

CALL FOR PAPERS
Twenty-second Biennial Congress of the
NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY
Durham, 12–16 July 2020

The NCS Program Committee is pleased to announce the Call for Papers for the Society's 2020 Congress in Durham. Please read the [Guidelines for Submission](#) carefully before preparing your abstract. They are new this year. We hope you enjoy reading about the wide range of sessions in preparation and considering your contribution to a rich and exciting program.

Submissions in two parts (below) are due by 20 May 2019.

Sessions are listed below under an Open category and six themed threads: Orientation, Action, Gender, Code(X), Risk, and Theory Now. Session formats—Paper, Lightning, Position—are also described and are crucial to the character of individual sessions.

Please note that proposers will not be notified of the outcome of their submission until the program is complete, with all sessions settled. We expect this process to take a number of weeks.

Hearty thank yous for all their work in fashioning this call go to the Program Committee—Mary Flannery, Wan-Chuan Kao, Philip Knox and Myra Seaman, with Ruth Evans and Tom Goodmann *ex officio*; to Jessica Rezunyk for continuing to make things work; and to the thread and session organizers named below.

We look forward to seeing the conference take shape!

Best wishes,

Elliot Kendall and Robyn Malo
Program Committee co-chairs

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

Please follow the two-step submission process outlined below.

You may submit to only one session, including the Research Expo.

If sessions are oversubscribed with abstracts that merit a place on the program, the Program Committee will create new sessions as necessary. **Your abstract will not be rejected simply because of your choice of session.**

A contribution to the conference in a service capacity—as, for example, a workshop leader, participant in a panel on professional issues, or session chair—does not preclude your participation elsewhere as a presenter of your own research or as a respondent.

Session organizers may not present work in their own session, though they may chair the session and may present work in another session at the conference.

You need not be an NCS member to submit an abstract, but you must be one before presenting at the conference. Waivers of the membership requirement may be granted for scholars who work in disciplines other than medieval language and literature.

To submit an abstract:

1. Fill out the **online register** [here](#).

The register ensures that the Program Committee can keep track of all submissions. We can only guarantee that your abstract will be considered if you fill out the register. You will be asked to nominate an alternative or ‘back-up’ session for your abstract and to describe your academic status (e.g. graduate student, early career, permanent or temporary, independent). This information will help us to find the best sessions for abstracts and to support the Society’s principle of inclusivity for session rosters. The register is only accessible to the Program Committee.

2. Email your **abstract** to your chosen session’s organizer(s).

Abstracts should be titled and no longer than 200 words. Please include your email address in the body of your abstract.

Submissions (register and abstracts) are **due 20 May 2019**.

SESSION FORMATS

Paper sessions showcase scholarly work in the form of extended presentations of 20 minutes each. A paper panel should include no more than 3 presenters total (either 3 papers or 2 papers and a respondent) and should allow for at least 30 minutes of open discussion.

Lightning talks sessions feature up to 6 speakers in short presentations of 5-7 minutes, allowing at least 45 minutes for open discussion. Presentations may be scripted but need not be. They might trail or precis a large project, zoom in on an element of research or open a provocative line of inquiry.

Position papers sessions address a single, focused question through a panel of up to 5 speakers and are specifically intended to foster debate and to consider the state of the field. Papers should be 7–8 minutes to ensure time for discussion.

Research Expo: The Research Expo will host research with strong visual or digital elements presented in a display or poster format. Presenters will discuss their display and the underpinning research during a dedicated launch session.

A note on **pedagogy** sessions: A pedagogy session may take any of the forms above or may propose an alternative form. It should address topics or questions relevant to teaching medieval literature and culture at a variety of academic institutions.

THREADS AND SESSIONS

Research Expo

Organized by Lara Farina and Arthur Russell (lara.farina@mail.wvu.edu; ajr171@case.edu)

Those whose research or teaching lends itself to a visual format, or who are interested in trying alternative modes of scholarly or pedagogical communication, are encouraged to submit an abstract for a poster presentation or installation. During the conference, all Expo exhibits will be displayed in a single time slot in a central location, with presenters in attendance to discuss their work and answer questions, and then left on display throughout the conference.

Posters and installations can be an effective medium for articulating the key focus or outcomes of your work, or the processes of research itself; they can be used to showcase a particular artifact or case study and findings. We hope to include work by a diverse group of teachers and scholars both junior and senior on topics conventional and adventurous, using varied approaches. We are especially interested in submissions from those who want to present their research findings around a central item of focus without privileging one particular path through their data, and we encourage exhibits that play with ways to communicate information that go beyond the visual. We will be happy to work with presenters to introduce tactile, auditory or even olfactory components to their displays.

Submissions to the Research Expo should include a title and the proposed content and format for the presentation: what you plan to present, how it will be presented, and what is gained in presenting your work in this way. **Please note that there will be provision to print posters on site in Durham, with full subsidy from NCS and conference funds, easing concerns about cost and logistics.** Useful general information on research posters and their formats has been published by [New York University](#), [Pennsylvania State University](#), [Colorado State University](#) and the [American Historical Association](#).

Thread 1: Orientation

Organized by Simon Meecham-Jones, Dan Remein and Michelle M. Sauer

1. (Re)Orienting around Cecily Chaumpaigne

Sarah Baechle and Carissa Harris (sebaechl@olemiss.edu; carissa.harris@temple.edu)
Lightning talks

F. J. Furnivall's 1873 publication of the 1380 Close Rolls record, in which Cecily Chaumpaigne released Geoffrey Chaucer from all prosecution *de raptu meo* [on account of my rape], proved disorienting for Chaucer scholars, who sought varying avenues of inquiry—legal, literary, historical—from which to interpret the 'raptus' and exonerate the poet. This session invites lightning talks that reverse this critical direction and explore how we might productively reorient Chaucer studies around the possibility of a rapist poet. Talks might consider the motivating assumptions behind previous approaches, examine those approaches within the larger context of rape culture, offer reassessments of the release's evidence, or suggest new

directions for Chaucer studies that account for the likelihood that Chaucer committed an act of sexual violence. We particularly welcome talks which address the gate-keeping functions of scholarship on the release, and the ways that writing about Chaucer and Cecily invites scholars into, or excludes them from, the field.

2. Global Chaucers: History of Receptions

Candace Barrington and Jonathan Hsy (barringtonc@ccsu.edu; jhsy@email.gwu.edu)
Lightning talks

For the past three NCS Congresses, Global Chaucers has sponsored panels looking at Chaucer's non-Anglophone reception in translations, appropriations, as well as the classroom. Each of these panels has primarily focused on Chaucer's *current* reception. For the 2020 Congress, we propose a Global Chaucers session that explores the *histories* of Chaucer reception beyond Anglophone reception. Possible topics include the non-Anglophone, multilingual, or cross-cultural histories of textual transmission; translations and editions; Chaucer in the curriculum; and contributions to scholarship.

3. Chaucer and the Traditions of Nationalism

Gabriel Ford (gabriel.ford@converse.edu)
Papers

Chaucer's early reception was pitched along contradictory poles of insularity and internationalism. For Hoccleve, for example, Chaucer was famously the 'The firste fyndere of our fair langage', the *fons et origo* of a national-language poetic tradition that—for some—reaches to the present day. For Deschamps, Chaucer was a 'grant translateur' vitally connected to poetic currents not bound by linguistic or geographic borders. This panel solicits papers that consider the long legacy of this tension. In what form is the English Chaucer present in the early reception of his works? To what extent and from what sources were those ideas imposed by later generations of readers and scholars?

4. Chaucer's England, England's Chaucer

Natalie Hanna and Gillian Rudd (n.hanna@liverpool.ac.uk ; g.a.rudd@liverpool.ac.uk)
Lightning talks

Those who love old England ... ought to love old Geoffrey Chaucer. [...] From him, and him alone, we get almost all that is known about the habits and manners of the English people, for before Chaucer ... there was, indeed, no national language. (Mary Haweis, 1887)

Chaucer has long been associated with England and Englishness. This session invites responses to Haweis's introduction to her adaptation of Chaucer's works. We seek to explore the ways Chaucer has been adapted, adopted and translocated across the centuries, and the ramifications of this long-lasting association of 'Chaucer,' 'England' (geographically and iconographically) and 'Englishness'.

5. Global Garden Design in Chaucer's World

Susan K. Hagen and Teresa Reed (shagen@bsc.edu; treed@jsu.edu)

Papers

The 2010 NCS Congress in Siena, Italy, hosted a session on Chaucer's gardens intended to break out of the *hortus conclusus* of Robertsonian exegesis and the *locus amoenus* of literary texts to move into the physical landscape of actual herbers, pleasure gardens, and parks. This panel session proposes to move farther afield to influences on medieval garden hardscape and planting design from the Arab east whether through the trade routes and Constantinople or through Arabic influence from al-Andalus by way of Southern France and Italy. In so doing, it seeks to place Chaucer's works in a broader visual and theoretical global context.

6. Global Courts

Will Biel (wjbziel87@gmail.com)

Papers

This panel welcomes interdisciplinary papers on court literature, broadly conceived, in and outside of Europe. Most secular medieval literature was composed for or within a court, whose politics writers addressed by asking audiences to look elsewhere in time and space. In twelfth-century France, Chrétien turns patrons toward Arthurian fantasies of long ago. In fourteenth-century England, Chaucer's characters imagine the geographically remote Mongol Empire. Thirteenth-century Norwegians translated French texts to align their king with Anglo-Norman England. In these examples and others, literature orients courts across the pre-modern globe. Papers might address literature comparatively, courts historically, or texts materially.

7. Pilgrimage Revisited

Kathryn McKinley (kmckinle@umbc.edu)

Lightning talks

Lightning talks are invited exploring any of the following: pilgrimage as metaphor; devotional journey and (self-)discovery; art in later medieval pilgrimage churches (in England or abroad); pedestrian pilgrimage; the aesthetics of pilgrimage narrative; hospitals and pilgrimage routes; secular song/music on pilgrimage; *palmeres*; Southwark; relics and rood screens en route; holy oil; fifteenth-century pilgrimage narrative; pilgrimage and space/locality; pilgrimage and late medieval theological controversies and orientations; ecocritical readings of pilgrimage landscapes; desiring the miraculous; Richard II and pilgrimage; financing pilgrimage; pilgrimage in wills; pilgrimage contracts; late medieval European/English pilgrimage generally.

8. Chaucer and Chaucerians in Scotland: Transmission, Continuity and Change

Rhiannon Purdie (rp6@st-and.ac.uk)

Papers

Material evidence for the Scottish circulation of works by Chaucer and his immediate followers may be sparse, but literary evidence for their influence is widespread and various. Yet despite the tremendous growth in studies of manuscript and print culture on the one hand, and the ubiquity of the controversial term 'Scottish Chaucerian' on the other, neither aspect of Chaucer's legacy in Scotland has been thoroughly mapped out. This session aims to draw together recent work on the circulation of works by Chaucer and Lydgate (some of whose works were persistently attributed to Chaucer in Scotland), and experiments with Chaucer's literary legacy by lesser-known poets from late-medieval Scotland.

9. Devotion and Religious Difference

Anna Kelner and Spencer Strub (annakelner@g.harvard.edu; spencer_strub@fas.harvard.edu)

Lightning talks

Medieval devotional writing often upholds communal unity as an ideal, but it also discloses other orientations delimiting the boundaries of these imagined communities. This panel invites reflection on religious difference in devotional writing and in the literary works by Chaucer and others that enter into dialogue with it. We invite work that complements scholarship on medieval English representations of Islam and Judaism by asking: how do devotional texts recognize or anathematize religious difference either within or between traditions? How do representations of religious difference intersect with those of geographic, national, racial, and/or ethnic alterity? How might texts across medieval religious traditions deploy modes of knowledge or affect to cognize difference?

Thread 2: Action

Organized by Joy Ambler, Moira Fitzgibbons and Sierra Lomuto

10. Pedagogy, Power and Privilege

Joy Ambler (joy.b.ambler@gmail.com)

Position papers

This session calls medievalists to engage our own positionality and identity in Medieval Studies relative to students, colleagues, and others. What strategies have medievalists found effective in making and remaking our discipline for all? How can we create equitable, supportive communities within our educational institutions, in the digital realm, in scholarly contexts, and in other venues? When it comes to those privileged parts of us, how do we deepen reflection, or hold ourselves accountable? When pressed down for who we are, what are our tactics to survive, rebel, and thrive? As a whole community of medievalists, where do we fall short, and how do we work toward addressing these deficiencies?

11. Action, Values, and Interpretation

Bobby Meyer-Lee (meyerlee@aya.yale.edu)

Lightning talks

In the wake of late twentieth-century poststructuralism, we have all become aware that interpretation is a fraught, circular, intractably uncertain activity. Today, however, for many of us, the ascertaining and proclaiming of truth and fact have become urgent public actions, motivated by core values regarding social justice, equity, the environment, etc. This session will inquire into how this urgency to voice a public commitment to specific values informs, affects, or perhaps stands in some tension with our scholarly interpretive practices. Cognizant of all the indeterminacies and self-projections that the establishment of a text's meaning necessarily involves, how do we negotiate the complex collisions and confluences of our values with those that we establish as belonging to the literary texts that we study? Presentations may take the form of case studies of readings of specific texts, of theoretical paradigms for values-aware interpretation, or elucidation of specific challenges in scholarly or pedagogical contexts.

12. What We Think About When We Think About the *Prioress's Tale*

Karla Taylor and Susan Nakley (kttaylor@umich.edu; snakley@sjcny.edu)

Lightning talks

Form and content together produce the Prioress's stunning commentary on belief, practice, and identity. Her tale matches rote knowledge and blunt bigotry with sophisticated verse, intricate setting, and exacting allusions. Poised to incite angry Christian masses, it instantly sobers up Chaucer's pilgrims. In the wake of Blurton and Johnson's *The Critics and the Prioress*, what do we think about when we think about the *Prioress's Tale*? What should we think about? Do contemporary religious bigotry and our own commitments move us to rethink this antisemitic narrative's ethical, social, aesthetic, and/or formal aspects—or spur our ethical, moral, or pedagogical action?

13. Toxic Chaucer

Dorothy Kim and Michelle M. Sauer (dorothykim@brandeis.edu; michelle.m.sauer@und.edu)

Lightning talks

Despite recent work on global Chaucer, queer sexualities, and other temporalities and textualities, the dissemination of and scholarly work on Chaucer might also be considered toxic. This session will reassess Chaucer's place in literary history to move away from ideas such as the Humanist Father Chaucer and the Proto-Feminist Chaucer towards an evaluation that confronts difficult but pressing questions about Toxic Chaucer. Topics can include toxic masculinity and rape culture; toxic manuscripts and toxic marginalia; toxic critics; race and decolonial discussions; toxic environments; toxic histories; toxic editions and toxic publishing; toxic hiring; toxic pedagogy; white supremacy; homophobia and transphobia; toxic humor; toxic medievalisms.

14. Praxis Makes Perfect: Yes, but What Do we *Do*?

Mariah Junglan Min (mmariah@sas.upenn.edu)

Lightning talks

This session seeks to interrogate the present contours of ‘action’. Specifically, it invites participants to reflect upon how the concept of ‘action’ is deployed currently within the push for social justice in medieval studies, and to identify the ways in which ‘action’ as implemented departs from ‘action’ as an ideal. Is critique inherently incomplete without proposed praxis? If so, who tends to be burdened with the task of proposal? How can allies/accomplices effectively move from agitating for action to *taking* action? How can our research and pedagogy use Chaucer and his works as a productive site for *doing*? For example, what role might engagement with community partners or civic initiatives play in Chaucer research and pedagogy?

15. Refugee Tales and Reenactment of the Medieval

Sarah Salih (sarah.salih@kcl.ac.uk)

Papers

The Refugee Tales project (refugeetales.org) combines walking and narrative, citing both the literary form of Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* and the content of its pilgrimage journey. It protests the UK government’s treatment of asylum seekers with reference to an ostensibly conservative medievalism based on traditional touchstones of English medieval historiography, such as Magna Carta. It challenges the government, in effect, to be more medieval, to live up to its medieval ideals. This session invites papers on the medievalist activism of Refugee Tales.

16. Social Media(eval) Studies Now

Anna Wilson (anna_wilson@fas.harvard.edu)

Position papers

This session invites panellists to answer the question: what is the role of social media in medieval studies now? What impact has it had? What is its future? What are its challenges and opportunities? Questions for consideration: how do the different interfaces, privacy settings, demographics, and formats of Tumblr, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, and more traditional blogs shape the kinds of medievalist engagements, networks, activisms, and knowledges that take place there? What is the relationship of social media to the changing shape of the academic marketplace, labour practices, virtual communities, and online teaching for medievalists at different career stages? How do we balance scholarly outreach with digital ephemerality, support networks with professional conduct, transparency of public discourse with ethical research practices? How—and can—threads on various platforms constitute a scholarly conversation to be engaged with in more traditional published work?

17. Chaucer in the Classroom I: The Middle Ages in Secondary Schools

Karen McShane and Kara McShane (kepatton@gmail.com; klmcshane@gmail.com)

Lightning talks

As secondary education becomes more and more driven by high-stakes testing, the history and literature of the Middle Ages have been increasingly taken out of context—or out of the curriculum entirely. This absence is exacerbated by the fact that many teachers feel underprepared to teach medieval topics, since support for these topics is often limited or absent from their own training. This session seeks to create conversation about how we can contextualize and teach medieval texts for secondary students. How might we reintegrate the medieval world into school classrooms? How might we encourage students to learn more responsibly and independently? How can we bring the medieval world into curricula that increasingly focus on relevance and relatability at all levels? We especially welcome contributions from secondary school teachers and those who help train and prepare them.

18. Chaucer in the Classroom II: Higher Education and Institutional Advocacy

Candace Barrington, Eva von Contzen, Katie Little and Lisa Lampert-Weissig

(barringtonc@ccsu.edu; eva.voncontzen@anglistik.uni-freiburg.de;

katherine.c.little@colorado.edu; llampert@ucsd.edu)

Lightning talks

This session invites discussion of new opportunities and new challenges to teaching Chaucer in an age of falling enrollments and shrinking budgets. What strategies might help to ensure that Chaucer continues to be available to students at a wide range of higher-education institutions? What roles can public scholarship and community outreach play in increasing the visibility and inclusiveness of Chaucer studies and of medieval studies more generally? How can we support primary and secondary teacher education programs, as well as teachers already in the classroom? The session invites contributions that consider approaches both inside and outside the classroom, discussions of institutional or national climates for humanities studies, and discussion of existing programs designed to address these issues.

Thread 3: Gender

Organized by Heather Blurton, Micah Goodrich and Chris Roman

19. Chaucer's Menagerie: Animal Representations, Gendered Implications?

Emily McLemore and Tara Williams (emclemor@nd.edu; tara.williams@oregonstate.edu)

Lightning talks

Animals abound in Chaucer's work. Some appear as full-fledged characters and some as metaphors or allusions that illuminate the appearance, temperament, or behavior of other characters—as when the Clerk's Envoy exhorts wives to be like camels and tigers. This session builds on the insights of animal studies, ecocriticism, and creature theory, seeking

lightning talks that consider how animal imagery connects with issues related to gender and its intersections with race and class.

20. Medieval Asexuality

Chelsea Skalak (skalakc@dickinson.edu)

Papers

Julie Sondra Decker famously referred to asexuality as ‘the invisible orientation’. This invisibility stems both from the difficulty of locating the evidentiary record of an *absence*, and from the general assumption that sexual desire is a universal constant. Non-sexual literary characters are unsettling: unearthly, like Galahad, or in need of correction, like Guigemar. Both medieval and modern writers tend to assume that sexual desire is at the heart of all human relationships, even relationships with God. An asexual subject, then, demands a reconfiguration of the relationships between human and human, and human and divine. This session invites new perspectives on queer asexual theory, literature, and lived experiences in the Middle Ages, seeking to make visible the invisible.

21. Consent I: Desire, Will and Consent—The Long Line From ‘Back Then’ to Right Now

Betsy McCormick and Lynn Shutters (bmccormi@earthlink.net; Lynn.Shutters@colostate.edu)

Lightning talks

This session will consider narratives, medieval and modern, that investigate the complicated nexus of will, desire and consent. Recently the idea of the ‘will’—and what it means to desire something, including sex—has received significant attention, both in terms of the #MeToo movement and also among feminist philosophers like Sara Ahmed and Amia Srinivasan. Certainly, Chaucerian texts address these issues in the medieval period, yet continue to resonate in today’s context. How might we bring Chaucer to bear on the present, to examine the social and political ramifications of our desires? We invite papers that channel Chaucer to examine what desires are considered appropriate/inappropriate, to contemplate how we come to want what we want, and to consider how we consent, or don’t, to those desires. Papers might also consider how different demands of desiring, willing, or consenting fall on individuals of different genders, sexualities, and races.

22. Consent II: Medieval Narratives, Social Consent, and Pedagogy

Sara Torres and Elizabeth Fowler (svt9b@virginia.edu; ef4n@virginia.edu)

Papers

From the vows pervading romances to the debates of the *Rose* and *La Belle Dame sans mercy*, from the assent of Chaucer’s pilgrims to the acclamation staged for kings, the medieval archive grapples explicitly with consent. Sociality itself is framed in terms of the demands of governance, incorporation, and mutual obligation. In this #MeToo moment, we invite explorations of the rituals of dominion; the interplay of consent and coercion in court, household, shop, or street; exclusions from the social contract; sexual violence; gender as

consensual. We welcome attention to issues of pedagogy and strategies for negotiating consent in the classroom.

23. **Griselda in the Twenty-First Century**

Leah Schwebel and Lynn Shutters (las235@txstate.edu; lynn.shutters@colostate.edu)

Lightning talks

The Griselda narrative took late-medieval Europe by storm, with multiple authors attempting this story of a cruel husband and his long-suffering wife. This session invites papers that consider any version(s) of the medieval Griselda story in light of twenty-first century academic and cultural developments. Possible lines of inquiry include: Griselda consistently appears as a model of female exemplarity. Why does her womanhood matter, and to what extent does each author's attention to her 'body', both corporeal and textual, enforce gendered readings of the narrative? *The Clerk's Tale* is a touchstone of feminist criticism, but few studies adopt queer approaches to the tale. What might queer theory add to discussions of Griselda? Consent is central to Griselda stories. What, if anything, does Griselda consent to when she weds Walter? How might we compare Griselda's consent, or lack thereof, to present-day concerns regarding consent?

24. **Queer I: Are Queer Theory and Feminism Compatible?**

Will Rogers and Christopher Michael Roman (wirogers@ulm.edu; croman2@kent.edu)

Position papers

While feminism and queer approaches have been integral in interrogating premodern sexual and gender identities, this close relationship is not a given. Indeed, one of the challenges in using queer theory is that it can supplant or erase women as a subject and implicitly insist upon a narrative where queer theory (and often its implicit masculine subject or critic) is seen as overwriting, superseding, interrupting feminist subjects, critics, and texts. In this session, we ask participants to engage with medieval texts and medieval subjects and the possibilities of using queer theory and/feminist critique together. Is this possible? Or are feminism and queer theory incompatible? If queer theory and feminism are incompatible, are there ways to bridge this gulf?

25. **Queer II: Intersectional Trans Lesbian Epistemologies**

Roberta Magnani (r.magnani@swansea.ac.uk)

Lightning talks

Queer methodologies are well established. Dinshaw and Frecerro use the queer to reframe understandings of time; Sturges and Schibanoff to reinterpret hermeneutic paradigms. Yet, this panel wishes to establish the urgency and specificity of 'lesbian' historiographies, as they offer generative new ways of extricating medieval studies from patriarchal paradigms which define the canon as a relationship between white straight men. This is a non-binary and decolonised hermeneutics shared with trans theory and race studies, two cognate conceptual

frameworks and ideal interlocutors. At a time when the #MeToo movement is voicing centuries of violent repression of all subordinate and non-conforming identities, this panel seeks position papers which evaluate/establish the valence of an intersectional trans lesbian epistemology for medieval studies.

26. Corpora

Helen Cushman, Richard Newhauser, and Arthur Russell (hcush@email.unc.edu; richard.newhauser@asu.edu; ajr171@case.edu)

Papers

Corporealities and embodied experiences are both material and gendered. Indeed, corporeal materiality and gender are often mutually constitutive. Premodern concepts of the material perpetuate notions of gender and its relationship to bodies, the senses, and literary genres. In this way, the interobjectivity connecting things and bodies genders affective piety, as Sarah McNamer has argued. Our session invites papers to revisit questions of gender, materiality, and embodied experience in light of new developments in the social sciences and humanities. How, for example, might the turn to queer/transgender phenomenologies, disability studies, and/or sensology inform our understanding of pre-modern gender and corporeal materialities?

27. Feeling Like a Woman

Carissa Harris and Mary Flannery (carissa.harris@temple.edu; m_flan@hotmail.com)

Lightning talks

In the Middle Ages (as today), emotion plays a vital role in the construction of femininity. Whereas emotions such as sorrow or pity function socially as appropriate forms of ‘feminine feeling’, others such as anger or defiance may be considered unbecoming to women. At the same time, as Sarah McNamer shows, performing pity and compassion offers a feminized experience of emotion that need not apply exclusively to women. These sessions seek short papers that consider what it means to feel like—or unlike—a woman in late medieval literary texts. Speakers can investigate how emotions can be (dis)empowering for women, examine how women use emotion in unexpected or subversive ways, or explore emotion’s role in the construction or destabilization of gender identities.

Thread 4: Code(X)

Organized by Heather Blatt, Megan Cook and Orietta Da Rold

28. How to Look at Lots of Books

J. R. Mattison and Hannah Ryley (julia.mattison@mail.utoronto.ca;
hannah.ryley@worc.ox.ac.uk)

Position papers

Recent work in English manuscript studies has studied increasingly large groups of manuscripts, building a more expansive picture of book culture. Yet, working with tens, even hundreds, of manuscripts requires us to reconsider methodologies, aims, and ethics. This panel examines how and why we examine many manuscripts. It asks how we select samples, how we handle and present data, and how we incorporate case studies. We seek position papers assessing any aspect of large corpus manuscript studies, including continental and Anglo-American methodologies, quantitative and qualitative analysis, editing texts with large manuscript traditions, or notions of popularity and manuscript survival, in order to address the question How should we look at lots of books?

29. Editing the Medieval Text: Useful Problems, Mishaps, and Solutions

Robert R. Edwards and Sebastian J. Langdell (rre1@psu.edu; sebastian_langdell@baylor.edu)
Papers

This session invites papers that reflect on the process of editing a fourteenth- or fifteenth-century text. We invite you to revisit key terms (work, text, judgment), editorial methods, and audiences in light of what our editions actually produce. Our results stand out clearly not only in the logic of editorial principles, but also in the places where method encounters problems and mishaps, where it leaves us at odds with what we understand about the given text as experienced readers. This session invites papers from scholars whose research has brought to the surface textual problems that we cannot resolve systematically but have to engage as matters of judgment and critical debate.

30. Books in Culture and Culture in Books

Orietta Da Rold, Jessica Berenbeim and Alex da Costa (od245@cam.ac.uk; jb455@cam.ac.uk;
ad666@cam.ac.uk)

Lightning talks

In 1825, Friedrich Ebert published what may be considered the first attempt to conceptualize handwritten culture. In *Zur Handschriftenkunde*, Ebert explored and delineated the theoretical challenges underpinning the understanding of manuscript books as cultural artifacts. Books *are* knowledge, not just because of what they transmit, but because of what they represent. Recent scholarship has considered the relevance of 'agency', 'intention' and the 'symbolic', engaging in a wide range of related conceptual approaches to the medieval book. This

Lightning Talks session seeks short papers exploring the types of knowledge that can be distilled from books—and, more broadly, how medieval culture is defined by books.

31. Books Before the *Canterbury Tales*

Gabriel Ford (gabriel.ford@converse.edu)

Papers

The frame-tale structure of the *Canterbury Tales* and its mixed-genre contents seem to be among Chaucer's most notable innovations. This session seeks to contextualize the (apparent?) originality of the *Tales* within the material context of its early circulation. Which codices (frame-tales, encyclopedic compendia, anthologies, etc.) or incunabula facilitate the early reception of Chaucer's framed collection? How do the presentation and formatting of the *Canterbury Tales* in manuscripts or early print editions signal the collection's affinities with or distinctions from extant traditions? In short, which specific medieval or early modern books matter most as we interpret the *Canterbury Tales* of the fifteenth and/or sixteenth centuries?

32. The Pre-Chaucerian Page

Alexandra Reider and J. D. Sargan (alexandra.reider@yale.edu; james.sargan@utoronto.ca)

Papers

Chaucer looms large in the study of medieval English literature, and—not unrelatedly—Chaucer manuscripts have been important to the study of medieval English manuscripts and their layout, orthography, and patterns of production and circulation (for example). But—just as one might problematize and historicize the idea of 'Father Chaucer'—one might consider these and other book historical developments in a longer and wider context. For this paper session, we invite speakers to consider English manuscripts, in any English vernacular, produced between 1200 and 1400 and what kinds of change or continuity they represent in the ongoing history of the manuscript page.

33. Marginalization and Inclusivity in the Digital Age

Sarah Noonan (sarahlleet@gmail.com)

Position papers

Digital archives, projects, and methodologies increasingly shape how scholars and students encounter and analyze medieval codices and manuscript fragments. This paradigm shift has undoubtedly energized the study of the medieval book, but the concentration of digital initiatives in larger research institutions has also exacerbated many preexisting institutional, economic, and research-oriented inequalities. This session explores how established and innovative modes of digital humanities practice can address these inequalities and cultivate engagement with sources, voices, or topics that are currently 'marginalized' within the study of the medieval book. Position papers may propose concrete solutions (i.e. projects or case studies that draw attention to 'marginal' archives or under-examined aspects of medieval book

culture) or theoretical interrogations of how digital approaches to manuscript studies might be leveraged to promote inclusivity in our field.

34. Thinking Codicology in Chaucer's Manuscripts

Orietta Da Rold (od245@cam.ac.uk)

Lightning talks

This Lightning talks session will focus on the manuscripts containing Chaucer's texts beyond Ellesmere and Hengwrt. Much has been learnt on the editorial use of these two manuscripts, but what other knowledge about human interaction can be derived by codicological explorations of the many other manuscripts of Chaucer's oeuvre? Codicology is here understood as that branch of scholarship which studies the manuscript book in its material realization and, more broadly, in all its cultural and historical interrelationships. Talks might address discrete close examination of manuscripts, broader provenance ideas, scribal relationships or simply raise questions about readers, owners, writers of little debated manuscripts.

35. Technology and Gower

Georgiana Donavin and Eve Salisbury for The Gower Project
(gdonavin@westminstercollege.edu; eve.salisbury@wmich.edu)

Lightning talks

The multiple copies of the *Confessio Amantis* and *Vox Clamantis*, and the singular *Speculum Meditantis*, as well as other works, provide a treasure trove of data for enterprising researchers seeking answers to paleographic, codicological, and technological questions. This session seeks presentations that explore how technological advances, including hypertext, augmented reality, apps for iPhone and iPad, multi-spectral imaging, and virtual reality enable broader access and study of Gower's manuscripts. Such tools enable the close examination of script, marginal notations, split-screen comparisons, enlargement of miniature illustrations, and exposure of what lies beneath the surface of a text.

Thread 5: Risk

Organized by Elizabeth Allen and Isabel Davis

36. Dangerous Hospitalities

Sara Torres (svt9b@virginia.edu)

Lightning talks

The social practice of hospitality pervades the literary imagination of medieval authors, whether in the figure of Harry Bailey, Boccaccio's Saladin, Lady Bertilak, or the *Rose's* allegorized 'Bel Accueil' (Fair Welcome). Scenes of hospitality are designed to offer refuge and achieve peace. At the same time, welcoming gestures and incorporative actions may be

coercive, even violent, in intention or enactment. This panel explores the risks and rewards of hospitality across diverse medieval genres, including romance, chronicle, hagiography, conduct literature, etc. Papers might address the fraught relationship between host and guest; spatial thresholds of hospitality, from the household to city to nation; liminality and medieval border zones; transculturation and diplomacy; and social ideation in light of critical theory on hospitality. How do medieval texts represent characters who offer, seek, or deny hospitality in moments of crisis?

37. Risk and Common Sense

Andreea Boboc (aboboc@pacific.edu)

Papers

Common sense can be used to gloss over moral risks and elide social ruptures; it can be associated with law and order public order and common law. If, as William Riddell noted, common sense ‘consists in the application of the rules of justice and honesty to the things of this work-a-day world’, how might vernacular literature engage in risky practices of justice on behalf of the community? This session welcomes papers that focus on common sense as a response to risky behavior and risky modes of thought in late medieval literature the vernacular literature of Chaucer and his contemporaries. How might common sense become a hedge against moral and legal enigmas (especially in matters of gender)? How might unquestioned common sense in law and literature encourage risky habits of thought by exercising an unquestioned, totalizing, or undue influence? How has medieval common sense been weaponized by the powerful to demonize and exclude those perceived as ‘others’?

38–39. Rethinking Fortune I and II

Isabel Davis (drbeldavis@gmail.com)

Papers (I); Lightning talks (II)

These panels seek papers which rethink medieval Fortune, asking for new understandings of this well-known trope. How did the idea of Fortune imagine the human person? What place did Fortune afford human beings in relation to the natural world or the cosmos? What did it mean that identity might be so radically contingent? How queer is Fortune? What lessons were supposed to be learned from the experience and expectation of constant transformation? How does the idea of Fortune conceptualise time, processing past events and anticipating future disruption or improvement? How does Fortune fit with explicitly Christian understandings of event? Panellists may wish to consider responses to Boethius’s *Consolation of Philosophy*, a key source text in relation to the idea of Fortune, or think more widely about how to contextualise Fortune and contingency in medieval philosophy, poetry and ethics.

40. Space and Time of Refuge

Elizabeth Allen (elizabethallen.uci@gmail.com)

Lightning talks

How do medieval spaces of refuge contain risk? Refuge can be imagined in caves, barrows, fairy hills; castles, gardens; ships' holds and islands; sanctuaries, chapels, graves and churchyards; limbo, Abraham's lap or cloth, even heaven. To what extent, and how permanently, do spaces of refuge offer security? To what extent do they suspend or change the terms of risk? How does refuge, asylum, or sanctuary threaten those whom it protects, change them, or render them precarious? This session seeks papers that grapple with the political, social, or penitential dynamics of refuge, including its capacity to let hazard in. It is further interested in how such spatial concerns entail temporal ones. How might medieval spatial refuge find echoes in later periods, or hark back to earlier times, or produce disjunctions across time and historical periods? How might the precarity of medieval refuge shed light upon our own times?

41. Risk and Trust

Elliot Kendall and Philip Knox (e.r.kendall@ex.ac.uk; pk453@cam.ac.uk)

Lightning talks

Gawain takes social risks that his colleagues shun in a multitude of romances that valorize *trouthe*, including *Green Knight*, *Carle*, *Turke* and *Ragnelle*. Criseyde deliberates and shows that reasoned decisions are emotional. Beryn finally learns not to trust and then saves himself by trusting one last time. The Pardoner's untrustworthy rioters trust lightly. Chaucer himself, pursued in the courts by his creditors, tested trust to breaking point. Lightning talks are invited on the relationship between trust and risk in medieval texts. How do texts assess risk and trust? In the vertiginous zone of unresolved possibilities, do stories offer rules or ask us to have faith? Considerations of social and emotional investment (love, friendship, sacrifice), financial investment (trade, credit, bargaining), or the interplay between them are especially welcome.

Thread 6: Theory Now

Organized by Holly Crocker, Stephanie Trigg and Marion Turner

42. Beyond New Formalism: Shape, Form, Figure

Arthur Bahr and Ingrid Nelson (awbahr@mit.edu; inelson@amherst.edu)

Position papers

The twenty-first century turn to form in literary scholarship now seems exhausted, so we invite position papers that reflect on New Formalism's legacy and tackle the question of what comes next. What features of premodern literature might offer other paradigms or models for the kinds of textually attentive analysis that New Formalism champions? 'Form' has meant so

many different things that it can seem infinitely, and unhelpfully, expandable. We therefore wonder what two other terms, ‘figure’ and ‘shape’, might add to our understanding. ‘Figure’ speaks to both pre-modern theories of rhetoric and modern theories of embodiment, whereas ‘shape’ seems a far less theorized concept—despite a poetic etymology dating back to Old English ‘scop’ and ‘scippan’, which might speak to poetry as active making. We hope that putting these terms in dialogue might clarify what each brings to critical practice, and thereby yield more fully theorized models of ‘formally’ engaged literary scholarship.

43. **Practicing Theory, Theorizing Practice with/in the Medieval Recipe**

Lisa H. Cooper and Chelsea Silva (lhcooper@wisc.edu; csilv008@ucr.edu)

Lightning talks

Chaucer’s investment in recipe discourse, on display in texts like ‘To Rosemounde’, the Cook’s portrait in the *General Prologue*, and the description of the Canon’s Yeoman, demonstrates the way in which recipes—culinary, medicinal, alchemical, and more—were spurs to imaginative literary work in late medieval England. But what is there to say about the recipe itself, this text-type that locates itself with imperative force between writer and reader, and that on its surface appears to invite less theory than *practice*, less reading than *use*? This session seeks a variety of papers that engage with any kind of recipe (or recipes) through a specific methodological or theoretical lens—whether affective, cognitive, codicological, (new) formalist, (new) materialist, or otherwise—and that consider if, and how, recipes might themselves constitute a kind of theory, whether of text or action.

44. **Studies of Aging (and Disability) in Chaucer**

David Hadbawnik and Richard Godden (dhabawnik@auk.edu.kw; rgodden1@lsu.edu)

Papers

The Reeve, in his ‘Prologue’, notes the problems that come with old age: ‘Avauntyng, liyng, anger, coveitise’; yet, while his ‘olde lemes mowe wel been unweelde’, he famously still has ‘a coltes tooth’. In this way, there seems to be an awareness in Chaucer, as in other medieval authors, of old age as a qualitative difference. However, old age is seen, both by modern and medieval thinkers, as a natural process. And yet, aging is often pathologized. Can a natural process be disabling? This panel seeks papers that address how Critical Disability Studies can illuminate the recurring motif of aging in medieval literature and interrogate the ways in which age constitutes a category of disability in the Middle Ages—one with a constructed set of social relations—that disrupts identity and troubles interpretative frameworks.

45. **The Time of Psychoanalysis**

Ruth Evans and R. D. Perry (revans19@slu.edu; rdperry@berkeley.edu)

Position papers

Psychoanalytic readings of Middle English literature came to the fore from the 1980s until roughly the publication of Aranye Fradenburg’s *Sacrifice Your Love* (2002), and were widely

perceived to be in competition with historicist readings. Yet while the pre-eminence of historicism has waned, psychoanalytic criticism has not assumed a greater prominence in the field. This panel seeks to discover ‘where is psychoanalysis now?’ It seeks papers on the importance of psychoanalysis to recent work on queer theory, trans theory, disability studies, critical race studies, ecocriticism, and other approaches. What does psychoanalysis still have to offer to the study of Middle English literature?

46. **Medieval Literature and Medical Humanities I: Senses, Perception, Voice**

Corinne Saunders and Stephanie Trigg for the Institute for Medical Humanities, Durham
(c.j.saunders@durham.ac.uk; sjtrigg@unimelb.edu.au)

Papers

The session takes up the interdisciplinary remit of the Institute for Medical Humanities at Durham, and its interest is in the ways that pre-modern thought illuminates contemporary experience. Contributors are invited to explore the possibilities for dialogue between medieval and modern perspectives, with a particular focus on the senses, perception and voice in relation to medieval literary texts. We invite papers addressing any aspects of these topics, including, but not limited to, the interplay of mind, body and affect, the relations between senses, perception and cognition, the connections between senses and emotions, the physical and mental experience and manifestation of the senses and/or perception, the representation of expression, and the ways in which texts treat and create voice(s). We are interested in both normal and pathological representations, and in the interplay between literary texts and other discourses, from medieval medical theory and psychology, to contemporary theories relating to the critical medical humanities and the intersections between the humanities and the sciences.

47. **Medieval Literature and Medical Humanities II: Body Parts**

Corinne Saunders and Stephanie Trigg for the Institute for Medical Humanities, Durham
(c.j.saunders@durham.ac.uk; sjtrigg@unimelb.edu.au)

Lightning talks

This session invites brief presentations that explore how medieval readers and writers perceive and apprehend the human body – either as a whole or as its component parts—in medieval literature. Whether the body is medicalised, pathologized, or perceived through allegorical or metaphorical language, medieval texts offer a range of ways to process the phenomenon of having—and being—a body. To what extent might this be conditioned by specific patterns of thought or structures of feeling, in Raymond Williams’ term? In *Medieval Bodies* (2018), Jack Hartnell reads the medieval body as it is represented in the art of the Middle Ages, but how do scientific, medical and narrative texts produce embodied knowledge and experience?

48. Mixture/Texture

Matthew Boyd Goldie and David Lavinsky (mgoldie@rider.edu; lavinsky@yu.edu)

Papers

We invite proposals on mixed textures in writing, representations of mixed media objects, iterations of multimedia in manuscripts and artworks, scholastic understandings of mixed matter, examples of transmedia, instances of cultural or material intersectionality, and related topics on Chaucer and his contemporaries. We are especially interested in theoretical and interdisciplinary approaches that question what Foucault called the ‘metaphysics of substances’ and ‘metaphysics of coherence’. Focal points for thinking about a dynamic premodern heterogeneity might include book-objects and other material assemblages; lists; networks; ekphrastic discourse, and the objet d’art.

49. Sensology

Helen Cushman, Richard Newhauser and Arthur Russell (hcush@email.unc.edu; richard.newhauser@asu.edu; ajr171@case.edu)

Papers

The rapid growth in the humanities and social sciences of sensology (the study of the human senses as cultural factors) has widened this ontology to include the body-centered historical method of Caroline Bynum, the phenomenology of sensation of Deleuze, and the sensory poetics of Susan Stewart. This session invites novel approaches to medieval sensology. Paper proposals might touch on the explanatory power of sensology; interrogate the sensory politics of constructions of race, gender, class, sexuality, and/or ability; investigate the post-humanist implications of the development of the sensory self; or calibrate contemporary theories of body ontologies, corporeal epistemologies, and sensory anthropologies.

50. Writing Perpetuity in Medieval English Literature

Gina Hurley and Mary Kate Hurley (gina.hurley@yale.edu; hurleym1@ohio.edu)

Lightning talks

Bede writes in his *De temporum ratione* that the ‘fleeting and wave-tossed course of time comes to a fitting end in eternal stability and stable eternity’. But what literary strategies do medieval authors use to represent eternity and perpetuity? How do they contain something that ‘has always abided, abides, and will abide, eternal in itself’ in the linear chronologies of the human mind? Following work on temporality by Carolyn Dinshaw, Kathleen Davis, and others, we propose a panel concerning literary representations of eternity. Our session invites papers that investigate the literary technologies of eternity from historical, scientific, and theoretical perspectives.

Open section

Sessions unaffiliated with threads

51. Identity Capitalism? Subjectivity and the Future of the Field

Robyn Malo (rmalo@purdue.edu)

Papers

As the caption borrowed from Terese Marie Mailhot suggests, master narratives of our period have often prioritized ideas of the individual—when did it emerge? In what does subjectivity consist? These questions animate James Simpson’s *Reform and Cultural Revolution* and Laura Ashe’s *Conquest and Transformation*—works designated as outlining the literary history of England’s Middle Ages. But does our focus on subjectivity and self-definition get in the way of other, more communal approaches, such as actor-network theory, or attending to social connectedness in many medieval practices (from death, to confession, to drama)? What might moving away from subjectivity mean for the future of what we study?

52. Chaucer and Italy, Revisited

Sebastian J. Langdell (sebastian_langdell@baylor.edu)

Lightning talks

This session invites flashes of insight, lightning-like, on the ever-evolving question of Chaucer’s relationship with Italy and Italian writers. Participants may focus on one authorial connection in particular—Chaucer and Dante, Boccaccio, or Petrarch, for instance—or may zero in on a given Chaucerian text, approach, or historical occurrence. Participants can take up an old critical question and offer new light; or introduce new connections, correspondences, and avenues of inquiry.

53. Voices in Middle English Literature

Melissa Raine (mraine@unimelb.edu.au)

Papers

This panel focuses on ‘hearing’ the voice of a literary character inside one’s own head. ‘Voice’ is a perennial topic of fascination within literary scholarship, while the lived experience of ‘hearing voices’, both internal and external in origin, receives sustained attention within the human sciences. Can these fields engage in a mutually illuminating dialogue? How might listening for chronologically distant literary voices inflect such a conversation? What kind of theoretical paradigm could support such an exchange? Papers might also address medieval theories of voice and literature; reading silently, reading aloud, and auditing readings, from medieval practices to modern recordings, as well as considering the valorisations of internal voices associated with models of mental health.

54. The Franklin and His Tale: Affirmation, Critique, Both, or Neither?

Bobby Meyer-Lee (meyerlee@aya.yale.edu)

Position papers

While virtually everything Chaucer wrote has provoked mutually exclusive critical responses, the Franklin and his tale—or, more specifically, the values that the pilgrim and his tale appear to espouse—have been among the most polarizing. This session seeks position papers that take new approaches to formulating an answer to the question posed by the session’s title.

55. Medieval Media Infrastructures

Tom White (tomjwhite9@gmail.com)

Lightning talks

This session will focus on the relationship between premodern literary studies and what Shannon Mattern calls ‘the deep time of media infrastructure’. How, presenters might ask, can we address the medieval city as a complex media infrastructure, in which the production and consumption of multiple media formats interact and overlap? How might the fields of Critical Infrastructure Studies and Media Archaeology enable new understandings of the labour and resources required to produce and maintain medieval media, from manuscripts and documents to graffiti, wall hangings, and tapestries? How do modern electronic infrastructures, through which medieval media recirculate, overlay older communicative networks?

56. *The Book of Sir John Mandeville* and the Critics

Tom White (tomjwhite9@gmail.com)

Position papers

Having received relatively sparse scholarly attention for much of the twentieth century, *The Book of Sir John Mandeville* has been the subject of a number of recent studies. Long defined by the hierarchical discourse of textual ‘corruption’, its textual plurality across multiple languages and ‘Versions’ is now prized by many scholars. Mandeville’s *Book* has also played a significant role in the turn toward postcolonial theory in medieval literary studies and in the efforts of numerous medievalists to teach a complexly global Middle Ages. This session invites position papers that reflect critically on the ‘return’ to Mandeville and his *Book* in recent scholarship.

57. ‘Bleeding Meaning’: Codices and Bodies

Roberta Magnani and Nicole Nyffenegger (r.magnani@swansea.ac.uk; nyffenegger@ens.unibe.ch)

Lightning talks

Starting from the ways in which the wounded body of Christ, and bleeding bodies more broadly in medieval literature, often resist binary categorisations, in this session we propose to think about the material bodies of codices that refuse to signify monolithically. In marginalia, illuminations, blemishes, and textual slippages, manuscripts may bleed meaning across the

boundaries of the normal. Panelists are asked in particular to consider how books, bleeding meaning in such a way, and wounded human bodies (that exist only by virtue of having been inscribed unto the parchment of a codex) inform one another in medieval literature.

58. Between the Lines and Margins: Restoring Multidimensional and Multilingual Reading Practices, c.1100–1350

Kathryn Kerby-Fulton (kkerby@nd.edu)

Lightning talks

How medieval readers actually used the technology of the page remains something of a mystery. This session will examine reading practices in manuscripts produced during the period of Early Middle English literature (1100–1350) by considering texts in material culture, and also the multilingual and cross-cultural nature of literary experience. This could include Middle English literary interactions with texts in Anglo-Latin, Anglo-Norman, Middle Hiberno-English, Middle Scots, Welsh, Irish, Norse, Flemish, Arabic, or Hebrew, for instance. It might include the study of glosses, illustrations, rubrics, or corrections, spontaneous reader annotations, or the work of ‘professional readers’ (i.e. those scribes, editors, annotators, illustrators, correctors - and sometimes authors themselves - whose job it was to design apparatus or prepare texts). Given developments in poetics and formalism, issues of mise-en-page (layout and visual design), metrics, text-image, and multidimensional reading (both non-linear and multimedia) could be explored.

59. ‘An unknown source near the original’: Textual Ghosts from the Age of Chaucer

Stephen Partridge (stephen.partridge@ubc.ca)

Papers

This session will focus on evidence that often remains at the margins of scholarship: books that survive in very partial states; corrections, additions, or shifts of affiliation in more complete books and texts; purposeful selection or excerpting from more complete books that are now otherwise untraceable; allusions, wills, and sale catalogues. How do case studies drawn from Chaucerian or other Middle English manuscripts and early prints interrogate our usual ways of understanding more complete and familiar books? What challenges are presented by these ‘immaterial’ texts? All approaches welcome—codicology, stemmatics, digital humanities, queer or disability studies, ecocriticism, system theory.

60. Lost, Abandoned and Forgotten: Editions that Didn’t Make the Cut

Robert Simola (rsimola@yahoo.com)

Papers

There have been numerous editions of the works of Chaucer. Some, like the editions of Tyrwhitt, Skeat, Robinson, and the Riverside Chaucer became the standard editions used by scholars while others like the editions of Donaldson, McCracken, and Pollard were respected and went through multiple printings. There have also been editions like those of Thomas

Wright and Charles Cowden Clarke that went through multiple editions and stayed in print for decades but did not receive the acclaim of the scholarly community. But there are also those editions that received just a single printing before being abandoned and forgotten. This session invites papers on these lost, forgotten, and abandoned, like the editions of W. Greatheed Lewis, James J. Donohue, Charles Mozley and Elizabeth Frink; and the wonderful children's edition of J. Brimley Johnson.

61. *New Medieval Literatures at 20: Looking Back and Looking Forward*

Laura Ashe, Philip Knox, David Lawton, Kellie Robertson and Wendy Scase
(laura.ashe@ell.ox.ac.uk; pk453@cam.ac.uk; dalawton@wustl.edu; krobert@umd.edu;
w.l.scase@bham.ac.uk)

Lightning talks

The New Chaucer Society Congress 2020 will coincide with the publication of *New Medieval Literatures 20*, an annual of work on medieval textual cultures. This panel invites reflections on the past twenty years of study of the textual cultures of medieval Europe (however defined)—as well as speculation about the future of the discipline. What has changed since the beginning of the new millennium? What new discourses and critical orientations have emerged, flourished, or dwindled? What aspects of medieval textual culture are ripe to receive new attention? What critical or theoretical approaches have yet to make inroads into medieval studies? In what ways might the study of medieval textual cultures shape the future of other discourses in the coming years and decades? What is the future of the scholarly journal in a changing world?

62. *Marxist Allegory*

Casey Ireland and R. D. Perry (clireland@gmail.com; rdperry@berkeley.edu)

Papers

In *The Political Unconscious* and now in his forthcoming *Allegory and Ideology*, Fredric Jameson overtly grounds his Marxist hermeneutic in medieval allegoresis. Jameson's focus on allegory follows a precedent set by György Lukács and Walter Benjamin—both of whom wrote at a time when medieval studies was establishing itself as a discipline. The prominence and complexity of allegorical texts in the Middle Ages—and the insights provided by their modern interpreters—offered a significant resource for Marxist theorists, a resource which Jameson draws from in revisiting allegory in his latest book. This panel invites papers that will ask what medieval studies can offer to Marxist understandings of allegory, and in turn what Marxism can do for medieval studies.

63. Fabulous Figures: Constructing Charisma and Authority in the Middle Ages

Irina Dumitrescu and Einat Klafter (idumitre@uni-bonn.de; eklafter@gmail.com)

Lightning talks

This session will examine the roles played by fame, fascination, and charisma in establishing authority across the Middle Ages. Power—whether ruling subjects or gathering followers, imposing one’s will or having freedom to act—can be conveyed by gestures, acts, performances, and symbolic works. How do communicative strategies shape and legitimize secular and religious authority? What codes and conventions are employed to express power, charisma and authority? What is the role of historical context, generic convention, and gender identity? And what is the role of (artistic, religious, family, political) networks in establishing authority or power?

64. Social Networks and Medieval Literature

Elliot Kendall and Nicholas Perkins (e.r.kendall@ex.ac.uk; nicholas.perkins@st-hughs.ox.ac.uk)

Lightning talks

Literary criticism often takes account of social networks—of readers and scribes, politicians and traders, of textual circulation or translation—but could the models of networks that we use in these endeavours be improved? This session invites reflection on how understanding social networks can help both to explain the production and circulation of literature, and to achieve new readings of literature. We particularly welcome proposals that engage—enthusiastically and/or sceptically—with network theory in the various forms it has taken in different disciplines, and hope that the session will encourage further debate about how the tools developed in studying networks might make a difference to how we engage with medieval texts.

65. Beyond Paternity: Chaucer and the Family Network

Samantha Katz Seal (samantha.seal@unh.edu)

Papers

While much scholarly attention has been given to Chaucer’s status as *paterfamilias* within the poetic genealogies of English literature, this session moves past metaphors of paternity to investigate other invocations of familial metaphor within Chaucer’s life, poetry, and the work of his successors. How did metaphors of maternal, sibling, spousal, or cousin relationships (not an exhaustive list!) impact the development of literary or biographical history? Can we use such metaphors to write women or less prominent individuals back into the literary historical record? And can Chaucer’s family metaphors offer new genealogical orientations to replace the linearity of paternity?

66. Middle English Ecology: Organisms, Environments and Human In(ter)vention

Emily McLemore (emclemor@nd.edu)

Lightning talks

This session invites lightning talks that explore how organisms interact with each other and their environments in Chaucer's work and Middle English poetry more broadly. While the topic includes organisms of both fauna and flora varieties, the session is especially interested in fostering discussion regarding the incorporation and treatment of plants and landscape, as well as how medieval poets construct and comment on 'natural' environments. How do human characters conceive of, create from, and intervene in their ecological surroundings? What effects does human invention have on nature in the Middle English poet's experience and imagination?

67. New Comparative Literatures in the Age of Chaucer

Emily Houlik-Ritchey (emily.houlik-ritche@rice.edu)

Position papers

Recent years have seen calls for new (or newly invigorated) comparative work. For instance, Sharon Kinoshita approaches comparison in the context of Mediterranean Studies to redress the narrowness of national, linguistic, and disciplinary knowledge formations; meanwhile George Edmondson employs the theoretical concept of neighboring as a methodology situating textual relations laterally and asynchronously, rather than hierarchically; and further approaches have been suggested in the context of medieval world literature by Michelle Warren, Suzanne Conklin Akbari, and Geraldine Heng. As medievalists envision such 'new' comparative literatures within and across disciplines, what possibilities, implications, and complications arise for the age of Chaucer?

68. English Literature and the Idea of Europe

Zachary E. Stone (zes9bx@virginia.edu)

Lightning talks

This panel examines the intellectual genealogy of Europe as a complex and contested idea in Medieval England. From Chaucer's description of Custance as the "queene" of "al Europe" to John Capgrave's ambiguous reconciliation of universal and national history in his *Abbreviacioun of Chronicles*, English writers negotiated conflicting geographic, political, religious, and cultural conceptions of Europe. While recent scholarship has paid close attention to Anglo-Continental exchange, this panel examines how English writers understood, embraced, constructed, critiqued, or rejected the idea of Europe itself. How, we ask, did English writers figure themselves and their communities as part of, or perhaps in opposition to, larger, supra-national, institutions and/or forms? And, in turn, how might English texts inform contemporary conversations regarding the history, nature, and possible futures of the idea of Europe?

69. Brexit in the Age of Chaucer/Chaucer in the Age of Brexit

Bob Epstein (repstein@fairfield.edu)

Papers

The political-economic issues at the core of the crises in contemporary Britain are also of import in fourteenth-century England and in the poetry of Chaucer and his contemporaries. This panel seeks papers on such topics as: domestic and foreign markets; European economic integration; England and international trade; immigration and emigration; international conflict and cooperation and national sovereignty; Englishness and Britishness; border crossings; England within and without Europe; the idea of Europe in the late Middle Ages; medieval English literature in the construction of nationalism and populism?

70. Chaucer in the Non-Anglophone World: Translations and Cultural Appropriations

Jonathan Fruoco (jonathan.fruoco@gmail.com)

Lightning talks

Chaucer studies have long developed outside of the Anglophone world—Global Chaucer has been instrumental in showing us its importance. But non-Anglophone Chaucerians seem to constitute an often silent minority in international congresses. The aim of this session is accordingly to discuss the development of Chaucer studies outside of the English-speaking world: we will question the difficulties (linguistic, but not only) of translating/adapting Middle English in different languages, of finding audiences, of reaching colleagues. Why does a medieval English poet speak to us? How do we make him our own?

71. Why is Chaucer Not Taught in French Departments/France?

Jennifer Alberghini, Stephanie Grace-Petinos and Sara Rychtarik

(jalberghini@gradcenter.cuny.edu; stephanie.grace.petinos@gmail.com; sararychtarik@me.com)

Position papers

Members of English departments, particularly those who study Chaucer, are aware of the deep French influence on Medieval English literature. Scholars have, of necessity, familiarized themselves with the works of writers such as Marie de France, Eustache Deschamps and Guillaume de Machaut, and especially the *Roman de la Rose*. These texts are often taught in English classes. Yet the influence is often seen as unidirectional. Building on conversations initiated at Kalamazoo and in the 2018 *Channeling Relations in Medieval England and France* conference, this session seeks position papers that address questions including: Why is Chaucer not routinely taught in French departments? More broadly, why is Chaucer not taught in France (and possibly other European countries as well)? How can medievalists within French departments incorporate Chaucer effectively into their syllabi/class discussions?

72. Medieval Literature in a Post-Truth Era

Sarah Kelen (sak@nebrwesleyan.edu)

Lightning talks

How do twenty-first-century readers negotiate narratives based on medieval ideologies of veracity and identity? How is the concept of truth activated or undermined in particular medieval texts and what do these instances tell us about their era or our own? Are there premodern antecedents for post-modern skepticisms about 'capital-T' Truth? How can medieval theories of fiction and facticity inform either historicizing or non-historicizing readings of medieval works?

73. 'Furie infernal': Rage and Anger in, around, and about Chaucer

Kate Koppelman (koppelk@seattleu.edu)

Lightning talks

This panel invites lightning talks, in relation to either scholarship or pedagogy, that investigate the various ways in which rage and anger appear, are produced by, and might be productive for readings of Chaucer's texts and contexts. Papers might engage with medieval theories of affect, as well as contemporary questions about the usefulness of anger in debates about misogyny, racism, and trans- and homophobia. Talks might engage with images of angry women, of violence and rage directed towards non-Christian racial and religious 'others', or with other non-normative bodies that are themselves angry or that produce angry responses. Additionally, talks might address angry responses to Chaucer's texts: for example, responses to Griselda, to Custance, or to the Knight in the Wife of Bath's tale.

74. The Making of Chaucer's Poetry

Sherif Abdelkarim (sa2je@virginia.edu)

Papers

In the wake of this century's New Formalism, this session invites scholars to explore Chaucer's poetry, style, and syntax in the greater context of medieval prosody and literary theory. Christopher Cannon dispelled the myth that Chaucer 'invented' the English language; this session extends his thesis by entertaining the idea that Chaucer's poetry, mechanically speaking, does 'nothing new'. What, then, makes Chaucer's poetry poetry, and what makes it 'Chaucerian' compared to that of his contemporaries, predecessors, or successors? What were (what are) the uses of Chaucer's poetry? And what uses do researchers have for prosody right now?

75. *De vulgaria eloquentia*: Theories of Language in Vernacular Medieval Literature

Kathy Cawsey (kathy.cawsey@dal.ca)

Lightning talks

In Chaucer's time, engaging in the theory or philosophy of language meant writing in Latin. Vernacular writers and thinkers, lacking both the technical vocabulary and legitimizing power of Latin, had to be creative, and turned to metaphor, narrative, and allegory to explore the myriad of ways they thought language worked. Chaucer was at the forefront of this thinking about theories of language; but other vernacular writers explored these concepts as well. From Langland's characters *Imaginatif* and *Truth* to Margery Kempe's differentiation between preaching and 'comownycacyon and good wordys', vernacular writers showed that they could adopt, adapt, change, overturn, and laugh at the serious Latin philosophers of language. This session calls for papers on any aspect of vernacular theory or philosophy of language in Chaucer or his contemporaries.

76. Instrumentality

Allan Mitchell (amitch@uvic.ca)

Papers

In the medieval period, technologies and their useful instruments were central to both the *artes mechanicae* and *liberales*. This panel invites presenters to explore practical and theoretical orientations towards instrumental goods in relation to Chaucer and his contemporaries, particularly in view of recent developments in media theory, object studies, ecocriticism, and in dialogue with decolonial feminist and queer theories of science and technology (e.g., Chun, Barad, Grosz, Hayles, and Risam). Papers might address instrumentalist and informational writings (*Art of Nombryng* or Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, which has garnered much fruitful attention of late in the work of Cooper, Taylor, Mead, Chism, and Truitt); time-keeping devices, medical implements, or other tools of the trade; and textual instruments such as volvelles, calendars, maps, or such things as reference systems, numerical codes, and pictorial or diagrammatic figures.

77. Afterlives I: Chaucer's Englishness in Chaucerian Afterlives

Anna Wilson (anna_wilson@fas.harvard.edu)

Papers

This session invites papers on negotiations of issues of national, racial, religious, and cultural identity in Chaucer's afterlives. 'Afterlives' might encompass literary continuations, adaptations, fanfictions, editions, or translations of Chaucer's work by writers such as John Lydgate, Robert Henryson, Dan Simmons, Baba Brinkman, or Patience Agbabi; or Chaucer's continued presence in the classroom. Such negotiations might also take place between the literary afterlives of Chaucer and Chaucer scholarship, in classroom discussion, or in creative responses assignments. Papers might also think about haunting, memory, ruins, relics, and other kinds of afterlives engaging with Chaucer's legacy as an English poet.

78. Afterlives II: Renaissance Chaucer Revisited

Robert Costomiris (robtcost@georgiasouthern.edu)

Position papers

This session seeks position papers to assess our current critical understanding of Chaucer's afterlife in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. How have our views of Chaucer's impact changed since Miskimin's *The Renaissance Chaucer* (1975) and Krier's *Refiguring Chaucer in the Renaissance* (1998)? Some ways to consider this issue are, for example, has the emphasis on the special relationship between Spenser and Chaucer blurred our sensitivity to Chaucer's influence on other poets such as Milton and Shakespeare? Similarly, are there aspects of Chaucer's philosophical inclinations that we have missed or under-appreciated in the work of later poets? And from a material perspective, how does the availability and accessibility of collected folio editions of Chaucer's works such as Speght's edition change the way his works were understood and used by later authors?

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