to use 3 grads and 4-6 undergrad singers each quarter (undergrads eagerly volunteer to learn ballad tunes and record them as part of their performance qualifications for a music degree).

Schedule of Work on the Houghton Ballads: In Advance of Grant

- on notice of NEH award a contract is signed with the Houghton Library to digitize its pre-1701 holdings
- Houghton creates high-resolution digital color photographs of the album pages of each collection, in preparation for beginning work on July 1, 2014 (already on the Houghton Library schedule)

Summer 2014:
• Becker works 49% time leading a team of 9 graduate student RAs working 53% time, and Murphy works 10% time leading a team of 2 UTD RAs at 39% time. 4 grads work on the digital images of color album pages and ballad facsimiles; 5 work on cataloguing the ballads, in consultation with library catalogue and ESTC specialist, Brian Geiger; the UTD team begins transcribing ballads.
• Bennet works 38% time researching available tunes for the ballads and inputting in database for each ballad its tune, its standard tune title, and whether it is singable.
• Stahmer begins work 45.5% time adding the FRBR layers to the MySQL database.

**September 2014 - March 2015:**
• Becker works 49% time leading a team of 9 graduate student RAs working 53% time, and Murphy works 10% time leading a team of 2 UTD RAs at 39% time. 4 grads work on the digital images of color album pages and ballad facsimiles; 5 work on cataloguing the ballads, in consultation with library catalogue and ESTC specialist, Brian Geiger; the UTD team begins transcribing ballads.
• Bennet works 38% time researching available tunes for the ballads and inputting in database for each ballad its tune, its standard tune title, and whether it is singable.
• Stahmer begins work 45.5% time adding the FRBR layers to the MySQL database.

**January 2015 - June 2015:**
• Transcribing ballads completed; making facsimile transcriptions and recording ballad tunes continued at the same relative pace; music editor works 15% time editing recording files.
• Fumerton teaches grad course on Houghton ballads; essays generated are mounted in EBBA.
• Stahmer implements the new cataloguing features to allow management of new FRBR layers.

**Summer 2015:**
• Team of 9 graduate student RAs from UCSB (6 from English and 3 from Music) work 53% time on making facsimile transcriptions and recording ballad tunes; also begin X-Ballading and cataloguing woodcut impressions. 2 UTD graduate student RAs each work 39% time making facsimile transcriptions.
• Stahmer begins work on RESTFul API.

**September 2015 - June 2016:**
• Fall 2015 Conference to celebrate EBBA’s accomplishments.
• Completion of all facsimile transcriptions, recordings, music file editing, X-Ballading, and cataloguing of impressions.
• Stahmer works 25% time completing RESTful API and implementing front-end search and browse functionality for new FRBR data model.
• Houghton is delivered facsimile album pages and citation information to mount on its own website.
• ESTC is delivered MARC records of all Houghton ballads.
• Announcement on UCSB and international websites of newly expanded EBBA.

Subsequent to the NEH Grant

**July 2016 - June 2018:**
Full archiving of ballads held at London (Antiquarian Society), Manchester, Williams College, and Yale. 2015-01-01 to 2015-06-30
If the British Library’s financial situation improves, we would also add the Bagford and other smaller BL collections. By the end of the project, EBBA expects to have assembled on a single searchable website all printed pre-1701 ballads (as well as many of the early 18th century), estimated at 10,000 items total.

**E. Staff (for full resumes, see Appendix 21)**

Director of Project: Patricia Fumerton
Fumerton is Professor of Renaissance Literature and Culture, founder of the UCSB English Department’s Early Modern Center, and much-published expert on 17th century broadside ballads. She will be responsible for final editorial control of EBBA. She will work 40% time on the project during the two-
year funding period.

**Associate Director and XML and Imaging Specialist: Carl Stahmer**

Stahmer holds a Ph.D. in English from UCSB in digital humanities and is faculty Project Scientist at UCSB. A past Associate Director of the Maryland Institute for Technology and the Humanities (MITH), he also currently serves as technical consultant to the Advanced Research Consortium (ARC) and to the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC). Stahmer will work 45.5% time on EBBA in the first year of the grant and 25% time in the second year.

**Assistant Director: Charlotte Becker**

Becker has been co-Project Manager of EBBA since 2010. Having worked on the project since 2007, she assisted in developing cataloging keywords, image processing procedures, and transcription rules. In December 2013 she will complete her PhD in English at UCSB specializing in popular print culture of 19th-century Britain. She will work 49% time on EBBA during the grant.

**University of Texas-Dallas Project Manager: Jessica Murphy**

Murphy is assistant professor of English at the University of Texas-Dallas and EBBA’s UTD Project Manager since 2010. She has been actively involved with EBBA since 2005, assisting with backend technology, cataloging, MARC records, developing standards, transcribing broadside ballads, and converting transcriptions into XML. She will teach a course at UTD in 2013 on EBBA and will devote 10% of her time each summer of the grant supervising a team of 2 UTD graduate students.

**Music Specialist: Caroline Bennet**

Caroline Bennet has an M.A. in Ethnomusicology from UCSB and has been researching and recoding EBBA tunes since 2010. She will work 38% time during the grant period.

**Library Catalogue Consultant: Brian Geiger**

Brian Geiger is Professor of History and Director of the Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research at UC-Riverside; he is also Director of the ESTC, North America.

### F. Dissemination

The goal of an expanded EBBA is to provide easy and free access to the images, texts, songs, citation information, and subject matter of English broadside ballads leading up to, including, and immediately following the printed ballad heyday of the 17th century. Since the Houghton has granted EBBA permission to create a database of its ballad holdings, no password or other restrictions need impede access to the site.

Graduate students and faculty actively promote EBBA in talks, publications, courses, and popular media (see **Appendix 2**). We are proud to have published a second volume, edited by Fumerton, specifically on the Pepys ballads. In the spring of 2014, we are launching a large, international conference at the Huntington Library. The NEH is always acknowledged in these promotions. Already a Google search of “EBBA” brings up our website first; and a general search of “broadside ballads” returns EBBA second. As our Letters of Support testify, we have already achieved broad acclaim (**Appendix 23**). We expect our recognition will continue to grow as the database expands. Finally, we will announce the NEH grant and EBBA’s expansion, when completed, via media outlets across the world.