

Early European Books

From Decision Maker to End-User

How *Early European Books* is being used in a leading international university



The University Library

A world-renowned research university, synonymous with academic excellence and amongst the most prestigious universities in the world, is becoming increasingly reliant upon the *Early European Books* database. With over 11 million holdings in the library, including 7 million bound volumes, it is one of the largest and most distinguished university libraries in the world. The university prides itself on the discovery and dissemination of knowledge, and online resources, including *Early European Books*, play an important role in students gaining access to the knowledge they need.

Decision-Maker

Decisions to purchase online resources are often made by librarians and yet they may never know how students make use of the research tools they have selected.

This profile highlights how a librarian for History of Science, who also lectures in History, and a History of Science PhD candidate at the same university use *Early European Books*.

The Librarian's view

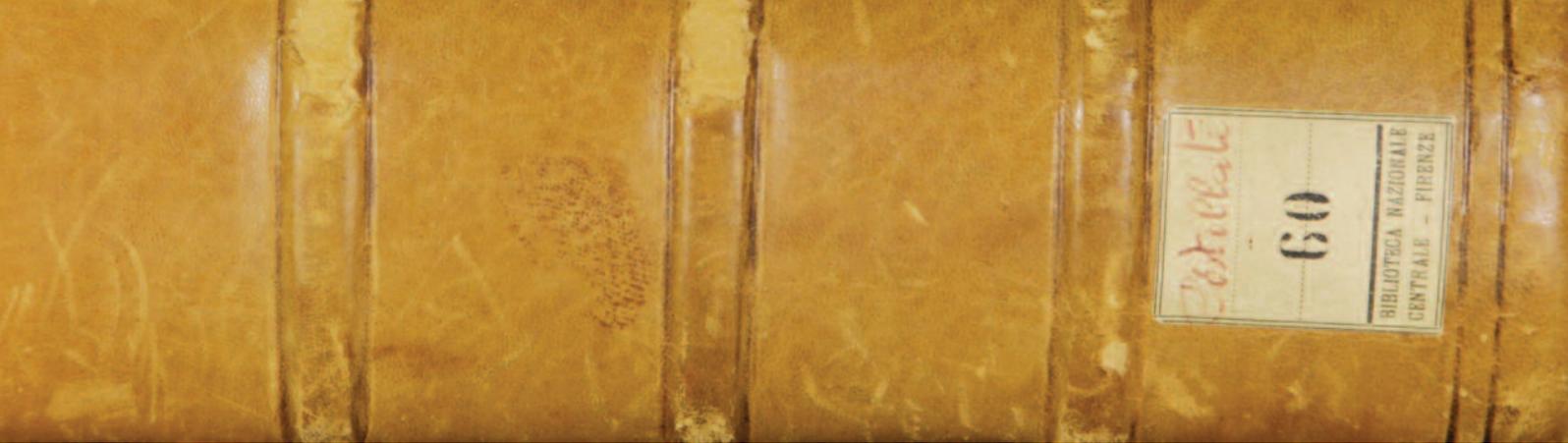
Supporting Faculty & Students – *Early European Books* is used in our library to support faculty and students. *Early European Books* allows the library to provide access to texts where the university library collection is lacking.

Images Show the Bigger Picture – For scholars of Modern Europe we have found the greatest value of *Early European Books* lies in the way it provides access to colour images from books published centuries ago. Images assist scholars in understanding how groups of people are understood in their cultures. A text could detail the scene of an early European public execution but an image is much more powerful and less prone to interpretation. Images provide something which text alone cannot.

A Powerful Research Tool – *Early European Books* empowers us to assist students with their research. Students researching the history of book printing are writing papers on the books they have accessed via *Early European Books*.

Early European Books traces the history of printing in Europe from its origins through to the close of the 17th century. Students are seeing a vast amount of books in one place and not having to travel the world to do so. They're writing as if they have seen the print book.





The Student's view

Increased Access to Rare Books –

As a student of early modern History of Science, with a particular interest in natural history, I find *Early European Books* an indispensable resource. It overcomes the problem of not having greater access to rare books, in spite of the university library having a rare books room. Conversely, it also helps me identify rare books I would like to subsequently read, in the rare books room, if the library has a copy.

Finding Source Material Quickly –

Using *Early European Books* as a way of getting sources for my thesis and research papers is a huge time-saver. Travelling the world to seek out rare books is the only way to gain access to millions of pages of rare books – accessing the *Early European Books* database is much more practical, less costly, and a vast amount of information is available at the click of a button.

Intelligent Response to Keyword Searches –

In order to research travel books and published works on natural history, both genres that were coming into their own in the

early modern period, I find keyword searching really helpful. Results found by using broad keywords such as 'animals' and 'plants' can highlight sources that might discuss topics of relevance. A specific search using fields such as author, date of publication, place of publication, language help me glean more exact results when I know exactly how they wish to interrogate the database.

Translation Awareness & the Diffusion of Texts –

Early European Books has been helpful in drawing my attention to translations of continental works that I previously wasn't aware of. Knowledge of translations is useful in researching the diffusion of texts, and in allowing the international students in my cohort to be able to read a text translated into their mother-tongue.

Marginalia is Historical

Commentary – Whilst marginalia can sometimes be difficult to read, it is incredibly interesting to my research. Scribbles in the margin give an insightful glance into the lives and thoughts of people who lived hundreds of years ago. These notes can also tell us about the reception of a particular work in history.



Primary Source Linking –

My professors often link to primary sources in their seminars. *Early European Books* allows me to go away and look at the original book, even if modern editions are readily available.

Marked List & PDF Downloading –

I like the 'Add to Marked List' function which allows me to identify books that I wish to take a closer look at later on. It is also helpful to be able to download PDFs of the texts so that I can read them later, and not be always reliant on an internet connection.