Renaissance and Reformation
Renaissance et Réforme

Moore, Shawn, and Jacob Tootalian, principal investigators. Digital Cavendish: A Scholarly Collaborative. Other

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Digital Cavendish: A Scholarly Collaborative is a hub of scholarly and archival research and information about Margaret Cavendish, the duchess of Newcastle (1623–73). An author of philosophy, drama, literature, and early science fiction, and a prolific letter-writer, Cavendish published works under her own name and was the first woman invited to visit and speak at the Royal Society. She is a striking historical figure, and woman-of-letters, whose trail-blazing works and ideas earned her the nickname of "Mad Madge" during her lifetime. Cavendish's vast textual corpus and historical importance merits the space for such resources about her works and life to be corralled. Formerly the Digital Cavendish Project, the site proclaims itself as a "collaborative space for Cavendish scholars and students"—and indeed it supports this mission in act as in word. Moving away from its former single-form, research-driven initiative, Digital Cavendish, as of September 2019, is invested in assembling and supporting digital scholarship on the early modern writer and thinker. Directors Shawn Moore and Jacob Tootalian have, with the help of many contributors, built a digital space for making connections through Cavendish scholarship—one that celebrates a variety of formats for publication—and for an interaction with that scholarship made possible through digital methodologies. The project is financially supported by a grant from Florida SouthWestern State College; the site not only mentions past sources of funding, but also shares that such funding has "dedicated equipment for [the project's] continued growth." Often unseen in such projects is the labour of grant writing, and the necessity for physical space and resources. Digital Cavendish's contributor and acknowledgement pages are prime examples of how to make the work and structural needs of digital humanities transparent.

The site notes the wonderful and broad range of subject areas it supports in Cavendish studies: literary, historical, digital, textual, bibliographic, manuscript, cultural, feminist, queer, and race studies. It is also a highly

accessible resource, receiving an accessibility score of 92 in a Chrome Lighthouse audit. Digital Cavendish is divided into three main areas of focus: 1) Resources and Publications, 2) Research and Scholarly Resources, and 3) Electronic Texts and Editions.

The "Resources and Publications" section links to external websites and articles concerning Cavendish, including the Margaret Cavendish Society. This section is largely meant as a pedagogical resource. For example, the link to Project Vox's Cavendish page is part of another larger project to explore the works and lives of early modern women philosophers, and its alignment with Digital Cavendish: A Scholarly Collaborative is a marker of early modern studies' efforts to spearhead the use of robust digital collectives in order to advance scholarship in that field. This section of the site also corrals two bibliographies of Cavendish scholarship, one of which is the collaborative work of Brigham Young University undergraduate students, whose work on the bibliography is prominently acknowledged. By making space for young scholars' contributions, and citing them alongside links to scholarly monographs and popular blogs, Digital Cavendish highlights the importance of using digital tools in pedagogy, and identifies itself as a space where strong scholarly endeavours from contributors at varying stages in academic work are valued. This is no surprise, as it aligns with the innovative pedagogy practices, such as enlisting students as editors and scholars, that co-creator of the project, Shawn Moore, has long championed.

Most striking as a form of digital scholarly publication is the "Research and Scholarly Resources" tab. This section features a set of digital humanities projects about Cavendish, mainly concerning her life and publications, linked from the site hub. It notes that these linked projects are subjected to peer review, with close work between the editors and contributors "to ensure scholarly rigor and digital sustainability"—motives made clear in the sub-pages for each project. Information about guidelines for submission is not clearly marked, and the project would benefit from a form or query method, especially as a means to support early career researchers. Each project listed under the "Research and Scholarly Resources" tab links to the separate project's home page, offering a bio of its principal investigator and a description of the project. The projects featured under this tab include such various branches of digital humanities work as GIS, network mapping, and corpus linguistics; the linked projects offer clear research methodologies and make their data available for public use and download. Liz

Blake's Locating Margaret Cavendish's Books: Database, Map, and Analysis, for example, is an innovative and insightful example of how data in Excel can inform meaningful arguments about writers, bookselling, collecting practices, and more. Many of the projects also cite ways for contacting their principal investigators with new or updated information and data—acknowledging the ever-constant work of digital humanities research: the need and ability to update, especially as new discoveries are made. Indeed, the Digital Cavendish platform itself is made for this essential type of updating, but how it archives versions of the publications it hosts is unclear. Such information is essential for contributors of Digital Cavendish, wishing to cite the continued relevance of their research, and for researchers using the data and articles. An internal method of cataloguing and making these available is preferable to pushing users toward other resources, such as the Internet Archive WayBack Machine. PI Jacob Tootalian's research is found in this section as well—"Cavendish and the Language of Genres" is a corpus linguistics study of the Cavendish corpus, exploring how a study of her combined writings maps variations in her writing by genre divisions. An updated publication of a presentation given at the Tenth Biennial International Margaret Cavendish Society Conference in 2013, Tootalian's publication of his research on the site extends discussion beyond the physical space of a conference meeting, and acknowledges the labour of research and conference circulation of scholarship as rigorous.

The third area of the site, "Electronic Texts and Editions," driven in part by the Crowdsourcing Cavendish initiative, features digital versions and editions of Cavendish's works. It links digital versions of Cavendish's works that are freely available online, and curates access to digital editions that have been produced using other means of digital scholarship: TypeWright, by 18th Connect, and transcriptions of many of Cavendish's works. Though the transcribers are not noted for these works, and there are occasional broken links (an inevitability in the constant labour of digital scholarship maintenance), this section offers a cache of texts for scholars and teachers to use. Additional metadata markup would make these transcriptions useful for further digital textual analysis, but their current form is clean and ready for the next phases of development.

The "Chawton House Library Plays–Images" section under the "Electronic Texts & Editions" tab is rather confusing, as it seems to include Moore's own research photographs, posted individually as "blog entries" with no other context, though linking back to a bibliographical entry. A different presentation

of these photos might either provide contexts as to why users might want to access them and their significance for Cavendish research, or offer links to other projects connected to the site that have made use of them. The concept, however, of gaining collection permissions for sharing research photographs in this method is an innovation that should be acknowledged. Scholars, whose research travel funds are increasingly dwindling, are often making research treks to look at materials that someone else's archive photographs could spare them. While it should never be presumed that photographs could stand in for undertaking an examination of a textual object on one's own, Moore's research photo cache offers scholars who lack institutional funding, or other pricey resources such as database subscriptions, essential access to primary-source material. This section of the project is rich for future development, and suggests a new form of collaborative archival crowd-sharing, should more libraries be so generous and supportive of new avenues of research as Chawton House Library.

Digital Cavendish: A Scholarly Collaborative promotes blog posts, bibliographies, biographies, digital humanities scholarship, and traditional essay-form articles—offering a peer-reviewed space for diverse modes of research. In this way, it is at the forefront of what digital humanities as a field can and should do for the future of scholarly research: create space for valuing newer, more expedient scholarship, by a diversity of experienced voices, that does not depend on slow-moving journal or monograph publication.

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Bauer, Ralph, gen. ed.
Early Americas Digital Archive.
College Park, MD: University of Maryland, 2002. Accessed 8 December 2019.
eada.lib.umd.edu.

The Early Americas Digital Archive (EADA) is a hemispheric digital archive of primary texts from 1492 to 1820. Originally launched as a paywalled project of the Society of Early Americanists in 2002, the now fully open EADA is an example of an early digital project that utilized digital technology to push a field, and its scholars, forward. When the Society of Early Americanists met