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The King's Cabinet Splintered: The Impact of Digital Mediation on The Kings Cabinet Opened

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The King's Cabinet Splintered: The Impact of Digital Mediation on The Kings
Cabinet Opened

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Abstract

In June of 1645, the Parliamentary New Model Army seized a packet of King Charles I's private correspondence at the battle of Naseby. This seizure was a crucial propagandistic victory that enabled the Parliamentarians to do irreparable damage to Charles' public image and, in contrast, to ingratiate themselves to the public. The Parliamentarians carefully selected, decoded, and arranged the letters in an effort to reveal Charles as a duplicitous ruler that cared more for his wife, Henrietta Maria, than his people. The collection is increasingly seen by critics as a case study in mediation through print—not just of private correspondence, but of the King's Office itself; now, TEI encoding enables it to become a case study in mediation through digitization.

The remediation of this collection creates or allows for a mutable construction of images of both the King and Parliament. The user takes an active role in constructing their understanding of the document and its historical moment. The semi-structured nature of an interactive document allows for new connections to be made—or severed—by the user in the specific instance of reading. The user now has more direct access to the annotations appended to the print edition, but also has the chance to read the letters without the ideological apparatus that the Parliamentarians worked so hard to create. The

King's Cabinet is no longer simply opened—revealing a structured, selected content—but has been splintered and left for the user to reassemble as they choose.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In June of 1645, the Parliamentary New Model Army seized a packet of King Charles I's private correspondence at the battle of Naseby. This seizure was a crucial propagandistic victory that enabled the Parliamentarians to do irreparable damage to Charles' public image while ingratiating themselves to the public. The Parliamentarians carefully selected, decoded, and arranged the letters in an effort to reveal Charles as a duplicitous ruler that cared more for his wife, Henrietta Maria, than his people. The collection is increasingly seen by critics as a case study in mediation through print—not just of private correspondence, but of the King's Office itself. The Kings Cabinet Opened invited the English public to engage in a conversation, through print, with the King and thereby challenged the King's claim to absolutism. Now, TEI encoding enables it to become a case study in mediation through transition to digital form that invites a critical reconsideration of the book. Each of the letters, the preface, and annotations have been individually encoded in extensible markup language (XML) using the guidelines set forth by the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI). Additionally, the documents have been inserted into a freely accessible interfaced database where users can interact with them in new ways. The Kings Cabinet Opened Online project seeks to maintain and enrich the diverse print features of this important historical document through the addition of semantic markup and the creation of an electronic edition.

Scholars like Alan Liu, Ed Folsom, Katherine Hayles, and Jerome McGann are turning to digital forms to examine the relationship between text and form through critical and theoretical work on the changes that occur in transitioning text from print to digital media. An important key term in this analysis is interface, the formal—material or virtual—frame or window and its features that act as the go-between for the reader and text. Through the interface Liu argues that the text presented becomes disconnected from its presentation, or “semiotically transcendental.”¹ For Alexander Galloway, the interface is “a gateway that opens up and allows passage to some place beyond.”² That place beyond is the database, or the semi-structured set of information that the reader cannot access except through an interface.³ The database lies behind the presented text that is a query against the available records in the database. Jerome McGann argues that in order for a database to function, it needs a user interface;⁴ the reader cannot experience the text directly from the database, but must have a gateway into the database. In the case of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* the Parliamentarians were presented with a collection that their editorial work could be seen to have reconceived as a database. The edition presented one query against that database—a single view into its whole relational content—with the printed book as its interface. Digitally, the database can be queried in multiple ways through its new interface. This sheds new light on the original editorial

¹ Liu 59.

² Galloway 30.

³ Whether that interface is through specific coded queries or a graphical interface. The database, as it exists in a technical sense, is a semi-structured set of records that cannot be directly touched or examined, except through interface as it exists in sequences of numbers stored virtually in “memory.”

⁴ McGann 1588.

work—typography and chronology, for example—while opening up the text in new ways by adding new information, highlighting editorial decisions, and presenting the letters individually.

The printing of Charles's private letters was part of a burgeoning tradition of epistolary publication. The pamphlet was a popular genre that "enabled pamphleteers to compass news, history and opinion into a few sheets and to bring into focus diverse heterogeneous materials and voices."⁵ The Parliamentarians used this generic ambiguity in publishing *The Kings Cabinet Opened* as a pamphlet. The flexibility of the pamphlet as genre allowed the Parliamentarians to collect diverse materials—letters, orders, prefaces, and annotations—in a single document and to experiment with their formal presentation. The Parliamentarians, with the help of the printer-publisher, Robert Bostock, used new print methods to communicate covertly to their readers—the printing of particularly damning text in italics, for example—in ways that allowed them to change the meaning of text without actually changing the words. By sequencing the letters out of chronological order, the editors created a narrative of transition in the king's thoughts and allegiances, presenting him as a "Prince seduced out of his proper sphear."⁶ In the preface, Parliament made their case for the validity of the letters as well as for their ideological agenda. The ideological inculcation accomplished in the preface guided the reader's understanding and interpretation of the text that follows it. The Parliamentarians

⁵ Joad Raymond *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2003) 214.

⁶ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 1

begin: “twere a great sin against the mercies of God, to conceale those evidences of truth, which hee so graciously (and almost miraculously) by surprizall of these Papers, hath put into our hands” and explain that the reader may “see here in his privat Letters what affection the King beares to his people.”⁷ The preface is used both to link the Parliamentarians with divine favor and to tell the reader what to look for in the letters. The Parliamentary preface can be seen as an instance of what David Zaret describes as the invention of public opinion, “when contending elites used the medium of print to appeal to a mass audience, and activist members of that audience invoked the authority of opinion to lobby those elites.”⁸

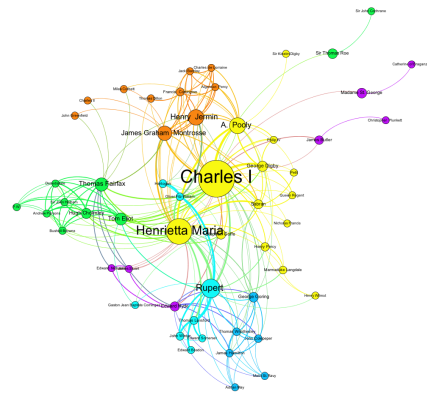


Figure 1.1 – Charles’ Social Network

The TEI edition of the text seeks to maintain, elucidate, and complicate the editorial decisions made by the Parliamentarians by clarifying and enhancing some of the textual changes while also bringing the text to a wider and more immediately involved audience. Encoding allows for the semantic distinction between textual elements like nouns—which in the text are italicized regardless

⁷ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 1

⁸ Zaret 10.

of type—and the similarly italicized emphasized text. Additionally, encoding enables algorithmic analysis of the text in new ways; for example, the algorithmic development of Charles’ social network based on collocation in individual letters.⁹ The insertion of the individual parts of the original document into a database returns the documents to their individuated state—as part of a disorganized collection from which a user can select pieces—with additional metadata such as sender, recipient, courier, and date. The letters become individual entities that are not necessarily part of a single whole, but exist as data in tables that are connected to other tables via shared information. They are, in a sense, returned to entities of correspondences—as values in their table row will correspond to entities and values in other tables and rows. The interface to the database acts as the *digital print* for the user, it is—as the print edition promised to be for the people of 1645—their window to the King’s private world and, simultaneously, into the Parliamentarian editorial procedures. The interface allows the user, in a slightly limited way, to act as the Parliamentarians by selecting particular pieces from the collection of letters while also making explicit the editorial work that had been implicit and embedded in the print artifact—the database and its interface let the user replicate the Parliamentarian selection procedure in an impermanent way; the user’s collection is malleable. In this way, the electronic edition and the print edition are linked; they are both, at any given moment, an instance of a query on a database of letters.

⁹ King Charles’ Social network (right) based on collocation of names in letters and developed using the open source program, Gephi.

Chapter 2: Historical and Print Context

The publishing of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* came at an opportune time and was the culmination of political strategies that Parliament had been developing well before the seizure of Charles's letters at Naseby. New communication methods provided the first instances of appeals to public opinion.¹⁰ In recognition of the importance of public opinion, Parliament came together for the first time to authorize the printing of *The Kings Cabinet Opened*;¹¹ whereas a single house previously authorized materials, this document was "Published by Special Order of the Parliament"¹² as a whole.

There were a great number of letters as pamphlets circulating at the time, and many of the letters were forgeries or entirely fictitious works.¹³ Given the dubious popularity of pamphlets and the suspicion that accompanied them, Parliament went to great lengths to assert the authenticity of the letters. They started with the subtitle "Secret Letters & Papers, Written with the Kings own Hand," and included an authenticity statement after each letter—usually "this is a true copy, examined by" and the name of an authenticator like Miles Corbett.¹⁴

¹⁰ David Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early-Modern England* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton UP, 2000) 174-75.

¹¹ G. Diana Barnes, *Epistolary Community in Print, 1580-1664* (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013) 107.

¹² *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 1.

¹³ Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering* 215.

¹⁴ *The King's Cabinet Opened*. Title Page, 3. For more on this, see Barnes 117.

Parliament also emphasizes the authenticity of the documents in the preface and challenges the King to come forward if the printed letters are forgeries, saying, “we dare appeale to his own conscience now, knowing that he cannot disavow either his own hand writing, or the matters themselves here written.”¹⁵ The emphasis on authenticity suggests the importance that Parliament placed on the reader’s judgment of and response to the document and the importance of the reader’s acceptance of the letters’ text as the King’s own words. This assertion enabled typographical manipulation of the text that changed its meaning, but not the words.

The impact of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* rested on the image of the king developed within and with his own words. Letters were particularly well-suited to Parliament’s purposes since letters were understood as the closest form of writing to speech “indeed as conversation in writing.”¹⁶ Therefore, readers considered the letters, once printed, as the King’s very own speech. The printing of his correspondence, among all of the other printed correspondence, came as a shock to readers. For the first time, the people were being invoked as such and were able to interact with their King on a personal and private level.

The image of the King presented in *The Kings Cabinet Opened* is one of deception, duplicity, and treachery. As Michael McKeon argues, the document’s full title begins the reduction of the King’s status in insisting “on [the letters]”

¹⁵ Ibid. 2. This is interesting in several ways: first, the assertion that the letters were written in the King’s hand is unverifiable, since the text referenced by the preface and read by the reader were rendered in print using type and not a reproduction of the handwriting; second, the appeal to the King’s conscience here is interesting since the text—and especially the editorial apparatus—call the quality of his conscience into question.

¹⁶ Barnes 106, 119.

status as an authentic secret history that in its own way disclosed the true identity of the King.”¹⁷ On its very face, then, the document offered not only to reveal the King’s true nature, but the secret goings-on of the state. Joad Raymond argues that the letters in *The Kings Cabinet Opened* “purported to show serious flaws in the king’s character: his passion for authority; his propensity for dissimulation and duplicity; and his unnatural and unmanly submission to the orders and desires of a popish wife.”¹⁸ The letters revealed, in Charles’s own words, his betrayal of the English people, the divestiture of his power, and his dedication to Henrietta Maria, the wife that had caused the people so much anxiety since their marriage. In a letter to Ormond about making peace in Ireland—dated 27 February 164^{2/4}—for example, the King writes, “I leave the managing of this great and necessary worke entirely to you” and even gives him the power for the “taking away of the Penall Laws against Papists.”¹⁹ The King here, then, not only divests himself of power and gives it to Ormond, but also give Ormond the power to betray the English by colluding with the Irish and offering acceptance to Catholics.

The King’s relationship with Henrietta Maria was at the forefront of the pamphlet’s focus and the public response. The Parliamentarians highlight this in the Annotations—indeed this discussion is first and takes up significant space—arguing that:

¹⁷ Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2005) 482.

¹⁸ Joad Raymond “Popular Representations of Charles I.” *The Royal Image: Representations of Charles I*, Ed. Thomas N. Corns (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 1999) 57.

¹⁹ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 16.

It is plaine, here, first, that the Kings Counsels are wholly managed by the Queen; though she be of the weaker sexe, borne an Alien, bred up in a contrary Religion, yet nothing great or small is transacted without her privity & consent...[that he] prefers her health before the exigence, and importance of his owne public affairs.²⁰

The King, the absolutist monarch, is ruled by a women—and, worse, by a Catholic—and cares more for her than his own people. The letters were selectively published in order to take advantage of these factors and to push the ideological goals of Parliament onto the public.²¹ Pamphleteers were already using letters to verify public panic and to “turn the existing anti-papist vocabulary into an oppositional rhetoric.”²² Through the publication of *The King’s Cabinet Opened*, Parliament claimed that the King was involved in a Catholic conspiracy that originated in a specific evil advisor, Henrietta Maria.

Beyond aligning him to Catholicism, Charles’s affection for his wife violated the cultural norms of his time and the expectation of Monarchy. Charles frequently laments her absence. He writes: “without thy company I can neither have peace nor comfort within myself.”²³ The King’s desire for his wife’s company, as opposed to the company of men, violated the cultural masculine norm. Charles was adapting the conventions of the epistolary genre in his letters to his wife, in which he enumerates the male friends he finds inadequate—of

²⁰ Ibid. 43-44.

²¹ Barnes 103; McKeon 482; Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering* 215.

²² Barnes 112.

²³ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 6.

whom he says, “some are too wise, others too foolish, some too busie, others too reserved, many too fantastic”—and opposes friendship and love, with priority given to love for a woman, whom he loves “above all earthly things, & [his] contentment is unseperably conjoynd with [hers].”²⁴ This enumeration and subsequent dedication represented a reversal of appropriate generic, political, and social conventions.

Charles’s prioritization of love over friendship lost him a number of his advisors because the letters show that Henrietta Maria is Charles’s “friend, confidant, advisor and wife and, as such, usurps the proper role of men [and that] she is at the centre of the personal rule.”²⁵ Charles violated an important convention of masculinity and betrayed his role as man and King. The King’s transmission of power to Henrietta Maria—beyond transgressing this masculine line and aligning himself with Catholicism—violated his absolutist Kingship. The divestiture of power is itself a divestiture of absolutism. In a letter dated 5, March 1645, Charles writes to Henrietta Maria, “*I give thee power to promise in my name (to whom thou think most fit) that I will take away all penal laws against the Roman Catholicks in England.*”²⁶ Here, Charles gives the power of his royal name and person over to Henrietta Maria, his “Dear heart.” McKeon argues that in the letters “amatory intimacies have usurped the place of public judgment, a perversion intimated by the (conventionally) amatory language the editors use to

²⁴ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 8.

²⁵ Barnes 121-122.

²⁶ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 7. Parliament’s Emphasis. This is also an example of Parliament’s emphasis of particularly damning sections of Charles’ letters.

announce that usurpation.”²⁷ The editors highlight Henrietta Maria’s usurpation of the King’s concern for and power over the state in the preface by mirroring his language in their description of his compromised position.

The Kings Cabinet Opened presented a specific image of Charles I and his private relationships to the people whom he was supposed to lead. Charles was painted as a deceptive ruler whose “use of cipher was presented as further evidence of further deception, and the cabinet of private letters was a synecdoche for monarchy and its process of rule which had been conducted in private without Parliament since 1629.”²⁸ The King’s privacy contributed to the air of deception that lingered on the cabinet letters and they struck a deep blow to the King’s public image. McKeon reinforces this understanding by arguing that “the evidence of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* suggests that the reduction of the public to the private, of politics to sex, of mastery to ‘effeminacy,’” was not an effect of Charles’ character but was at the very heart of Stuart absolutism.²⁹ The letters collected in *The Kings Cabinet Opened* had far reaching effect and deep implications for the monarchy and the country. The letters represent an early example of the transition from monarchy to democracy by asking the readers to participate through a genre that was marked by dialogic responses, usually in the form of new published letters.³⁰ The preface, for example, states that the authors dare not “smother this light under a Bushell, but freely hold it out to [their]

²⁷ McKeon 485.

²⁸ Barnes 112.

²⁹ McKeon 486.

³⁰ Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering* 218.

seduced brethren...that they may see their errors and return into the right way...they may see here in his privat Letters what affection the King beares to his people.”³¹ The preface, then, invites the English people to judge the validity of the monarch and their decision to be Royalists while implying the correct choice by labeling the reader as having already been seduced. The Parliamentarians define their audience and invite them to participate in a deliberative political system in which their judgment matters.

The Kings Cabinet Opened, therefore, is increasingly included in the debate about the development through print of the distinction between the public and private and the development of Jürgen Habermas’s public sphere.³² David Zaret, among others, argues that, despite Habermas’s situation of the early modern formation of the public sphere in the early eighteenth century, the English Civil War is a more appropriate date, especially concerning the utilization of print and new print methods in order to invoke a public.³³

The Kings Cabinet Opened stands out as an example of the publicizing power of print, even among the other pamphlets printed in this time, and thus contributes to this re-dating of the development of the public sphere. The letter pamphlet as a widely popular genre “permitted a slippage between the intended, often familiar, reader and a broadly constituted reading public.”³⁴ This slippage can be felt in the emphasis on the King’s authorship and the Queen’s reception;

³¹ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 1.

³² Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989) 27.

³³ Zaret 175.

³⁴ Barnes 106-107.

the majority of the letters are from the King to Henrietta Maria and the editorial apparatus emphasizes this fact. Michael McKeon argues that in publishing the King's private letters "the realm of the private takes on the semiotic authority of the public realm, and what it entails is the 'identity' of the king in the sense, not of name and lineage...but, more intimately of mind and motive."³⁵ The editors emphasized this fact by choosing a title that suggested that by seizing the letters, Fairfax had seized the King himself.³⁶

By printing the King's private letters, Charles's very mind was revealed to the public who were invited by the editors to judge not simply his behavior, but his thought. Parliament's publication, then, "addressed the people as political subjects by virtue of their ability to read; the reader was conceived as someone who could judge what he or she read, and this grounded a notion of active deliberative citizenship."³⁷ The reader was invited to make a judgment of Charles and to express that judgment through action in the public such as printing a response or supporting the Parliamentarians. Both the King and Parliament, however, were in the habit of utilizing print to attempt to sway public opinion in their favor. The use of print by both sides to invoke public opinion promoted a dialogic, democratic politics that "left its mark on communicative practices that reoriented political discourse so that its production increasingly involved simultaneous constitution and invocation of public opinion."³⁸ The controversial

³⁵ McKeon 483.

³⁶ Barnes 107.

³⁷ Ibid. 111.

³⁸ Zaret 177.

press instantiated and appealed to the new political public and created practices that influenced the medium of print and its public mobilization from the English Revolution on. Political texts, like *The Kings Cabinet Opened*, “claim the mantle of opinion to legitimate a legislative agenda.”³⁹ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* attempts to legitimate the Parliamentary revolution, to provide that “cause, for which Sir Thomas Fairfax joyned battell.”⁴⁰

The printing of the King’s private thoughts was not met positively on all sides. To Royalists, this was not a challenge to absolutism, but a commandeering of the King’s private mind, an absolutism worse than his own.⁴¹ Most importantly, the letters reveal a distinct gap between the King’s public professions and his private thoughts and actions. The magnitude and diversity of the reactions to *The Kings Cabinet Opened* indicate its impact on the instantiation of the public sphere and the text’s political role in its own contemporary time. Parliament utilized publicity—the cabinet letters printed—to oppose and reveal the King’s secret rule.

The ideological force of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* rests in its editorial apparatus and in what Jerome McGann calls the book’s “bibliographic codes.”⁴² McGann indicates that the meaning of a text is a function of “most material...levels of the text: in the case of scripted texts, the physical form of books and manuscripts (paper, ink, typefaces, layouts) or their prices, advertising

³⁹ Ibid. 13.

⁴⁰ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* Title page.

⁴¹ McKeon 483.

⁴² J. Jerome McGann, *The Textual Condition* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton UP, 1991) 12.

mechanisms, and distribution values.”⁴³ *The Kings Cabinet Opened* is an excellent example of a text in which the bibliographic codes powerfully inflect the meaning of the text. The printed version of the text takes advantage of the scribal epistolary traditions to suggest the authenticity of the letters, including the use of typographical layout and font shifts. Parliament’s use of the genre of the familiar letter convinced the public readership that they “were in such familiar proximity with his majesty that they could judge him as they would an equal.”⁴⁴ The Parliamentarians recognized and exploited the generic quality of both the familiar letter and the pamphlet to reproduce the printed equivalent of private letters and thereby bring the reader into the King’s company and the King into the reader’s political and social level.

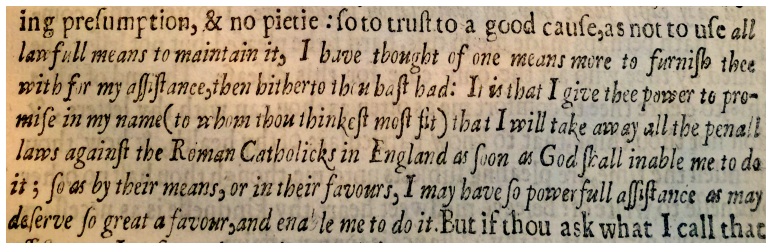


Figure 2.1 – Emphasized text in the print edition

The Parliamentarians took advantage of the permeable generic qualities of the pamphlet to shift the bibliographic code of the printed documents in order to emphasize and advance their ideological goals without changing the linguistic codes,⁴⁵ or text, of the letter. For example, Parliament employed typographical

⁴³ McGann indicates that meaning is a function of all these matters, “whether we are aware of such matters when we make our meanings” or not. Ibid. 12.

⁴⁴ Barnes 106. Joad Raymond reiterates this in *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering*, 217.

⁴⁵ For McGann, the linguistic codes are the content of the text and the meanings contained within the actual words (12).

devices—italicizing particular sections of letters to highlight their ideological importance—to communicate to the reader without changing the King’s actual words or necessarily highlighting their own presence in the text.⁴⁶ In addition to typographical shifts, some of the documents were left partially encoded to remind readers of the secrecy of its original circulation and to enhance authenticity.

The editorial apparatus itself is essential to the reception of Parliament’s ideological message. The preface not only introduces the reader to the material that follows, but guides their reading and interpretation. For example, “the king is identified with secret language, deception and sin, whereas parliament is associated with plain prose, God and truth: secret letters are counterpoised with the openness of pamphlets.”⁴⁷ The preface is the arena in which Parliament battles for the support of the public and challenges the sovereignty of the King.

The preface is also “a pedagogical exercise in discursive political citizenship” that utilizes partisan language to force the reader into siding with Parliament by linking them with Protestantism and friendship.⁴⁸ By forcing the reader to side with Parliament, the preface makes it easier to highlight the faults of the King, which Parliament accomplishes by discussing enmity, friendship, and love to anticipate the letters that followed. For example, the preface repeatedly forces the reader to choose a side through invocation of adversarial, binaristic language like “thou art either a friend or enemy to our cause...if thou art an

⁴⁶ Emphasized text (above) from Letter 8 in which the King gives Henrietta Maria power.

⁴⁷ Barnes 113.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 115-116.

enemy to Parliaments and Reformation.”⁴⁹ The preface thus “strives to demonstrate that monarchical sovereignty is neither singular nor absolute” by establishing the sovereignty of the Parliament, the state, and the law.⁵⁰ Therefore, the preface is essential to guiding the reader’s understanding of the impact of the printed letters, and imperative to the ideological mission of *The Kings Cabinet Opened*.

Parliament also selectively ordered the letters in order to communicate the message inculcated in the reader through the preface. Diana Barnes argues that the pamphlet is an interpolated text that unhinges the letters from the context that originally gave them meaning and reinterprets the King’s words by placing them in a new discursive context.⁵¹ The fact that the letters are printed in the generically flexible pamphlet form encourages the reader to ignore their specific arrangement and the textual adjustments made to them by the editors. This detached context enables Parliament’s narrative of the King’s seduction by his wife and betrayal of his people to be enhanced by non-chronological sequencing, which confers new meaning. Therefore, Parliament’s ideological message is enhanced and conveyed—after inculcation in the preface—by the non-chronological sequencing of the letters. The new arrangement develops the King’s seduction through a narrative of transition; they narrate his transition from being bound to his people to being bound to his wife. In a letter on page 34—dated 12 July 1626—for example, the King complains of the “unkindesses and

⁴⁹ *Kings Cabinet A*³r-v

⁵⁰ Ibid. 115-116.

⁵¹ 117.

distates [that] have fallen between [his] wife and [himself]" and concludes that he must "make her goe to Tiburn in devotion, to pray," and in the following letter—dated 1, January 1644—requests that she write to him more often for, *"the distractions of London were never so greate, or likely to bring good effect as now lastly that assistance was never more needful, never so likely as now to doe good to him who is eternally thine"* which is followed by a letter to his son Harry in which he asserts that *"her health in the first place be cared for, then my affaires."*⁵² The sequencing of the letters creates a narrative of transition from dissatisfaction at the level of desiring Henrietta Maria's exile to her being a pleasant and necessary diversion, to her becoming the most important part of his life.

The annotations continue reinforcing Parliament's ideological message, and even communicate the most important ideological message of the whole pamphlet: "the King is not sovereign, he is acting under malign influence and should be made subject to the law."⁵³ Within the annotations, the editors "carefully played on gender anxieties, suggesting that the king failed the demands of masculinity, and was governed by a woman."⁵⁴ Additionally, the annotations explicitly pair the King's public declarations and the contrary assertions in his letters—the reader can see both the King's public and private personae in the same place.⁵⁵ The juxtaposition enhances the difference and

⁵² *The Kings Cabinet Opened* 34-36. Parliament's Emphasis.

⁵³ Barnes 129.

⁵⁴ Raymond, "Popular Representations of Charles I" 58.

⁵⁵ Barnes 130.

highlights the discrepancies in the King's two persons. It also helps solidify the difference between public and private men through a discovery of the dual nature of one man who operates differently in both spheres.

Chapter 3: The Digital Edition and Book as Interface

I now turn to *The Kings Cabinet Opened* in its electronic form. The original text has been encoded into XML using the Text Encoding Initiative's guidelines, transformed into HTML, and inserted into an electronic semi-structured database for retrieval by the user via web interface. Like the printed text, *The Kings Cabinet Opened Online* has at its heart a problem of *code*. The text has been re-encoded, transformed again into a coded language that can obfuscate or clarify its meaning depending on what the user brings to their experience. The digital edition reimagines the text by presenting it in a malleable format to a new public and inviting them to both formulate and interpret the text and, especially, the work that Parliament and that I, myself, through digitization, have done to it.

In converting the text of *The Kings Cabinet Opened*⁵⁶ I attempted to maintain all of the linguistic and bibliographic codes that were present. While faithful transcription and encoding of the text by the undergraduate students of the Digital Literary Studies course here at the University of South Carolina and myself resulted in the preservation of the linguistic codes, the bibliographic—or material—features of the text were, in some cases more difficult to preserve and in others were enhanced. The impact of the translation of the bibliographic

⁵⁶ A text that is based partially on material retrieved from *Early English Books Online* and partially from Google Books.

codes has special significance for this document and its meaning. As I have already demonstrated, the bibliographic codes are paramount to the communication of Parliament's ideological message. To maintain this, I have maintained the typographical shifts in the letters, even enhanced their function. In the printed edition of *The Kings Cabinet Opened*, both nouns—persons and places—and emphasized text are italicized. In the electronic edition there is now semantic differentiation between nouns—which are tagged with <i> or italic tags—and the emphasized text—which are tagged with or emphasis tags—thus, there is a bibliographic emphasis on the text that the Parliamentarians meant to emphasize. This new differentiation enhances and complicates the Parliamentary message through the elaboration of new bibliographic codes—not to mention allowing this distinction to carry through to non-sighted individuals using screen readers.

For example:

```
<p>
<emph> Now I must make a complaint to thee of my <persName key="CCD122">Sonne
Charles</persName>, which troubles me the more, that thou maist suspect I seeke
by equiocating to hide the breach of my word, which I hate above all things,
especially to thee: It is this he hath sent to desire me, That <persName
key="JGZR021">Sir John Greenfield</persName> may be sworne Gentleman of his
Bedchamber, but already so publicly ingaged in it, that the refusall would be a
great disgrace both to my <rs type="person" key="CCD122">Sonne</rs> and the young
<rs type="person" key="ZGZR021">Gentleman</rs>, to whom it is not fit to give a
just distaste, especially now, considering his Fathers merits, his owne
hopefulnesse, besides the great power that Family has in the West: </emph> 'Yet I
have refused the admitting of him untill I shall heare from thee. Wherefore I desire
thee first to chide my <rs type="person" key="CCD122">Sonne</rs> for ingaging
```

Figure 3.1 – Example of emphasized text. nouns and regular text.

In the code above, we can see the initial <p> tag that delineates a section of text within the overall <div type='letter'>⁵⁷ that contains a section of text that the parliamentarians printed in italics. This text is enclosed in or emphasis tags that semantically mark its emphasis—the text is not italicized until it is translated into HTML and marked with tags—that is, it denotes the emphasis in the text in a way that is not presentational, but hierarchical. The text enclosed in the tag is hierarchically differentiated from the rest of the text in the paragraph. Also present here are <persName> and <rs> tags. These tags are used to identify people within the text, <persName> being a person's name and <rs> being a reference string for the person. Each person has been assigned a key by which they are linked to an identity entry in the personography. These tags separate the nouns, which are also italicized, from the text that is designated as receiving emphasis. When translated into HTML, these tags are made into hyperlinks to the personography page that are wrapped in <i> or italics tags. The difference in and <i> tags maintains the semantic differentiation between the types of text in the HTML presentation. The HTML text of this selection looks like this:

*Now I must make a complaint to thee of my **Sonne Charles**, which troubles me the more, that thou maist suspect I seeke by equiocating to hide the breach of my word, which I hate above all things, especially to thee: It is this he hath sent to desire me, That **Sir John Greenfield** may be sworne Gentleman of his Bedchamber, but already so publikely ingaged in it, that the refusall would be a great disgrace both to my **Sonne** and the young **Gentleman**, to whom it is not fit to give a just distaste, especially now, considering his Fathers merits, his owne hopefullnesse, besides the great power that Family has in the West: 'Yet I have refused the admitting of him untill I shall heare from thee. Wherefore I desire thee first to chide my **Sonne** for ingaging himselfe without one of our consents; then, not to refuse thy owne consent; and lastly, to beleieve*

Figure 3.2 – The HTML Version of the text selected in Figure 3.1 above.

⁵⁷ A <div> is a division in the hierarchy of the semi-structured document. In the case of each of the letters, the divisions are of type "letter" within the <body> of the whole document.

The nouns, being hyperlinks are now both visually and semantically distinct from text that the Parliamentarians chose to highlight through emphasis. The reader can, while reading the digital text, be doubly aware of the Parliamentary editorial work and the editorial work that I have done.

A difficulty that I encountered was how to encode the editorial authenticity statements that were inserted after each letter. After deliberation, I created a new type of note, labeled “authStmt” to distinguish the authenticity statement from the rest of the letter. This new note creates a semantic differentiation between the letter and the authenticity statement and highlights the editorial presence in the document. Ed Folsom argues that situations like this reveal the continuing nature of any digital or database project in which, “all our careful tagging and markup...reveal more and more features that our tagging codes cannot adequately describe.”⁵⁸ This difficulty and its solution—perhaps all coding and editorial decisions—reveals the constructed nature of the editorial assertion of authenticity in the first place; the authenticity of the document requires the reader’s—and subsequently the user’s—trust in the editor’s honesty. In the world of popular pamphlet printing, the assertion of the authenticity of the material presented was of paramount importance to Parliament, in the world of digital text on the internet, authenticity is impossible to confirm—Charles cannot speak to the accuracy of the digital letters, and there is no regulating body for information disseminated through the internet—and yet, just as important. The internet has become the pamphlet of the modern age—the site of

⁵⁸ Ed Folsom, “Reply.” *PMLA: Publications Of The Modern Language Association Of America* 122.5 (2007) 1609.

unsubstantiated texts created from an amalgamation of possibly dubious sources—and this new version of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* participates in this same necessity of constructing authenticity in an environment of fakes.

That the document has been transferred into a database has far-reaching implications for its meaning. The user can choose to view the letters in their original printed sequence with preface and annotations, or sort them by date, or by sender-receiver, can view all the letters that reference an individual, and so on. The letters have been re-individuated—they have been encoded as separate pieces, returned to individual pieces of a conversation—and inserted into a database.

This means, as Manovich and others have noted, that the world of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* is represented as list.⁵⁹ The user, thus, experiences *The Kings Cabinet Opened* through an interface that displays the letters in what Alan Liu calls a “data pour.”⁶⁰ These are places on a page where the author or editor surrenders the act of writing to that of parameterization, designated zones where unknown content pours into the manifest work from databases or XML sources. The letters selected from the list now appear in locations on the screen that are designated for the display of information that is unknown—the user determines which letter or letters to see at any given time. For Liu, this is the characteristic of encoded text—the content of the work is separated from the “material

⁵⁹ Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2002) 225; Ed Folsom, “Database As Genre: The Epic Transformation Of Archives” *PMLA: Publications Of The Modern Language Association Of America* 122.5 (2007) 1573.

⁶⁰ Alan Liu, “Transcendental Data: Toward A Cultural History And Aesthetics Of The New Encoded Discourse.” *Critical Inquiry* 31.1 (2004) 59.

instantiation or formal presentation.”⁶¹ The letters are separated from the editorial apparatus in two ways: they can be viewed without the preface or annotations, or they can be viewed without Parliament’s careful sequencing. Therefore, the meaning of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* is now more explicitly mutable.

We can come to a better understanding of this mutable meaning by discussing the effect of database on narrative. Lev Manovich has argued that database and narrative are natural enemies, but I, like Katherine Hayles and Ed Folsom, argue that database and narrative are more like symbionts with a caveat.⁶² That is, the database enables new narratives while challenging the original or official narrative. Manovich, despite his description of database and narrative as natural enemies, links them in a way saying “the ‘user’ of a narrative is traversing a database, following links between its records as established by the database creator.”⁶³ Therefore, narrative in itself is composed of a database. The narrative of an interfaced database, then, is composed of what Ed Folsom calls fractal pieces.⁶⁴ In *The Kings Cabinet Opened*, each letter, the preface, and the annotations, and the added personography and social network maps, can each be seen to generate fractal pieces of the whole narrative of a single experience with the electronic edition of *The Kings Cabinet Opened*.

The exploration of, and interaction with, each of these fractals leads to what Folsom explains is a rhizomatic experience of the text that is characterized

⁶¹ Ibid. 58.

⁶² Manovich 225; Folsom, “Reply” 1609; N. Katherine Hayles, “Narrative And Database: Natural Symbionts” *PMLA: Publications Of The Modern Language Association Of America* 122.5 (2007) 1603.

⁶³ Manovich, 227.

⁶⁴ Folsom, “Database as Genre” 1574.

by “an intertwined web of roots.”⁶⁵ The letters themselves—whether the static collection that is represented as a reproduction of the original document or the individual or user-sequenced—now have identities all their own that lead to other fractals; each letter contains a list of persons which links to the personography which links to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. The user can generate their own and multiplicative narratives constructed from these fractals; can construct their own sequencing of the letters, choose to see the annotations or preface, in addition to the narrative of their experience with the site, and the narrative of their path of information access.

The database, then, rather than being the enemy of narrative, enables the creation of narratives. Katherine Hayles indicates that database also relies on narrative “because database can construct relational juxtapositions but is helpless to interpret or explain them it needs narrative to make its results meaningful.”⁶⁶ *The Kings Cabinet Opened*’s new interfaced database allows for the user to create new connections and then interpret them—to construct a new narrative and therefore a new image of Charles’s private and political life.

The interface can also enhance the communication and understanding of Parliament’s ideological message. The user now has the opportunity to view the annotations that are specifically relevant to the letter that they are currently viewing in the same virtual space. Previously, the annotations and the letters were only spuriously connected—they existed in the same physical document but

⁶⁵ Ibid. 1573.

⁶⁶ Hayles 1603.

not the same physical space. Now, because of the interfaced database, the user is able to better understand and relate the commentary of the annotations to their intended letter—if they so choose.⁶⁷

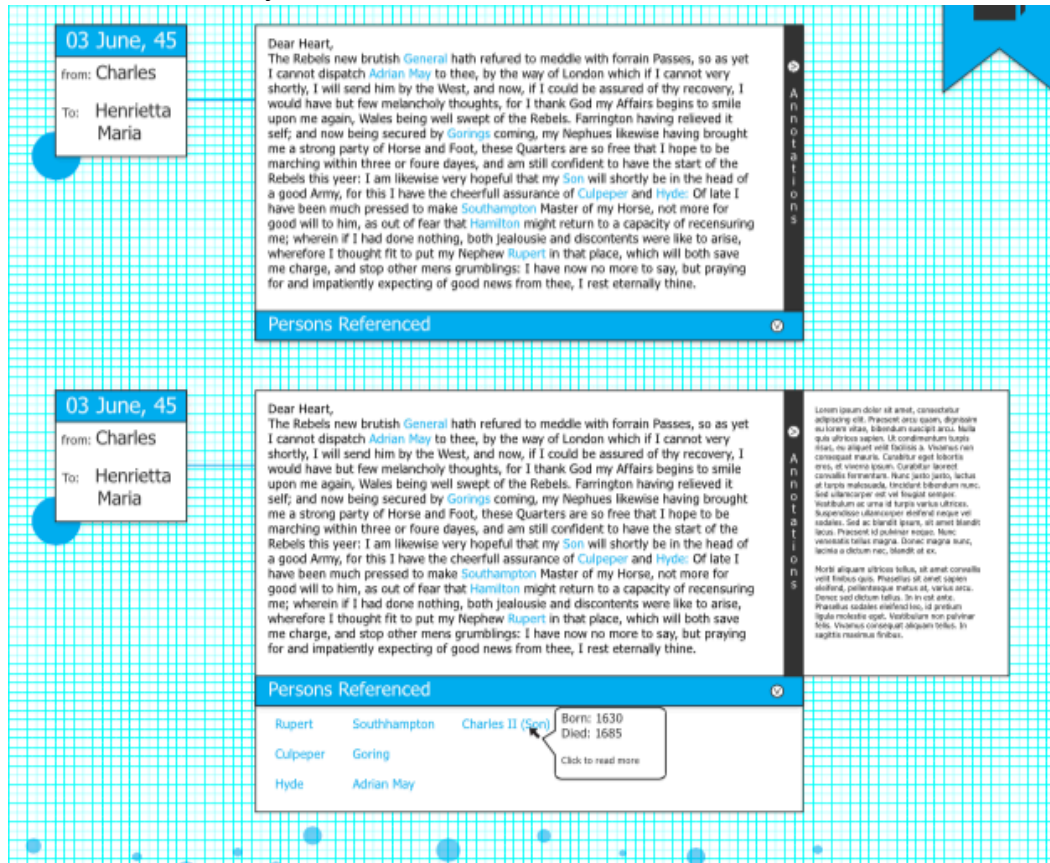


Figure 3.3 – Website Concept

The user now has more apparently variant paths through *The Kings Cabinet Opened* and therefore can construct their own image of King Charles I and Parliament. In this way, I think, the electronic edition of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* represents the incarnation of Parliament's—professed—ideal invocation of the public. Understanding this requires a reconsideration of the book and interface. Scholars are increasingly recognizing the fruitfulness of investigating

⁶⁷ Website Screenshot (right) displaying a letter with and without annotations and a list of people referenced inside the letter that are linked to other resources.

the connection between print and digital media. Johanna Drucker argues for an understanding of interface that is “what we read and how we read combined through engagement, [that] is a provocation to cognitive experience, but [that] is also an enunciative apparatus.”⁶⁸ For Drucker, the interface contains both text and instructions for reading that are in part constituted by and constitutive of the reader. In going forward, there is a need to rethink the interface, for, “so long as we think of interface as an environment for doing things, performing tasks, work, structuring behaviors, we remain linked to the idea that ‘reading’ the digital environment is restricted to an analysis of its capacity to support the doing of tasks.”⁶⁹ A reconsideration of the interface, then, requires a reconsideration of the target of analysis and the function of the interface as a whole. Drucker’s argument is about the continued development of interface, but I think that it is useful for considering interface as a whole. The interface is a window to a selection of text with instructions for how to interpret that text; it is a site of mediation that impacts the reception and understanding of text. To limit our understanding of this complex structure to its capacity to support the completion of tasks is to miss the effect that interface has on any particular instance of a text or its constitutive impact on our reception of that text.

John Milton wrote in *Areopagitica* that “books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was

⁶⁸ Johanna Drucker, *“Interface and Interpretation” Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 2014) 147.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 144.

whose progeny they are.”⁷⁰ Books have, and have had, a life beyond their final printed form; they exist in conversation with other texts, within a system of circulation and use, are bound or rebound with other texts, added to, revised, are the product of complex social interactions that do not cease upon its completion, and exist in multiple printed states. That the book exists in multiple states—and can be changed by each reading or reader—lends itself to an understanding of the book as an instantiation of a view to an interfaced database. Each state, issue, or edition can be seen as representing an—at least slightly—different query on the database of the material from which the text was generated—the work that the text is an attempt at embodying. G.T. Tanselle, in his book *A Rationale of Textual Criticism* argues that the text on a page does not constitute the work and therefore “any alterations one makes in the manuscript do not automatically alter the work.”⁷¹ The work, then, of the text consists not in its manifestation on the page, just as it does not consist of its manifestation on the screen. The database and Tanselle’s work are similar in that they both lie behind and structure what is presented to the reader. The print text, like a web page, can be seen to represent an instance of an organization of pieces. The printed page can act as an interface that mediates between the reader and the work, that impacts, creates, or guides their understanding of this particular instantiation of records retrieved from the database. States, issues, and editions can represent various instantiations of views to interfaces whose text is the result of different

⁷⁰ John Milton, *The Complete Poetry and Essential Prose of John Milton* Eds. Willaim Kerrigan, John Rumrich, and Stephen M. Fallon, Modern Library (New York, NY: Random House Inc., 2007) 930.

⁷¹ G. Thomas Tanselle "The Nature of Texts." *A Rationale of Textual Criticism*. (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania, 1989) 27.

queries to the same database that guide our reading of that data set and database.

As Drucker explains, the graphic features of books all perform particular structural purposes:

They work as presentation (what's inscribed and present), representation (content of a text and/or image), navigation (wayfinding across the spaces of the book), orientation (sense of where one is in the whole), reference (into the sources and conversations on which a work is drawn), and social networking (the dialogues of commentary, footnotes, endnotes, and marginalia).⁷²

Here, the discussion of the physical features of the printed book also represents the architecture of the book's interface. We can see that the book features many of the characteristics that we attribute to the digital interface and can come to the conclusion that the transition from print to digital is a change *in* interface, not a change *to* interface for text. While the digital interface allows for explicit connections between texts through hyperlinks, these connects already exist in the print interface. These connections come in the form of allusions, textual notes by scholars, references, addresses, co-authorship, the social circumstances in which the book was produced, and so on. The preface to *The Kings Cabinet Opened*, for example, states that the authors will not "smother this light under a Bushell,"⁷³ which is a clear biblical allusion that invokes another

⁷² 162.

⁷³ 1.

text—that links from this text to that text. Ziva Ben-Porat argues in her article “The Poetics of Literary Allusion” that allusion is the “simultaneous activation of two texts,” which “results in the formation of intertextual patterns whose nature cannot be predetermined.”⁷⁴ The allusion, then, reinvigorates the text alluded to—the not quite dead book—in the invocation that results in a dialogic interaction between the two texts which creates new meaning for the reader that activates the link by recognizing the allusion.

In a digital interface these intertextual connections can be strengthened by providing a hyperlink from one text to the other, but the connection must already be activated within the printed text in order for the hyperlink to exist.⁷⁵ The term for these new connections—a feature of changes made to old interface—is indicative of its origin, since the prefix hyper- indicates going over, above, beyond, or extending something that must already exist.⁷⁶ That is, a hyperlink is an extension of a link that already exists—or the concept of a link in general. The hyperlink does not constitute the connection between texts, but makes it more apparent through underlining, highlighting, or being in a different color.⁷⁷ The development of hyperlinking represents an extension, revision, or enhancement of the interface feature of allusion in print it does not, however, replace that original feature.

⁷⁴ 107-108.

⁷⁵ Since, without said allusion, no hyperlink would be necessary or possible.

⁷⁶ *The Oxford English Dictionary*

⁷⁷ That is, only if the web designer does not change the rules that govern the appearance of links within the page's body text. It could be interesting to have hyperlinks that were invisible—though the user's cursor would still change shape when they moused over the link—and thereby closer to the allusion which they represent.

The Kings Cabinet Opened is a valuable case study in the similarity of the print and digital interface. The print document can be viewed as a snapshot of the interface to a database, as the result of a single query to a database. Here, the seized letters, the packet in its entirety, function as the database—the set of records stored and organized in a central location from which the user chooses—and the printed pamphlet as the interface to that database. The printed book represents the result of a query that could be—roughly—structured: SELECT letters FROM packet WHERE Charles = [Deceptive AND (Duplicitous OR Loving)] SORT BY severity. The appended preface and annotations function as the user guide for interpreting the result of the query—the frame around the data pour.

This metaphorical representation of both text and web interface places the text in an architecture and understanding called Model-View-Controller. The model representing the data set and its structure—the original letters for parliament, the available letters for the users of the website. The model from which Parliament selected is a truly unknown domain, but the interfaced database of *The Kings Cabinet Online* is filled with and structured by the selections that Parliament made against their model. The new electronic model is a model of the view (or instantiation of the print interface) of the original model—a representation of the original data set. *The Kings Cabinet Opened Online* represents a change in interface for *The Kings Cabinet Opened* for a data set that I have attempted to replicate entirely. The change in interface represents

a change in the reader's possible experience and interaction with the text, not a change in the text itself.

The view represents the selection performed on the data set, the letters that are printed in the pamphlet and that populate the database of *KCO Online*, plus the appended editorial apparatus. In the case of the codex, print can be seen as the interface and each individual book as a view. Parliament's selections, which were guided by their political motives, were made by their controller—those motives that structured the selection performed on the model and transmitted to the view. In the electronic edition, the letters—those selected by parliament—combined with the database structure make up the model. My code, and the user requests facilitated—and limited—by it, function as the controller (the instructions that the server utilizes to select collections of letters from the collection of letters). Finally, the page that the user sees—which is structured by my own editorial and design choices—represents the view.⁷⁸

The online and text versions of *The Kings Cabinet Opened*, then, mirror each other in form and functionality. The display on the website is an instance of the text—and a query performed against the database—just as the printed pamphlet is an instance of the text. Each is rife with interpretive possibilities and mutability that are arrived at through editorial guidance and user interaction. The difference lies in the user's ability to re-generate the text in a way that has not yet been printed—in their ability to re-instantiate the text. The electronic edition is, therefore, only dynamic in its re-generability which is enabled through, and only

⁷⁸ See the screenshot of the web page above.

through, its new interface. It represents a rapid shift in presented text akin to the bibliographic states that books can appear in. Digitally, the web interface and user perform the functions of compositor and printer in a more immediate and less permanent way.

Thus, the interface is the primary zone of mediation for text, both printed and electronic. Interface functions as the go-between for text and reader-user, but not without having an effect on the experience of the text. Alexander Galloway explains in *The Interface Effect* that representation through interface is “a map, a reduction or indexical and symbolic topology.”⁷⁹ It is common to look at the transition from print to digital as a liberation from the formal restrictions of print, as a method that allows for freedom in the user’s experience of the text. While I think that this is true, it is important to recognize that there are inherent limitations in interfaced media—the user is limited to our structured map, our indexical topology that guides, as Parliament did, the user’s experience and understanding of the text, albeit in new ways. The new interface compounds editorial decision upon editorial decision that results in a text that is doubly restricted and constructed, but that is freshly and contradictorily mutable in its openness to recombability. The result is not a new text or even a new edition, but a new *experience* of the text and of reading.

The user can come to the text, recombine and reconstitute its content, but, as is the case with print, cannot escape from the interface through which they are viewing the text. For example, the user is forced to notice the new distinction between nouns—which are hyperlinked, italicized, and colored—and emphasized

⁷⁹ vii.

text. This change influences the experience and interpretation of the text; it invites, hints at, and draws the user to new information and, in some cases, it invites them to leave the text itself. The new formal elements—like the orange links in Figure 3.3—distract from the content, in a sense reduce the importance of the King's words to the experience of the text and highlight new—and old—editorial decisions. The new elements function as possible interruptions to the text and its continuity, as possible junctures in the narrative of the user's experience with the text.

The user is given the opportunity to reconfigure the document and thus to consider the text itself in new ways—though with or without Parliament's specific guidance—while still within the confines of specific editorial decisions. The new interface has not eradicated the print interface, but extended it. The formal structures that are inherent in the print interface have been enhanced, not replaced—the letters remain as letters, are still presented within a frame (now called the viewport) the allusions and references to people remain, but are more evident.

The letters viewed without the editorial apparatus appended to them in the print edition mean very little individually, but can enable the user to come to a new understanding of a particular piece of English history. Interestingly, though the primary editorial apparatus is disconnected—the preface and annotations—the typographical conventions remain and are enhanced and therefore can communicate a different message. The social networks and links in the letters can lead them to a new understanding of seemingly minor characters in the

English Revolution. As Diana Barnes indicates, for the printed edition, “in a peculiarly intellectual fashion readers were invited to participate by reading and judging the King’s epistolary rhetoric.”⁸⁰

Now, the digital edition draws out the Parliamentarians’ rhetorical choices while encouraging readers to explore alternate or even external possibilities. The semi-structured nature of an interactive document allows for new connections to be made—or severed—by the user in the specific instance of reading. The King’s Cabinet is no longer simply opened—revealing a structured, selected content—but has been splintered and left for the user to reassemble.

⁸⁰ Barnes 134.

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The Kings cabinet opened: or, certain packets of secret letters & papers, written

with the Kings own hand, and taken in his cabinet at Nasby-Field, June

14. 1645. By victorious Sr. Thomas Fairfax; wherein many mysteries of

state, tending to the justification of that cause, for which Sir Thomas

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Appendix A: The Status of the Digital Edition

The digital edition of *The Kings Cabinet Opened* currently exists, like the printed text, in several states. The letters have been separated into individual Extensible Markup Language (XML) files that have been encoded according to the Text Encoding Initiative's version 5 guidelines. This process involved developing a set of encoding guidelines by which each letter could be uniformly approached for encoding. The encoding was completed alongside a team of students in the Digital Literary Studies course. These guidelines ensured consistency in editorial decisions about markup across the edition. While this is an iterative process, the text has currently been encoded to include tags that provide meta-data for each letter such as sender, recipient, and date. Additionally, the structure of the letters have been made more apparent by separating headers, closers, postscripts, and authority statements from the body text. Each person mentioned in the letters has also been tagged and provided an ID number that corresponds to an entry in the XML personography file. Each place mentioned has also been tagged and many of the dates referenced within the letters have been tagged as well.

The tagging of the text creates an extra layer of semantic information within each document; now there is information about the content embedded within the text. In order for a user to access and make use of the added information, the encoded XML documents need to be transformed into an

interactive Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) document through the use of a language called Extensible Stylesheet Language (XSLT). Transforming an XML document using XSLT involves writing a stylesheet—a complex set of rules—that govern the process by which the XML is translated or transformed into HTML. Writing this stylesheet requires attention to detail and forethought. Each XML tag had to be accounted for and translated into semantically meaningful HTML units. This, for example, is where the emphasized text—`<emph>` tagged text—became differentiated from the otherwise italicized nouns of the text for the reader through rules that translated the nouns to italicized links—of class person or place—and the emphasized text to semantically emphasized blocks of text that were tagged with `` or emphasis tags.

Currently, the most complete interactive edition of *The Kings Cabinet* Opened is this static HTML website that can be found at <http://www.kingscabinetonline.com>. The website features the full text as it appears in the print edition with preface and annotations. Before each letter, the meta-data—sender, receiver, courier, etc.—has been extracted and is displayed before each letter, all of which are separated by horizontal rules. Within each letter, the person's mentioned are hyper-linked to a personography page that features basic biographical information—birth, death, occupation—and links to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography entries for each person. Within the annotations, any references to specific letters are hyperlinked to the appropriate letter on the site.

I am currently in the process of developing the Django interface and MySQL Database for the second phase version of The Kings Cabinet Opened Online. Performing this task will enable many of the targeted features of the project, like the recombability of the text. While the electronic edition as it exists already has a significantly different interface to its print-based predecessor, I want to push this change in interface further on an iterative basis. The development of the static web edition of the text is the first such iteration. Designing the database for KCO Online has forced me to conceptualize the letters and the data within them in new and interesting ways that have implications for the future of the project. The slowest part of this task has been teaching myself the Django language, which is an extension of the Python programming language. Django is a framework that will allow me to create the interface that I have envisioned for this project and to continue building on it in the future. I hope to add many new features beyond user sorting and searching; among these are: dynamically generated interactive social network graphs, maps that represent the spatial network created by the correspondence, that map the travel of couriers and troop movements, and, most interestingly, community annotation of the text. Community annotation would allow the users of KCO Online to contribute their own “marginalia” to the book and thereby contribute to its similarity to a material book as if it were being lent, shared, or gifted to many people.

In the future, I think that it would also be helpful and interesting to encode the letters with meta-data about their layout on the leaves of the printed

document. For example, encoding signatures and catchwords, which would enable different displays through the interface like openings and a possibly sheet view that attempted to reconstruct the sheet after composition and printing but before folding.