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A Guide to Early Printed Books and Manuscripts

By Mark Bland



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A Guide to Early Printed Books and Manuscripts provides an introduction to the language and concepts employed in bibliographical studies and textual scholarship as they pertain to early modern manuscripts and printed texts

- Winner, Honourable Mention for Literature, Language and Linguistics, American Publishers Prose Awards, 2010
- Based almost exclusively on new primary research
- Explains the complex process of viewing documents as artefacts, showing readers how to describe documents properly and how to read their physical properties
- Demonstrates how to use the information gleaned as a tool for studying the transmission of literary documents
- Makes clear why such matters are important and the purposes to which such information is put
- Features illustrations that are carefully chosen for their unfamiliarity in order to keep the discussion fresh



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Editorial Review

Review

"This is an absolutely essential book. We have excellent handbooks for English printed books and manuscripts, but no one book that takes us through every aspect of the making and circulation of texts, from paper to binding to reading. Mark Bland meets an urgent need."—*Peter Stallybrass, University of Pennsylvania*

"Bland's emphasis on the human element of textual production makes this introduction to bibliography attractively readable, where often the subject can seem arid to beginners, but it also is rooted in his conviction that the study of texts must always be grounded in an awareness of the people who contributed to every aspect of their creation." (*Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, 2012*)

"Showing an extensive knowledge of the scholarship in his field [Bland] provides an objective assessment, often correcting false reasoning and offering a sound explanation of the facts ... I believe that Mark Bland's Guide would be of help to anyone interested in the discipline." (*European Review of History: Revue europeenne d'histoire, 18 July 2012*)

"Bland offers a clear and comprehensive guide to bibliography, and it is appropriate that it is most likely to come into its own as part of the work of making meaning, wedged open beneath a researcher's elbow." (*The Review of English Studies, 23 December 2011*)

"This book is indeed a very practical, clear and valuable guide to books and manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries ... The book is well illustrated and Bland makes good use of the images, especially in his exemplary discussion in Chapter Two about how to use watermark evidence." (*Script and Print, 1 August 2011*)

"Wide-ranging and commendably concise, this handbook provides an up-to-date and practical guide to bibliographical concepts, methods and terminology ... This book will equip students, perhaps encountering sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts for the first time, in their early printed or manuscript form (as distinct from modern editions), to approach bibliographical description and analysis without fear or confusion and, for those wishing to pursue the subject more widely, it will serve admirably as an introduction." (*Routledge ABES, 2011*)

"a gateway to some of the major works of bibliography" (*Library and Information History, December 2010*)

"Bland's 'Guide' is distinguished by intelligent and comprehensive coverage, by his extensive knowledge of current scholarship in the field, and by his personal research and rethinking." (*The Library, September 2011*)

From the Back Cover

A Guide to Early Printed Books and Manuscripts provides a concise introduction to the language and concepts employed in bibliographical studies and textual scholarship as they pertain to early modern manuscripts and printed texts.

Focusing on documents from the late sixteenth and early mid-seventeenth century, the author explains the complex process of viewing documents as artefacts, showing readers how to describe documents properly

and how to read their physical properties. This helpful *Guide* demonstrates how we are to use this information, together with an understanding of the processes of production and modification, as a tool for studying the transmission of literary documents.

An invaluable resource illuminating the complex relationship between the material processes and the meanings of the written and printed word, *A Guide to Early Printed Books and Manuscripts* is essential reading for anyone interested in book history and textual scholarship.

About the Author

Mark Bland is Senior Lecturer in the Department of English and Creative Writing at De Montfort University, UK. He has published extensively on early printed books and manuscripts, paper, censorship, stemmatics, and editorial practice, as well as on Ben Jonson and his contemporaries. He is the editor of the forthcoming Oxford edition of *The Poems of Ben Jonson*

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