The Prodigal Daughter: An Edition of an Anonymous Text

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DOI
https://doi.org/10.25772/XWAC-CQ53

Defense Date
2019

Document Type
Thesis

Degree Name
Master of Arts

Department
English

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Abstract
The Prodigal Daughter (1736) is a poem that, on the surface, appears to be an approachable text that was likely geared towards a children's audience during New England's first Great Awakening, within the approachable format of a chapbook. However, when explored further, The Prodigal Daughter reveals a complicated textual history during a time of theological and social revival in New England. This thesis considers the historical context of The Prodigal Daughter's narrative, as well as the poem's publication history. The text's transmission is carefully examined and encapsulated in this edition—giving the reader a transcription that is the result of collating twenty-eight surviving witnesses of The Prodigal Daughter. This thesis serves as a critical edition of The Prodigal Daughter, with an introduction which includes a careful consideration of gendered theology, homiletics, the literary marketplace, and the role of the devil in the female conversion narrative during New England's first Great Awakening.

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Date of Submission
12-12-2019