



The Chaucer Newsletter

A Publication of the New Chaucer Society

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Spring, 1995

Nominations for New Trustees

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Peggy Knapp (Carnegie Mellon University), has submitted its recommendations for new Trustees. The membership will now be asked to choose four names from the eight listed below to succeed Richard F. Green, Elizabeth Kirk, Barbara Nolan, and David Wallace, whose terms expire with the 1996 Los Angeles Congress. The nominees are David Aers, Peter Brown, Jeorg Fichte, John Ganim, Linda Georgianna, H. Marshall Leicester, Toshiyuki Takayima, and Anna Torti. If you have not received your ballot already, it will arrive shortly.

NOT MEETING IN BOULDER ?

As members may recall, the 1996 NCS congress initially was to have been held in Boulder, Colorado and hosted by the University of Colorado, which, through our colleague Elizabeth Robertson, had issued an invitation to the Society at the 1992 congress. In 1993, however, at the suggestion of the Trustees, a poll of the membership was conducted that revealed a majority preferred the Society not meet in Boulder as (Continued on page 8)

Travel Subventions For New Chaucerians

At the NCS congress in Canterbury in 1990, the Trustees of the Society decided that interest income accumulating from the NCS Endowment Fund should be made available to encourage and assist new Chaucerians to attend biennial congresses. Anyone who has been awarded a Ph.D. since August 1993 or who is in the advanced stages of completing the dissertation and who is interested in obtaining such a subvention to attend the 1996 Los Angeles Congress should send to the NCS Director by August 1, 1995 a brief (1-page) letter of request that also describes how his or her dissertation/thesis centrally focuses on Chaucer. At the same time, the applicant's dissertation director should write a brief supporting letter to the NCS Director confirming the status of the dissertation.

Subventions (in the form of reimbursements) are meant to cover some or all travel, lodging, and registration expenses associated with the Los Angeles Congress; the size of subventions will depend on the number of applicants and the amount of interest income available, but every eligible applicant will receive some funding.

1996 NCS CONGRESS CALL FOR PAPERS

The Program Committee for the Tenth International Congress, to be held at the Sunset Village Conference Center in Los Angeles, California (Friday, July 26 to Tuesday, July 30, 1996), announces the following topics for sessions. Papers or proposals should be sent directly to the organizer of each session, except as noted. The session organizers must receive all papers or proposals by July 1, 1995. Organizers will select papers and participants by late August 1995, and the names of participants and the titles of their presentations will be announced in the Fall 1995 Chaucer Newsletter.

The Committee has followed the lead of the 1992 and 1994 congresses in scheduling some of the same kinds of newer formats and ground rules to encourage discussion and to elicit submissions from throughout the membership. Members may apply to more than one kind of session, (Cont. on pg. 2)

but may actually participate in only one. The constitution of the NCS mandates that participants (except for invited speakers from other fields) be members with their dues paid up; we ask you to share this announcement with graduate students, younger colleagues, and others who may not now be members of the NCS. We also urge you to inform colleagues outside of North America and the U.K. of the Congress. (Students may join the Society for two years at the student rate of \$15 per year. They should write to the New Chaucer Society for application forms. New Ph.D's should consult the information on travel subventions printed above.)

Organizers have provided a brief explanation of what they have in mind, though sessions may change in response to submissions. In some cases noted below submissions should be sent to the chair of the Program Committee, who will forward submissions to the organizers.

I. CONCURRENT PAPER SESSIONS

Concurrent Paper Sessions will contain three papers and no respondents. Each paper normally will be limited to 15 minutes to allow for 1/2 hour of discussion. Full drafts of papers are expected by the end of February 1996, and will be circulated to other speakers in the session.

1. Chaucer and Translation.

The theory or practice of translation/translatio as it affected Chaucer and his contemporaries, including: the problematic of translation as broached and explored in religious discourses, "orthodox" and "Lollard" (translating the Bible, translation as Babel reversed, etc.); Latin/French/English relationships and transactions (and Chaucer's place in them); the idea of translatio studii as it shapes 14c. English textual production; Chaucer's appropriations from antecedent texts, Latin and vernacular; the politics of "translating" Chaucer into the fifteenth century. R. W. Hanning, English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University, New York, New York 10027. FAX: (212) 854-5398. Note:

submissions to this panel should be blind. Members should include their names and addresses and phone numbers in an attached sealed envelope.

2. Polyphony and Polytextuality in Chaucer.

Papers on the relationship of Chaucer to late Ars Nova music, particularly those treating simultaneous production of sounds (i.e., polyphony) and words (i.e., polytextuality) and analogous artistic techniques in Chaucer's poetry, are invited. Send abstracts to Robert Boenig, English, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-4227. FAX: (409)

862-2292; e-mail: reb5335@venus.tamu.edu

3. Chaucer and Print Culture.

A session on the publishing, reading, criticism, and/or social and cultural uses of Chaucer in the early history of the printed book. Particularly welcome will be papers locating Chaucer in such broader issues as the development of English Humanism, shifts in the notions of authorial identity, the constructions of a canon of vernacular literature, the makings of gentry and bourgeois readerships, structures of patronage, the commercialization of the booktrade and the market status of English poetry, etc. Seth Lerer, English, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-2087. FAX: (415) 725-0755.

4. Genders. This session will explore the relationships between sex, gender, and sexuality in contemporary theory and/or medieval culture as they relate to Chaucer and Chaucer studies. Papers on feminist theory and practice and gender studies, gay and lesbian criticism/queer theory and gender studies, medieval masculinities, medieval medical definitions of gender and the history of sexuality, cultural studies/gender studies are also invited. Glenn Burger, English, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2E5. FAX: (403) 492-8142; e-mail:

gburger@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca.

5. Chaucer and Romance. Papers are invited which explore connections between the genre of romance and a variety of Chaucer's texts. Studies may concentrate, e.g., on issues of intertextuality, generic transformation, or broader questions of cultural contextualization (such as studies of manuscript anthologies which include Chaucerian 'romances'). Carol Meale, English, University of Bristol, 3-5 Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1TB, England. FAX: (0272) 288860.

6. Reading Dreams. An attempt to extend our understanding of the cultural context for Chaucer's representation of dreams. Peter Brown, Darwin College, University of Kent, Canterbury CT2 7NY, England. FAX: (0227) 475470; e-mail: P.Brown-2@ukc.ac.uk.

7. Chaucer in Stanzas. How does it matter to the reader of poetry when Chaucer frames his 'matere' in stanzas, as against couplets or prose? How does he make his stanza forms expressive? Any of his stanzaic poems may be considered in the light of these and similar questions. Howell Chickering, English, Amherst College, Amherst, MA 01002. FAX: (413) 542-2141; e-mail: hdchickering@amherst.edu

8. Hoccleve. Any aspect of

the life or work of one of Chaucer's earliest disciples and promoters. Abstracts or papers to Larry Scanlon, English, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08903-5054. FAX: (908) 932-1150; e-mail: scanlon@zodiac.rutgers.edu

9. Chaucer and Celtic Culture. Welsh and Irish court culture, politics, society, poetry--what we don't know about multiculturalism in the British Isles. Lynn Staley, English, Colgate University, Hamilton, NY 13346. FAX: (315) 824-7176; e-mail: lstaley@center.colgate.edu

10. Thirteenth-Century Approaches to Chaucer: Revaluations, Reclamations, Redirections. Papers in this session will try to win through the over-emphasis on Chaucer and Chaucer's "originality" in the study of Middle English in order to look closely at some of the texts and textual sensibilities that a long Chaucerian shadow has occluded. This session, as the pun of its title implies, will offer revaluations of Chaucer's writing in the light of thirteenth-century textual concerns as well as unexplored precedents for Chaucer in this earlier period. Christopher Cannon, English, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90024. FAX: (310) 206-5093; e-mail: ibenbql@mvs.oac.ucla.edu

11. Dissent. Papers are invited that (1) consider Chaucer's work in relation to

various contemporary forms of resistance to the powers that be in his world; (2) explore the appropriateness of the notion of "dissent" as a category of cultural analysis for late medieval England; (3) dissent from forms of orthodoxy currently holding sway in Chaucer studies, especially those concerned with passing political or moral judgment on Chaucer and/or on his critics. In an effort to achieve a balance among different points of view, the organizer hopes that papers that dissent from his own attitude toward these issues will be forthcoming. Lee Patterson, English, Yale University, New Haven, CT 06520. FAX: (203) 432-7066; e-mail: lee.patterson@yale.edu

12. Chaucer and Public Art. Chaucer is often discussed with manuscript illuminations, but not with more popular, decorative, and public art. This session invites papers on any form of public art (wall paintings, stained glass, roof bosses, rood screens, decorated rooms, painted signs, etc.), whether ecclesiastical or secular, English or Continental. Comparative work is especially encouraged. C. David Benson, English, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269-1025. FAX: (203) 486-1530.

13. Chaucer and Langland. Focus of session: to compare the discursive practices both in, and opened by, these two

corpora of contemporary poetry. Kinds of topics: representation of writing/reading; discursive/social boundaries; textual suppression; figuration of autobiography; deployment of contemporary drama, ceremonial; exploitation of Chaucer and Langland traditions in the fifteenth century. James Simpson, Girton College, Cambridge CB3 0JG, U.K. Tel: (0223) 338954; FAX: (0223) 338896.

14. Orality and Literacy in Chaucer. There seems to be general agreement among Chaucerians that Chaucer's art combines in a unique way elements of popular oral poetry and literary rhetoric. The exact nature and extent of these different traditions and their mutual interplay in Chaucer's work need further exploration, especially in the light of recent scholarship on oral poetry and the rhetoric of narrative. The way Chaucer makes use of the storyteller's role and his rapport with the audience also offers opportunities for further investigation. Dieter Mehl, Uckerather Straße 74, 53639 Königswinter, Germany. Tel: (02244) 1798; FAX: (02244) 82994.

15. Foundational Moments: England. Every age creates, within limits, its own image of Chaucer. The late nineteenth century saw a strong surge of Chaucer scholarship and criticism in England. That laid foundations which we

now need to judge from our own historical perspective. The work of Furnivall and the Chaucer Society, Skeat and his great edition, the wide critical sweep of W. P. Ker, are some of the high spots. A paper on Skeat has been commissioned. Two further contributions on the period from Furnivall to World War I are invited. Derek Brewer, Emmanuel College, Cambridge CB2 3AP, U.K. FAX: (0223) 241104.

16. Foundational Moments: Europe and America. A session to parallel "Foundational Moments: England," with attention to the contributions of Chaucerians in Europe, especially Germany, and the Americas, especially the schools of philologists following Child and ten Brink, and themselves often schooled in Germany. Kittredge, Koch, Root, Robinson, Lounsbury would be a few of the prominent names. Papers on individuals or on the larger trends of the period are welcome; a paper on Kittredge has been commissioned. Stephen Barney, English, University of California, Irvine, CA 92715. FAX: (714) 824-2916; e-mail: sbarney@uci.edu

17. The Virgin Mary. This session will explore the cultural power of images of the Virgin in the later Middle Ages. Papers should address the appearance of the Virgin in Chaucer's poetry, but should also address the wider cultural

and/or theoretical implications of those appearances. Comparative papers will be welcome. Topics might include the Virgin's body: its rites of passage, its beauty; the power of icons of the Virgin to construct religious subjectivity; her role in the justification of war or the preservation of peace; the question of her consent and its relation to more explicitly political notions of "freedom"; what she meant to different classes of society; her grief, and its relation to constructions of loss in the later Middle Ages; historical and locational changes in the scope and meaning of her powers. Louise Fradenburg, English, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106. FAX: (805) 893-4622; e-mail: lfraden@humanitas.ucsb.edu

18. Spectacle. The uses and implications of ceremony, pageantry, bodily display, tournament, and other public stagings in Chaucer's and related works. John Fyler, English, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155. FAX: (617) 627-3606; e-mail: jfyler@emerald.tufts.edu

19. Chivalry and Violence. Chivalry has traditionally been seen as a benevolent institution in the Middle Ages--channelling and containing the aggressive and violent tendencies of the medieval aristocracy--but recent historical work has revealed a darker side to this picture.

Papers are invited that address the question of the interdependence of chivalry and violence in Chaucer's poetry. Richard Firth Green, English, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada N6A 3K7. FAX: (519) 661-3640.

20. Chaucer and Money. The session will focus on Chaucer's interest in commercial values, ranging from the intricacies of credit, loans, and debt, to larger issues of markets and merchants, wealth and poverty, abundance and want. John Fyler, English, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155. FAX: (617) 627-3606; e-mail: jfyler@emerald.tufts.edu

21. 1396. This session invites papers concerned with the events of 600 years ago, and their relation to Chaucer's poetry. The most notable are the battle of Nicopolis, and the marriage of Richard II; but allowing for a certain approximation in dating, we would also welcome abstracts concerning such topics as the completion of Westminster Hall, the Wilton Diptych, and the Appellants. John Fyler, English, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155. FAX: (617) 627-3606; e-mail: jfyler@emerald.tufts.edu

22. Women of the Court: Female Patronage and Power in England 1327-1400. Who were the women in the courts of Edward III and Richard II

who offered patronage and/or exerted influence in social, cultural and political affairs? This session invites papers from literary critics and historians on such women and on the question of how their lives and influence provided a context in which to read late medieval English literature. Carolyn P. Collette, English, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, MA 01075. FAX: (413) 538-2138; e-mail: ccollett@mhc.mtholyoke.edu

23. Public Space/Private Space in Late Medieval Culture. How can we think about space as a source of social power in the late Middle Ages in England? How can it be theorized and historicized in relation to practices of festivity/ceremony and public life? How is the organization, domination and appropriation of space a central part of the transformations of material religious culture? Sarah Beckwith, English, CL 526, University of Pittsburgh, PA 15260. Tel. (412) 624-6506.

24. Open Submissions: Completed Papers. The Program Committee solicits completed papers on any Chaucerian topic, of no more than 12 pages in length. Our deadline, for this session alone, is September 1, to allow for the submission of finished work. John Fyler, English, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155. FAX: (617) 627-3606; e-mail: jfyler@emerald.tufts.edu

II. CONCURRENT COLLOQUIA

In order to allow for different kinds of sessions, more discussion, and wider participation, each afternoon of the 1996 Congress will feature 2-hour colloquia. Each colloquium will have a maximum of six participants and a presider; colloquia will vary somewhat in format depending on the topic. In most cases, the format would be that of a series of short position statements by the participants, followed by round table and general discussion. Organizers will strive to avoid converting colloquia into paper sessions. Where it is absolutely necessary to have formal speakers assigned in colloquia, they will be limited to a five-minute statement or position paper. The distribution of papers by panelists ahead of time to the members intending to attend these sessions, either by mail, electronic mail or packets available at the registration desk of the Congress, is encouraged. Common suggested reading lists, either for panelists, audience or both, are also encouraged.

Members wishing to participate as panelists should send proposals or descriptions of their research to organizers listed below.

1. Chaucer and the East.

Proposals for this session might address the ways in which writing in the age of Chaucer is influenced by or represents non-European culture. Presentations that take particular account of how increasing consciousness of "the East" helps to specify and support European or specifically English identities will be especially welcome. Thomas Hahn, English, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY 14627. FAX: (716) 442-5769; e - m a i l : THHN@dbl.cc.rochester.edu

2. Teaching the Ending of Troilus and Criseyde.

What are the critical issues in coming to terms with the last 100 or so lines of the Troilus? What do they tell us about Chaucer's understanding of his project in the poem? Of the stage he has reached in his poetic career? Of comedy and tragedy? Of his relation to literary tradition? Winthrop Wetherbee, English, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853. FAX: (607) 255-6661; e-mail: ww22@cornell.edu

3. Teaching Beyond Chaucer's Text: Modern Poetry, Images, Critical Essays, etc.

A discussion concerning how teachers of Chaucer use (or could use) contemporary poems, films/slides/art objects, selected scholarly essays, music medieval or modern, and/or other non-Chaucerian texts to illuminate Chaucer's own text and to engage

students in the ongoing conversation which Chaucer began in the late 1380s. D. Thomas Hanks, Jr., P.O. Box 97421, Baylor University, Waco, TX 76798-7421. FAX: (817) 755-1321; e-mail: Tom_Hanks@Baylor.edu

4. Teaching Chaucer in Non-English-Speaking Countries.

The aim of the colloquium is to encourage a wide participation of Chaucerians from Europe and the East in order to discuss the various issues concerning the teaching of Chaucer and of medieval literature in non-anglophone countries. Anna Torti, Via Giulia 49, 06038 Spello (Perugia), Italy. FAX: 0742-301486.

5. Teaching the Man of Law's Tale.

Each member of this colloquium will present a 5 to 10 minute discussion of his/her approach to teaching the "Man of Law's Tale." The panel will include as wide a variety of perspectives as possible. Topics might include "The Man of Law's Tale as a Religious Tale," "Gender Issues in the MLT," "Race in the MLT," "Law and the MLT," "What is the Genre of the MLT," etc. Each participant will also provide a handout (e.g., a specialized bibliography, a class plan, a list of key passages) for discussion by the panel and the audience. Elizabeth Robertson, English, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309-0226. FAX: (303) 492-8904; e - m a i l : roberte@spot.colorado.edu

6. Manuscripts. Short reports on work in progress which relate to MSS of Chaucer's writings or to MSS which have some more general bearing on Chaucer's works. In the light of these reports, the ensuing discussion might then isolate or highlight areas (particular MSS, kinds of MSS, parts/aspects of MSS, or MS collections) where further research could be revealing. Julia Boffey, English, Queen Mary & Westfield College, University of London, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS, England. FAX: (0181) 980-6200; e-mail: j.boffey@qmw.ac.uk.

7. Chaucer and Cultural Studies.

Do modern versions of Cultural Studies provide new approaches to Chaucer's work? If so, can these be used to reformulate the way "Chaucerians" look at Chaucer, in terms of a CULTURE, and how we behave as a profession when we're doing it, or are we doomed to a half-life of pallid imitation and fashionable noises? David Lawton, English, University of Tasmania, GOP Box 252C, Hobart, Tasmania 7001, Australia. FAX: (002) 207631; e - m a i l : d.a.lawton@english.utas.edu.au.

8. Chaucerian Crossdressing and Crossgendering: Theories, Texts, Contexts.

Questions of crossdressing and/or gender blurring that bear upon Chaucer's writing and its late medieval social

environment. Papers that address these issues in relation to political considerations, queer theory, current trends in Chaucer scholarship, interpretation of specific texts, and the historiography of gender and sexuality are all invited. Linda Lomperis, Literature, Cowell College, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA 95064. FAX: (408) 459-4880; e - m a i l : linda_lomperis@macmail.uscs.edu

9. Chaucer and the Digital Revolution (or: From Print to Digitization): Roundtable on the digital revolution's intellectual, institutional, social, and pedagogical impacts on the study of Chaucer. How is the discipline being reshaped, for good or for ill? Conversely, what impacts on the profession at large may result from the early digitization of our field? Mary Wack, English, Avery Hall, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99163-5020. FAX: (509) 335-2582.

10. Workshop on Reading Chaucer Out Loud. This is a workshop devoted to the question of the reading of Chaucer out loud in class and with students. Those interested in being one of three "responding panelists" are urged to write the organizer, who will begin the colloquium by working 75 minutes with a group of students on matters of

pronunciation, prosody, and interpretation. The panelists (who will not be among "the students") will be invited to remark on pedagogical issues, both those connected to the workshop proceedings and those arising from their own experience and interests. General discussion will follow. Alan Gaylord, English, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH 03755. FAX: (603) 646-2159; e-mail: alan.t.gaylord@dartmouth.edu

III. SPECIAL GROUP SESSIONS

The Program Committee has set aside one hour on the first afternoon of the Congress for small group discussions of very narrowly defined, highly technical topics of Chaucerian scholarship. The organizer will be responsible for structuring and leading the discussion on the topic at issue; a few other participants might also be listed in the program. Members interested in organizing and leading small group discussions should contact John Fyler, English, Tufts University, Medford, MA 02155 as soon as possible. FAX: (617) 627-3606; e-mail: jfyler@emerald.tufts.edu

Congress Planning Committee:
John Fyler (Tufts University), Co-chair in charge of program planning; Edward Condren (University of California, Los Angeles), Co-chair in charge of local arrangements; Susan Crane (Rutgers University), Linda Georgianna (University of California,

Irvine), and R. F. Green (University of Western Ontario).

From the Secretary

It is with reluctance that I announce the retirement of Fred Porcheddu from the position of Secretary for Membership and Finance. Fred's tenure-track position at Denison University understandably demands his full attention. I am sure you will join me in wishing Fred all the best and in offering him hearty thanks for all his labors on behalf of the Society.

I am Bryan P. Davis, Fred's successor and a Ph.D candidate at Ohio State University specializing in medieval manuscript studies.

In order to facilitate the membership renewal process, I am asking members to return their forms by July 15, 1995. This change will insure that members receive SAC 17 as soon as it is published. Those who choose to pay their membership fees by credit card should remember to include the card's expiration date. This information is necessary in order that you card can be properly debited.

(Continued from page 1)
 minority protection to
 homosexual citizens. (This
 law was passed in the Fall of
 1992, after the offer to host
 the NCS was made by
 Boulder.) The Society's
 Trustees concurred with that
 majority preference and,
 following discussion of other
 offered sites, accepted
 UCLA's offer to host the 1996
 congress. The officers of the

Society wish it emphasized
 for the record that Elizabeth
 Robertson and her
 colleagues neither
 recommended that NCS
 overlook the Colorado law
 and meet in Boulder nor
 suggested that the
 membership be polled
 regarding it; only the
 Society's officers were
 responsible for the actions
 taken and opinions

expressed on this matter. The
 Colorado law, in the
 meantime, has been
 suspended, its status to be
 determined by the Supreme
 Court.

The Executive Director
 apologizes for not having
 clarified this matter before
 now.

Newsletter Submissions

The New Chaucer Society is now able to accept both computerized and traditional printed submissions to the *Chaucer Newsletter*. If computerized, the submission must be in ASCII text; it must be stored on diskettes using IBM-compatible or Macintosh-compatible diskette formats. Either five and one-quarter inch or three and one-half inch diskettes are accepted. Computerized submissions should be accompanied by a copy of the printed text. Please include with any submission your address (and E-mail address, if available), phone number, and fax number (if available).

The *Chaucer Newsletter*, distributed twice a year to members of the New Chaucer Society, is intended primarily as a vehicle for Society business. Its ephemeral nature makes it unsuitable for substantial articles, but we are happy to publish discussions of research in progress and other activities of interest to Chaucerians. The deadline for the Autumn issue is September 1st; for the Spring issue, January 1st. Send materials to Christian Zacher, Editor, or Bryan P. Davis, Secretary for Membership and Finance, at the address given below. You may reach the NCS office by phone (614) 292-2061, by fax (614) 292-1599, or by e-mail bdavis@magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu.

The New Chaucer Society

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