Bibliographical Description 1:

- The basic divisions
- Title page
Objectives:

- To understand the purpose of bibliographical description
- To introduce the basic divisions of a physical description as presented in Pearce (1970)
- To learn how to write a heading and describe a title page
### Purpose of Bibliographical Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Catalogues &amp; checklists</th>
<th>Bibliographies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Make available a list of books in a certain collection or library or by author or subject</td>
<td>• Attempt to examine every available copy of an edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minimal identifying details</td>
<td>• Describe the characteristics of an “ideal copy” of the edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Usually only a single copy is described</td>
<td>• Distinguish between issues and variants of the edition...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Purpose cont.

- ...explain and describe the printing and textual history of the edition
- Place the edition “in a correct and logical relationship to other editions.” (Bowers)
- Usually include extensive detail involving in-depth analyses and possibly research (*analytical bibliography*)
- Serve as a bridge to textual criticism (Greg)
Basic Divisions (Pearce)

- A) the heading and title page
- B) the **collation** and colophon
- C) the contents
- D) the binding
- E) notes
A1) The heading

- The heading is a brief statement of identification—author, title, date
  - Webster, John  The tragedy of the Duchess of Malfi. 1623.
  - Johnson, Samuel  A journey to the Western Islands of Scotland. 1775.
A2) Quasi facsimile of the title page

a) Borders (compartments, frames or rules) given as \textit{height x width}

b) The letterpress
There are 3 kinds of borders:

a) **Compartments**
   i. Single piece, carved, engraved or cast as a whole
   ii. Single piece cut into smaller pieces
   iii. Separate pieces designed as a whole
   iv. Four pieces of type cast with obliquely cut ends

b) **Frames**
   i. Borders made of separate cuts or ornaments
   ii. Separate cast type ornaments forming a border

c) **Rules**
   a) Printers’ rules used to form a border (1 or more)
Describing Borders 2

• Description of the border is at the beginning of the title page description:
• Examples from Pearce (p. 27)
  Title page: [within a compartment, 250x200mm, an archway on a pediment]
  Title page: [within a frame of fleur de lys ornaments 250x150mm]
  Title page: [within triple rules]
THE
DEFENCE OF
Poefie.
By Sir Phillip
Sidney,
Knight.
[publisher’s device]
LONDON
Printed for
VVilliam Ponfonby.
1595.
B. Collation

- The collation consists of 5 main parts
  1. Statement of format
  2. Statement of gatherings
  3. Statement of signings, foliation, and pagination
  4. Statement of plates and insets
  5. Statement of press figures
Colophon

- The colophon is the printer’s imprint usually on the last page of a section or at the end of the book
- The colophon is given immediately after the collation
- The exact location of the colophon is given
- Example (Pearce p. 96)

Colophon: E4: IMPRINTED AT Lon- don By H M for Christopher Barker at the signe of the Grassehopper in Paules Churc hyarde, Anno Domini. 1575. Stet H M
Contents

- The contents are given as fully and exactly as possible
- Contents of each leaf are given as a statement or a transliteration
- Additional comments should be in square brackets
- Include catchwords, running titles, and type page
- There is no absolute rule as to the precise amount of detail to be given. Highlight the details you consider most important.
The binding of books between 1501-1800 takes the form of a continuous narrative.

*Example from Pearce:*

Binding: Full calf, with gilt flower and leaf decorations round the edges of front and back covers; spine titled in gilt at top. *T.e.g.* fore edge cut, bottom uncut.
Notes:

- Include notes for any relevant information not included above.
- e.g. issue or state, provenance, location in standard catalogues or bibliographies, reference numbers, existence and location of identical copies, etc.
Review of the elements:

- **[Heading]** (p. 19)
- **Title page:** [description of compartment, frame, or rules; give measurement in height x width] (pp. 19-29)
- **[Letterpress transcription]** (pp. 30-38)
- **[Collation and colophon]:** includes statement of format; statement of gatherings; statement of signings, foliation, paginations] (pp. 61-97)
- **Contents:** (pp. 98-100)
  [Also include]
  - catchwords:
  - running titles:
  - type page:
- **Binding:** (p. 104)
- **Notes:** (p. 105)