**Rare Books Pedagogy Unit**

Multiple Edition Exercise

Many works appear in multiple editions for a variety of reasons: some authors change their work from edition to edition (or printing to printing); sometimes works are edited to appeal to a new audience or conform to new literary conventions; sometimes texts change in the publication process. This exercise provides an opportunity for students to analyze and interpret multiple editions of the same text in order to focus on issues of textual stability, editorial choice, and critical apparatus.

**As you work through this exercise, please keep the following in mind:**

You must comply with the rules of the Rare Book Room.

* Please handle all texts with care; do not bend book spines back, bend pages, and so on.
* You may only use pencils while working in the Rare Book Room; pens are not allowed.
* No food or drink is allowed in Special Collections.

**Choose one set of the following texts:**

***[Add in the chosen texts here]***

**For the first part of this exercise, you will need to review a designated passage from two different editions of the same text.**

1. Be sure to study the passage in both editions carefully. (This is not as easy as it sounds).
2. Develop a list of similarities between the two editions. Are the words in the passage identical? Is the spelling consistent? Is the punctuation consistent? If there are footnotes (or other scholarly apparatus), is it the same in both texts? Is the typesetting the same? Are italics used consistently?
3. Develop a list of differences between the two editions. Are there words present in one edition that are missing in the other? If the vocabulary has been changed, what is the significance of the change? If words are spelled differently, what is the effect of the difference? Are the footnotes different, and if so, how? And to what purpose?
4. Check to see if the texts have any prefatory material that explains the editorial choices in the edition.
5. Evaluate the text as a product to be sold—the quality of the paper, the binding, the size of the text, the size and type of the print, illustrations—to help determine the audience for the edition.

Based on your analysis of the passage in these two texts and the texts themselves, you should be able to write a brief (one to two page) essay in which you develop some ideas about the definition of an edition and/or the editorial process.

**Please keep the following in mind:**

1. State your thesis at the beginning of your essay. Your thesis may focus on the editing process, editorial practices, or the effects of editorial choices . Remember that a thesis is a position statement and that you need to stake a position about editions in your essay.
2. The more specific evidence you use in your essay to prove your point, the better.
3. Your essay should *not* be a list of responses to the questions 1 through 5 above. The questions are intended to give you some strategies to begin your analysis; they do not provide the structure (or the thesis) for your essay, nor are they intended to limit your analysis.
4. Each paragraph of your essay should support your thesis statement. Please make sure that there are transitions between paragraphs so that each paragraph leads to the next, and make sure that each paragraph builds upon its predecessor.
5. Every book reflects a cultural moment. Your job is to make sense of it.
6. This assignment does not require external research—it requires careful viewing, thinking, and writing.

**Grading Rubric:**

A (90-100) – Excellent work. The essay has been completed in a professional and timely manner. The student has engaged with the subject in a thoughtful and thought-provoking manner. The analysis is accurate, and the notes are insightful. The essay has a clearly articulated thesis, and it is clearly organized; the author has chosen compelling evidence to substantiate the analysis. The essay does not require substantive revision, and there are no grammatical or stylistic errors.

B (80-89) – Good work; the essay has been completed in a professional and timely manner. The essay shows that the student has substantially engaged with the subject, but the analysis is either partially incomplete, includes weak evidence, or manifests some difficulty with organization. The essay requires substantive revisions, but few or no stylistic ones.

C (70-79) – Average work; the essay has been completed but not necessarily in a professional or timely manner. The essay reflects effort by the student, but the analysis is incomplete, includes inappropriate evidence (or a lack of evidence), or shows significant difficulties with organization. The essay requires significant substantive or stylistic revisions.

D (60-69) - Less than average work. The essay has not been completed in a professional or timely manner. The essay shows a lack of effort on the part of the student and a lack of engagement with the assignment. The essay lacks analysis, evidence, and organization; extensive substantive and stylistic revisions are necessary.

F (<59) – Inadequate work. The essay has not been completed, or when submitted, the essay demonstrates a significant lack of effort on the part of the student. Such work is marked by the absence of analysis, evidence, and organization; engagement with the illustration and the assignment is necessary before extensive revisions are even possible.