

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Shakespeare and Text

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SHAKESPEARE AND SCALE

The Archive of Early Printed English

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Shakespeare and Scale

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ABSTRACT: Scale has been the central promise of the digital turn. The creation of corpora such as EEBO and EEBO-TCP has eased the logistics of access to primary sources for scholars of Shakespeare and early English literature and culture and fundamentally altered the ways in which we retrieve, read, think about, and analyze texts. However, the large-scale curation of historical corpora poses unique challenges and requires scholarly insight and significant algorithmic intervention. In sections on “Text,” “Corpus,” “Search,” and “Discovery,” this Element problematizes the specific affordances of computation and scale as primary conceptual categories rather than incidental artifacts of digitization. From text-encoding and search to corpus-scale data visualization and machine-learning, it discusses a range of computational techniques that can facilitate corpus curation and enable exploratory, experimental modes of discovery that not only serve as tools to ease access but accommodate and respond to the demands of humanistic inquiry.

KEYWORDS: digital, Shakespeare, archive, curation, book history

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