

The Echoing Cry

Joshua King

On the central grounds of Baylor University (Waco, Texas) is a beautiful building with marble columns, stained-glass windows, and chandeliers known to the majority of our 17,000 students for hosting concerts and offering a pleasant place to study during finals. Relatively few appreciate that the [Armstrong Browning Library and museum \(ABL\)](#) houses over 50,000 manuscripts, letters, rare books and other valuable artifacts related to the Brownings and a host of other literary and cultural figures from nineteenth-century Britain and America. Fewer still have interacted with these items, even though they are fully accessible. As a Victorianist, I therefore find that this remarkable collection offers a blessing and a unique challenge. The possibilities for new discovery—for students, scholars, and the wider public—are endless; but even after students have been exposed to the fact that these materials are on campus, it can be difficult for them to appreciate their relevance: why should a stockpile of Victorian artifacts matter to them or their world? Similar questions confront the steady stream of non-academic visitors to the ABL.

To help answer these questions, I have for some years been incorporating the collections into my classes through projects that invite students to discover the abiding relevance of rare items by sharing them with the wider public. [One form this has taken is a now-extensive digital archive of student blogs about rare items](#), which has in several cases awakened scholars to the relevance of our collections, and on which I have drawn for class activities and for mentoring student research. More recently, I have designed a [series of student exhibition projects](#). Students work over a semester to create a unified, professional exhibition of rare items at the ABL for the general public. In each case, the projects have culminated in a preview at the semester's end and then been mounted officially for the semester and summer following the course. Student evaluations have reaffirmed the old adage that one learns best by teaching others, especially because students have seen that their work has a meaningful real-world impact: "I learned so much in working with the rare items because I was able to apply what I learned in class to the project."

Yet after doing two such exhibition projects in 2017 and 2018, I felt the need to help students and visitors better articulate and *envision* connections *between* sections of exhibitions. How could all these interesting things truly fit together? What medium would allow students to grasp and convey such connections in an engaging and memorable way, beyond the relatively passive medium of texts on exhibition cards and labels? How might such a medium enable students and exhibition audiences to *participate* in creating the stories told by the items displayed, and in considering the ways in which these stories involved them and their present world?

The suite of tools offered by COVE, I found, provided an effective means of addressing these challenges in an exhibition project for my upper-level seminar on Victorian Poetry in spring 2018. Advanced undergraduate seminars at Baylor are kept small, so I was privileged to have a group of eleven students—several of them from the sciences and social sciences in addition to English—who formed a tightly-knit community. Yet I believe the COVE-enabled successes we experienced with this exhibition project can be extended to different classroom settings and institutional contexts. Below, I provide a sketch of the purpose and nature of the exhibition project, and then explain how COVE has become essential to its coherence and (I hope) future impact.



Figure 1. Armstrong Browning Library, Baylor University (Waco, Texas).

For this project, my students were charged with creating an exhibition on Elizabeth Barrett Browning's (EBB) "The Cry of the Children" (1843), her protest against child labor in British mines and factories. In addition to applying and integrating course content, they were told, their exhibition would contribute to a symposium to be held at the Armstrong Browning Library (ABL) in October 2018 in celebration of the 175th anniversary of "The Cry of the Children."

Called "Rhyme and Reform: Victorian Working-Class Poets and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 'Cry of the Children,'" this two-day international symposium will involve digitally linked talks, performances, and exhibitions at the ABL, the University of Victoria (Canada), and the University of Strathclyde (Scotland). It will showcase EBB's poem while putting it into dialogue with literary portrayals of labor by working-class Victorians. In addition to forming a physical exhibition at the ABL, the students' work will be incorporated into a digital exhibition that will include contributions from Victoria and Strathclyde, and that will be hosted on an event website.

Students were inspired by knowing that their work would have an international audience, but they also understandably felt some anxiety. I soon came to see that in addition to precise guidelines they would need a shared sense of mission, which we articulated as follows in our planning sessions:

Our mission in this exhibition is to involve viewers in the story of how EBB responded to the injustice of child labor through her poem, awaken their curiosity about the poem's contexts and influence, and challenge them to consider how it might still speak to them and their time.


How, as one my students, Emily Burton-Wood, put it in her narrative panel for the exhibition's closing display (fig. 2), could we help audiences hear the "echo" of EBB's "Cry," experiencing the ways it could resonant within and beyond its time? In consultation with the rest of the class, Emily designed a take-away card asking viewers to "hear" the "Cry" in their present world (fig. 3)—a provocation that builds upon similar challenges issued by students throughout the exhibition. This effort to catch echoes of the "Cry" informed every part of the project, including the title eventually selected by the students, which opens with a partial quotation from a line in the poem that become deeply resonant for several of them: "Orphans of earthly love": Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Protest for Working Children."

"May the Children Weep Before You": The Echoing Cry

How does *The Cry of the Children* relate to Waco?

Working children in the United States faced similar conditions to those Elizabeth Barrett Browning (EBB) describes in her poem about child labor. In particular, today's McLennan County was a hotspot for child laborers in mills and other occupations in the early 1900s, such as the newsboy seen below.

However, at this point child labor was no new concern. American writers began engaging with EBB's *Cry* soon after its publication. In the display case below, the *Christian Inquirer* (1847) uses EBB's poem to make an emotional appeal about child labor in the United States (case left). This article and others like it expressed the public sentiment that enabled a lengthy movement towards reform.




Part of the U.S. conversation seen in the *Christian Inquirer* parallels treatment of child labor in Charles Dickens's *Household Words*. The article *Ground in the Mill* quotes from EBB's emotional appeal to further the author's own claims (case right). Like U.S. reform, the ten-year gap between this article and EBB's works shows the slow movement away from child labor in England.

Literature in the U.S. and England played a pivotal role in child labor reform. EBB's *Cry of the Children* came off the heels of Parliament's report on child labor (see display on "Who Will Represent England's Laborers?"). *The Cry* not only started a conversation, but created a lasting impression. EBB's work led by example as the voice of reform from London all the way to individual readers across the U.S., maybe even in Waco, Texas.

—Emily Burton-Wood

Figure 2 (above). Closing panel to exhibition.
Figure 3 (below). Take-away card.



Can we hear
*The Cry of
the Children*
in our world?






Figure 4 (left). Introductory panel.

Figure 5 (below). Exhibition preview. Students showcased for a select audience the materials to be displayed for the public in October 2018. COVE stations are circled in red. Jeff Cowton, Curator and Head of Learning at the Wordsworth Trust and Museum (Grasmere, England), beamed in as a consultant during the semester and "toured" the exhibition via Skype on my phone (circled in blue) at the preview.

Students hoped to involve audience members in discerning echoes of EBB's "Cry" by inviting them to explore guiding questions about its contexts, influences, and abiding relevance. These questions are reflected in the lower portion of the introductory panel to the exhibition (fig. 4). As shown in the photograph below of the exhibition preview (fig. 5), our class addressed these questions through a combination of traditional rare-artifact displays, student-produced videos about child labor in nineteenth-century factories and mines, and, crucially, two interactive COVE stations on iPads with a timeline and map (circled in red in fig. 5). Each student took responsibility for a different section.

Although only portions of a larger exhibition, the COVE timeline and map proved essential to its coherence. The students responsible for the timeline (Katie Ray) and map (Calle Coleman) collaborated with their classmates to ensure that they used these tools to create connections between every section of the exhibition—capturing, as it were, the echoes we had discerned of the poem across time and space. Jeff Cowton, Curator and Head of Learning at the Wordsworth Trust and Museum (Grasmere, England), has long been reaching diverse audiences with exhibitions of rare materials, and he joined the students

for a virtual conference to offer advice early in the semester. He "toured" the exhibition preview via my phone (see fig. 5) and expressed his admiration of the COVE stations. He felt that they provided a uniquely effective means of involving our audience in discovering connections between exhibition sections and relating stories told in those sections to their own situations. In fact, he indicated that the Wordsworth Trust is pursuing similar methods of audience engagement.



The students' effort to catch echoes of the "Cry" across time and space is evident in the titles they selected (see figs. 6 and 7). As one might predict, locations in the geospatial map concentrated in England, but Calle worked with her classmates to identify unexpected corners of the globe associated with the poem and exhibition displays. For example, Edinburgh, Scotland, far from EBB's home in London at the time she wrote the poem, earns a place on Calle's map and in a coordinated entry in Katie's timeline (fig. 8). This is because Edinburgh was the headquarters of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, in which "The Cry of the Children" first appeared (August 1843). That publication history is somewhat surprising, given the conservative politics of the journal and EBB's liberal affiliations—a fact commented upon by another student, Joe Meek, in his exhibition display about the first publication of "Cry of the Children."



Figure 6. Cove map for exhibition, created by Calle Coleman. [Click here to link to the map.](#)

The Ongoing War: "The Cry of the Children" in Time

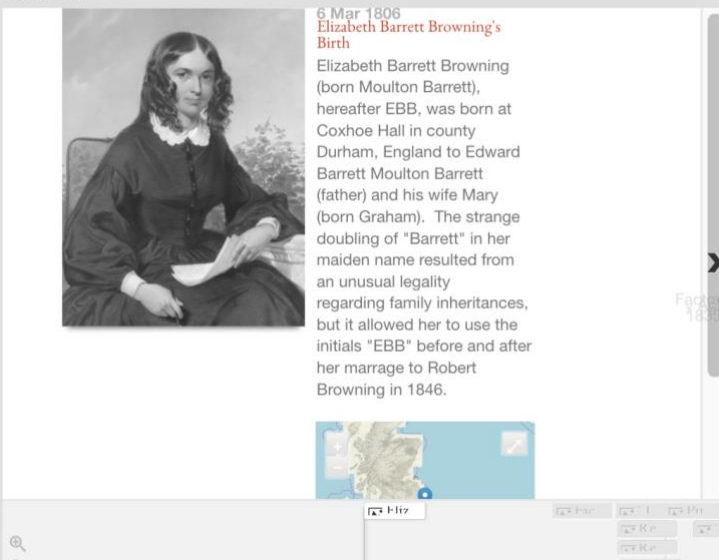
View Edit Revisions + Add items to this chronology

Created by Katie Ray on Mon, 04/16/2018 - 21:55

This timeline outlines events surrounding the poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning (EBB) entitled "The Cry of the Children." Please see the related COVE geospatial map titled "'The Cry of the Children' in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's World and Our Own." Both this timeline and that map were created as part of a student exhibition on "The Cry of the Children" by Dr. Joshua King's Victorian Poetry undergraduate seminar at Baylor University in spring of 2018. This exhibition, staged at Baylor's Armstrong Browning Library in fall 2018, combines these digital tools with interactive videos and physical displays of manuscripts and other rare items.

PART OF GROUP:
Cry of the Children Exhibition

TIMELINE



6 Mar 1806
Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Birth
Elizabeth Barrett Browning (born Moulton Barrett), hereafter EBB, was born at Coxhoe Hall in county Durham, England to Edward Barrett Moulton Barrett (father) and his wife Mary (born Graham). The strange doubling of "Barrett" in her maiden name resulted from an unusual legality regarding family inheritances, but it allowed her to use the initials "EBB" before and after her marriage to Robert Browning in 1846.

Figure 7. COVE timeline for exhibition, created by Katie Ray. [Click here to link to the timeline.](#)

Other locations were even further removed, such as Boston (MA; circled in red in fig. 6), where "The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point" (1847) was first published before EBB placed that poem next to "Cry of the Children" in the 1850 edition of her *Poems*. She thereby drew parallels between slave labor in the U.S. and abuse of child workers in the U.K., a subject explored in a display by Connor Watkins. Another map location joined the timeline and several displays in connecting the issue of child labor to the regional history of the exhibition site in Waco, Texas (circled in red in fig. 6), and to modern child labor around the globe in places such as Indonesia (circled in red in fig. 6). This link to the present is illustrative of the connective and participatory energy contributed by COVE to this project. The timeline and map entries visualize the topicality and global relevance of the "Cry." This builds upon opportunities in other sections of the exhibition for viewers to acknowledge both their implication in child labor as consumers and their capacity to help redress such injustices (fig. 9).

"The Cry of the Children" Published in the Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine

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EBB's poem as it was first published in the *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. The poem is reflective of the reports that she read about child labor in factories and mines. She wrote this poem in protest of the cruelty that was taking place.

Event date:
Aug 1843

Parent Chronology:
The Ongoing War: "The Cry of the Children" in Time

ASSOCIATED PLACE(S)



First Publication of "The Cry of the Children"

View Edit Revisions

"The Cry of the Children" was first published in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in Edinburgh, Scotland in August of 1843. This is interesting, given that EBB held liberal political views and the magazine was known for typically conservative positions.

PARENT MAP
"The Cry of the Children" in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *World and Our Own*

COORDINATES
Latitude: 55.953252000000
Longitude: -3.188267000000




Figure 8. Timeline entry (left) for publication of "Cry of the Children" in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, linked to map entry for the location (above).

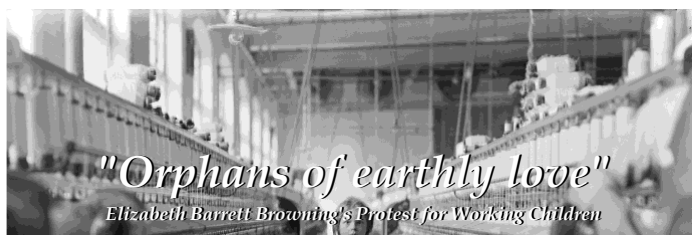
TIMELINE

2018
Modern Day Child Labor in Indonesia
 This child from Indonesia is just one of around 152 million children involved in illegal and harmful labor in our world today (United Nations). You may not be able to see child labor in the place that you live, but it is still very prevalent in areas all over the globe.

Child Labor in West, Texas

Modern D...

Timeline@US



Although *The Cry of the Children* was published almost two centuries ago, child labor and other forms of modern slavery continue to exist in many parts of the world.

There are still many unrepresented, voiceless children laboring in factories around the world today. Click on the QR code below to discover if you are using a product that was created by these children.



While EBB used her platform as a writer to make strides towards restoring the rights of the oppressed, we can make equally important efforts in simple, every day ways, as well.

Scan the QR code above for ways in which you can help end exploitative labor.

Figure 9.

Top: Entry from the COVE timeline connects EBB's "Cry" to global child labor in 2018, and links to one location of such labor that is annotated in the COVE map.

Both reinforce invitations in other sections of the exhibition to reflect upon one's own agency in the story of child labor, such as the take-away card mentioned above (fig. 3); the bookmark created by Sakina Haji to accompany her exhibition display about EBB's calls for representation of the unrepresented (lower left: front and back of bookmark are shown); and the QR code created by Ilse Vielma to complement her display of a related letter and other EBB artifacts (lower right).

If these COVE tools empowered students to uncover and communicate echoes of the "Cry" in our time and world, they also assisted them in conveying complex historical contexts of EBB's poem. For example, the COVE map and timeline helped students visualize the relationship between EBB's poem and the 1842 and 1843 Parliamentary reports on child labor that motivated it. As seen below (fig. 10), the geospatial map—which is again linked to the timeline—exposes just how close EBB was to the center of Parliamentary debates that motivated and responded to these reports.

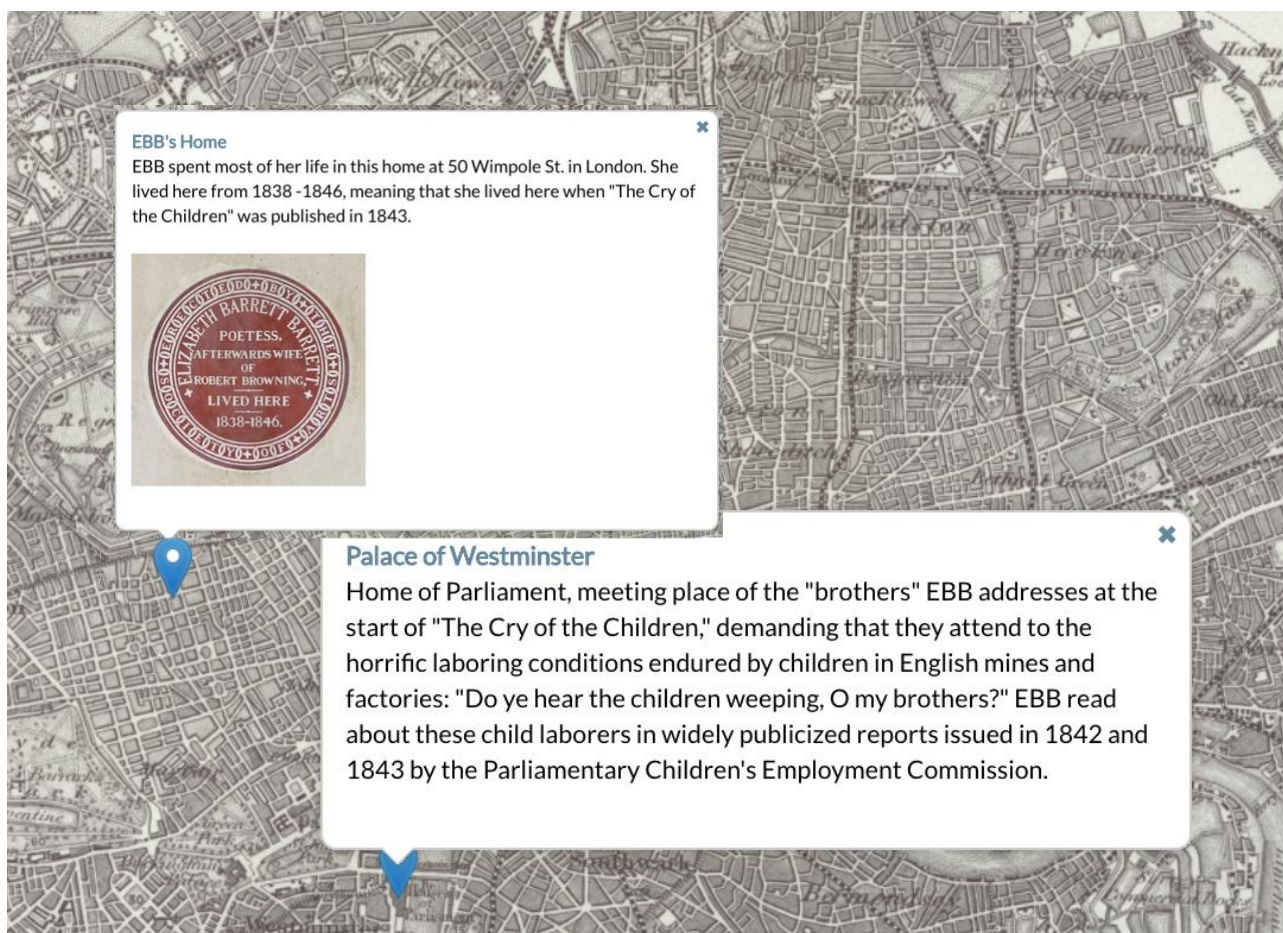


Figure 10. EBB's home when writing "Cry of the Children" displayed next to Parliament, which commissioned and debated the reports that inspired her poem.

One of EBB's friends, R.H. Horne, conducted interviews for these Parliamentary reports in the manufacturing town of Wolverhampton. A map entry for Wolverhampton invites viewers to follow a link to videos created by Elaine Renberg and Caroline Lunsford (fig. 11). Elaine's and Caroline's videos were in part inspired by details and testimonies in these same Parliamentary reports. They use images, narratives, and sounds to prompt viewers to imagine what it was like to be a child laboring in factories and mines at this time. In this way, the videos provide a kind of modern analogy to the experience of EBB and many other Victorian readers who were exposed to the severities of child labor through the testimonies and illustrations of the Parliamentary reports.

Wolverhampton: Factories Investigated

View

Edit

Revisions

On 7 August 1843, EBB wrote a letter to her friend R.H. Horne, who had been involved in a Parliamentary commission to investigate factory conditions in Wolverhampton. In this letter, EBB said that "The Cry of the Children" "owes its utterance to your exciting causations," referring to Horne's work as one of the investigators of the factories. [Click here to see two student-created videos about what it was like to be a child working in nineteenth-century British mines and factories.](#)



Figure 11. Map entry for Wolverhampton, where R.H. Horne, friend of EBB, gathered testimonies for the Parliamentary reports that inspired "Cry of the Children." [Click here to access the student-created videos about nineteenth-century child labor mentioned in the link above.](#)

In these and many other ways, the COVE timeline and map aided students (and, ideally, will aid their audiences) in discerning and displaying echoes of EBB's "Cry" within its immediate historical moment, across the nineteenth century, and into their present world. These tools have also furthered another goal of this exhibition: to spread awareness of the ABL's rare collections. The official opening of the exhibition in October 2018 will accomplish this objective with scholars and members of the public from beyond Baylor, both through the physical display at the ABL and through the digital version of the exhibition that will be synthesized on the "Rhyme and Reform" website with contributions from the universities of Victoria and Strathclyde. Both this website and the COVE tools themselves will remain available on the web, ideally becoming open-access resources useful for scholars, instructors, students, and general readers of many backgrounds around the world. Of the rare items highlighted by the exhibition, perhaps the two most intriguing and lesser-known are draft manuscripts of earlier poems that informed EBB's approach to "Cry of the Children." Two students, Mary Catherine Montgomery and Ben Pennington, did exhibition displays on these manuscripts, and Katie's COVE timeline incorporates the manuscript central to Mary Catherine's display (fig. 12) into its narrative (fig. 13).

While the map and timeline are integral to the exhibition, the annotation tool within COVE Studio contributed early and vitally to students' engagement with "The Cry of the Children" itself. Earlier in the semester, we used COVE to conduct a live annotation workshop on "Cry of the Children." In the class session immediately preceding this annotation workshop, we discussed some of the poem's formative contexts and formal properties, while also relating it to larger themes of the course unit through which we were progressing at that time (a unit on "Victorian Women Poets and Religion").

Figure 12. Panel for display focusing on manuscript, "Cry of the Human," related to "Cry of the Children" (right).

Figure 13. Timeline entry on "Cry of the Human" with scan of manuscript (below).


Liturgy, Lamentation, and a Prayerful Precedent

Upon first glance, *The Cry of the Children* may appear as though, when confronting abuse of the children, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (EBB) scorns Christianity altogether. Read stanza 11 in the case below. What impression do you get of EBB's religious views from these lines?

A closer look at the poem alongside EBB's earlier publication, *The Cry of the Human*, indicates her frustration, not with Christianity itself, but with the church's failure to act in line with sound theology. The intercessory style of this earlier poem enables readers to rightly understand her religious commentary in *The Cry of the Children*.

From beginning to end, EBB concludes every stanza in *The Cry of the Human* with the refrain "Be pitiful, O God." At the time of its publication, readers would have recognized this phrase from *The Book of Common Prayer*, the official service book of the Church of England. A very similar refrain—"have mercy upon us, O Lord"—laces "The Great Litany." Could this be an interesting coincidence or a pointed means of getting the Church's attention?

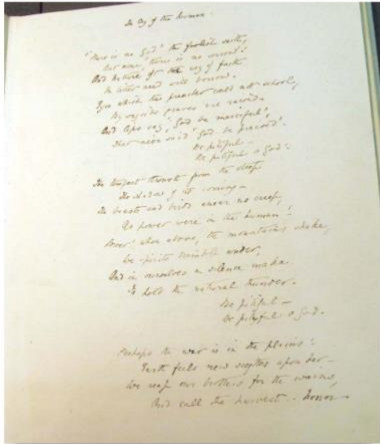
By echoing this plea, EBB presents the poem as a pertinent prayer for her time. It demonstrates her own spiritual devotion and clarifies her critical stance in *The Cry of the Children*. Look back at stanza 11 in *The Cry of the Children*. There EBB reproves the way the church recommends prayer without physically addressing the social ills themselves. She affirms in line 135, "God's possible is taught by His world's loving," revealing her conviction that faith and action must go hand in hand. Read together, these poems express EBB's view that while intercessory prayer is necessary, it is not an excuse for inaction.



EBB's prie-dieu (prayer stand), now located on the third floor of the Armstrong Browning Library, attests to her own spiritual devotion.

— Mary Catherine Montgomery

TIMELINE



Draft of "Cry of the Human" by EBB (MS D0172, Armstrong Browning Library)

Nov 1842

"The Cry of the Human" published by EBB

Written several years before EBB's initial publication of "The Cry of the Children" (1843), this poem portrays many groups of oppressed people crying to God to hear their prayers for relief. Among these oppressed people were the starving poor. "Cry of the Human" serves as almost a foreshadowing of what is to come in "Cry of the Children." In the image you can see the first page of one of EBB's drafts of "Cry of the Human" (MS D0172), which is held at the Armstrong Browning Library at Baylor University (Waco, Texas).

by [Katie Ray](#)

The Ongoing War: "The Cry of the Children"

"The Cry of the Children" Published in the Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine

In the annotation workshop itself, my research assistant, Holly Spofford (a graduate student in Baylor's English PhD program), served as amanuensis. Students prepared for the workshop using materials that I had distributed at the close of our preceding class on the poem. These included the marvelous introduction to the poem in Pickering and Chatto's *Works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, scans and transcriptions of poetic drafts thematically related to the poem at the ABL, and a worksheet with the following prompts:

- 1. Review the scans and transcriptions of poetic drafts related to "Cry of the Children" and take notes in response to these questions:** What different strategies of protest and

addressing an audience did EBB pursue in "Cry of the Children"? Why do these differences matter?

2. Drawing in part on the notes you take above, prepare to make three main kinds of observations during our special COVE session.

a. Questions: What lingering questions do you have about parts of the poem that seem difficult to understand?

b. Background: What historical and cultural contexts might it be helpful for a reader to know in order to understand this poem? (Here you might wish to draw upon notes from our class discussions thus far in this unit, the introduction I provided to the poem, and other background you might have acquired from outside of class.)

c. Interpretive: What insights do you wish to offer others into the poem, its meanings, and the ways EBB crafts it? (Here you can draw upon your notes comparing "Cry of the Children" to earlier poetic drafts by EBB. You might also consider details of imagery, allusion, sound pattern, metrical variation, etc.)

These three categories—questions, background, interpretive—were repeated in the color-coded annotation filters that we used in our annotation session. During the session, we were fortunate to have with us Prof. Natalie McKnight of Boston University, who was visiting the ABL to give a talk later in the week at the 19th-Century Research Seminar (19CRS) that I organize. Her presentation was on Charles Dickens's reaction to his visit to the Lowell Mills in Massachusetts, so she was primed to add a fascinating transatlantic dimension to our conversation (and she ended up drawing upon observations from our COVE annotation workshop in her address to the 19CRS!). In all of the above, we followed a strategy pioneered the previous semester with Prof. Dino Felluga (Purdue) during his visit to the ABL for our newly created three-month research fellowship for distinguished Victorianists. In October of 2017, we hosted a similar annotation session on EBB's sonnet "On a Portrait of Wordsworth by B.R. Haydon" (1842), [which became the basis of an omnibus scholarly edition of the sonnet on COVE](#)—a process described in the introduction to that edition.

The annotation session on "The Cry of the Children" proved formative to our class exhibition, helping us to identify shared insights, questions, themes, contexts, and resources that we wished to pursue further. It also provided a model for the kind of annotation sessions that will be included in the "Rhyme and Reform" symposium in October 2018. Each of the three locations for that program—Victoria, Strathclyde, and the ABL—will host annotation sessions with their local audiences on different sections of "Cry of the Children" and share their results toward the close of the events. These will, in turn, provide the basis for another omnibus scholarly edition on COVE by the international team of scholars involved in "Rhyme and Reform."

In evaluations for this course, students expressed their gratitude for the exhibition project, repeatedly calling it "a wonderful learning experience that I am very happy to have gotten my hands on before graduating," singling it out as something "I specifically enjoyed," and identifying it as "a great way to continue student involvement until the very end of the semester." Based on these evaluations and personal conversations with students, I believe the exhibition succeeded because it challenged them to catch, and creatively relate, the many and continuing echoes of EBB's "Cry." Although only two of the students actually designed the COVE timeline and map, as mentioned above, they worked with their nine colleagues to develop their content and ensure it resonated with the other dimensions of the exhibition. The evident synergy between all of the students as they

collaborated on the project was in part stimulated by the early and intense interaction with the poem facilitated through COVE studio's annotation tools.

Others considering adoption of COVE for exhibitions should be aware of a possible obstacle, which we have had to work around while preparing "'Orphans of earthly love': Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Protest for Working Children" for its opening at the October 2018 "Rhyme and Reform" symposium. Baylor University's Internet Technology department does not currently permit open web connections in long-standing physical exhibitions (as opposed to those that are up for only a few days and can be monitored relatively easily). As I understand it, this restriction is in place at other universities and museum spaces. The logic behind it is fairly obvious: among other things, when using an exhibition station that has an internet connection, viewers could accidentally or deliberately navigate away from the intended website. At present, COVE does not offer app versions of its tools that can be downloaded and used without an internet browser. As a result, since "'Orphans of earthly love'" will be up for several months after the "Rhyme and Reform" symposium, we have had to devise a different way to include the COVE stations in the physical exhibition (as opposed to the digital version that will be on the "Rhyme and Reform" website). Rather than installing iPad stations as we did for the preview, we will create large scans of the map and timeline and creatively mount them on foam-core boards, including directions for reaching the digital tools online, accompanied by QR codes that viewers can scan with their smart phones to access the tools on site. Given that other institutions are likely to place similar limitations upon open web connections, I would encourage others who are planning exhibitions with COVE to devise related alternative display strategies. I have one final piece of advice for anyone contemplating a COVE-integrated student exhibition: collaborate with the curators, media specialists, internet technicians, and librarians on your campus. This exhibition has come together only because of the professional and creative insights of these experts at Baylor, some of whom deserve special thanks here: Erik Swanson (Exhibits Curator and Coordinator for University Libraries), Dr. Melinda Creech (a phenomenal archivist, researcher, and curator who has long served the Armstrong Browning Library), Carlye Thornton (Digital Media and Communications Specialist at the University Libraries), Jennifer Borderud (Director of the ABL), Melvin Schuetz (Assistant to Curators at the ABL), and, more recently, Laura French (Curator and Associate Librarian at the ABL).

In closing, I wish to stress that while I have described applications of the COVE tools in relatively unique circumstances, I can think of no obstacle to them being used in related ways in different contexts and institutions. My students' use of COVE in their exhibition project could be adapted for a range of courses with access to relevant special collections. At institutions without special collections, or without special collections connected to a course's subject, the COVE timeline, map, and annotation studio can still help students—individually and collectively—draw connections between the places, events, people, contexts, texts, and evolving arenas of reception that shape the literary and cultural works at the center of courses. Most importantly, in my view, these tools almost inherently resist a top-down approach to instruction and learning, inviting students to develop connections on their own and participate actively in the creation of knowledge. Without question, COVE has sharpened my students' sensitivity to the many echoes of EBB's "Cry," and to the potential for catching and communicating echoes of many other texts in the future.