



THE NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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newchaucersociety.org

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear member

Get the best rate: the London Congress

In just under two months' time, many of you will be attending the 20th Biennial Congress of the Society, which will be held at Queen Mary University of London (QMUL). You will find some information about the Congress from the Chairs of the Local Organizing Committee below this letter. Note that the Registration deadline is **June 15**. That's just three weeks away. After that date, the cost rises slightly. So be sure to register now, to get the best rate. When you register, please consider attending the banquet on Thursday 14 July. I am aware that it is not inexpensive and that some people will not be able to stretch to it. But if you can afford to splurge, please do. It's a great way to end the Congress. It follows the final reception and the Biennial Lecture by Stephanie Trigg, which will be held in the same venue as the banquet, The Brewery, 52 Chiswell Street, London, EC1Y 4SD. For those that wish

to attend the Congress Banquet only (and not to register for the Congress), they may register via [this link](#), at the cost of £106.69, which includes a processing fee; this ticket admits you to a drinks reception with canapes, Stephanie Trigg's biennial Chaucer lecture, and a full multi-course seated dinner with drinks. This represents good value for London.

Welcomed and supported: the new NCS Mentoring Scheme

NCS is working hard to provide more support for graduate students and newly appointed faculty and to make everyone feel included in the Society's events. An important new feature of the 2016 London Congress is the mentoring scheme, developed by Trustee and next President Ardis Butterfield and Trustee Tom Hahn. The scheme is open to all graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and newly appointed faculty that will be attending the London Congress. The announcement is on the website, and you have all recently received an email inviting you to sign up on an online form.



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The scheme is designed to help graduate students and anyone new to the Society to meet more established scholars in order to feel welcomed and supported during the congress, and also to make or develop professional contacts.

For further information or questions, please feel free to write to: Ardis Butterfield (ardis.butterfield@yale.edu) or Tom Hahn (thomas.hahn@rochester.edu).

Anyone, at any stage of their career, is welcome to participate in the scheme.

Suitable teddy bear icon: Childcare at the Congress

There will be a parent and child room available at the Congress. Trustee Alex Gillespie has set up a group on Facebook to provide information about childcare options in London, and opportunities for attendees to make cost-share arrangements. Please visit the page and join: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/623717291100451/>.

See you in London: the 2016 Donald Howard Travel Scholarships

Another of the ways in which NCS supports our members is the awards we make during Congress years from the [Donald Howard Scholarship Fund](#) to graduate students and newly-minted PhDs to offset the costs of attending the biennial Congress. This year NCS distributed just under \$25,000, a sum equal to 5% of endowment, to 55 awardees. Congratulations to this year's winners of the Donald Howard Travel Scholarships. We look forward to seeing you in London. The winners are:

Anya ADAIR (Yale), Abby ANG (Indiana), Justin BARKER (Purdue), Jenny BOYAR (Rochester), Paul A. BROYLES (University of Virginia), Matthew BRUMIT (University of Dallas), Amber Dove CLARK (University of Texas at Austin), Sheila COURSEY (University of Michigan), Taylor COWDERY (Harvard), Emilie COX (Indiana), Timothy COX (Arizona State University), Annika CUNNINGHAM (University of Michigan), Helen CUSHMAN (Harvard), Clare

DAVIDSON (University of Western Australia), Mimi ENSLEY (Notre Dame), Jason ESCANDELL (University of Texas at Austin), Maia FARRAR (University of Michigan), Jonathan FORBES (UCSB), Sara FREDMAN (Washington University, St Louis), Jonathan FRUOCO (Grenoble), Jessica HENDERSON (Toronto), Zachary HINES (University of Texas at Austin), Shay HOPKINS (UCSB), Gina Marie HURLEY (Yale), Heather Herrick JENNINGS (UC Davis), Ann KILLIAN (Yale), Leah KLEMENT (Princeton), Rachel LEVINSON-EMLEY (UCSB), Jessica LOCKHART (Toronto), Ruen-chuan MA (Columbia), Michael MANDRINKIAN (Oxford), Sam McMILLAN (Pennsylvania State University), Elizabeth MELICK (Kent State University), Sarah Kate MOORE (University of Washington), Amy MORGAN (Surrey), Oya Bayılmış ÖĞÜTÇÜ (Hacettepe University), Ashley OTT (SLU), Joy PARTRIDGE (CUNY Graduate Center), Laura PEREIRA DOMINGUEZ (Santiago de Compostela), Sara PETROSILLO (UC Davis), Ingrid PIERCE (Purdue), Sharon RHODES (Rochester), Katherine RICHARDS (WVU), Andrew M. RICHMOND (Ohio State University), Dana RODERS (Purdue), Jennifer Leigh SAPIO (University of Texas at Austin), James SARGAN (Oxford), Sheri SMITH (Cardiff), Adam SPELLMIRE (Tufts), James STAPLES (NYU), Vaughn STEWART (UNC), Haylie SWENSON (George Washington University), Grace TIMPERLEY (Manchester), Amanda WETMORE (Toronto), Andrea WHITACRE (Indiana).

In addition, offers of awards went to Clio Doyle (Yale) and Chelsie Malyszek (Yale). Both, regretfully, had to decline them since they won't be able to attend the Congress. Congratulations to both on the awards; we will miss seeing you in London.

Two-way traffic: High School Teachers

Another way in which NCS has sought to be more inclusive is its program of outreach to high school teachers, spearheaded by Trustee Lynn Staley. The Committee is concerned that NCS widen the membership to include more high school teachers as active participants. While most of our members have traditionally been college teachers and graduate students, we are eager to include those who teach

Chaucer and medieval literature in high schools. Membership in NCS provides a unique opportunity for teachers at all levels to learn from one another, share best practices, and generally promote the study of Chaucer in our curricula and our classrooms. The Committee comprises Lynn Staley, Chair (lstaley@colgate.edu), Kara Crawford (crawfordk@bishops.com), Susanna Fein (sfein@kent.edu), John Fyler (John.Fyler@tufts.edu), John Longo (jlongo@css.org), David Raybin (draybin@eiu.edu), and Sarah Stanbury (sstanbur@holycross.edu). You are warmly encouraged to contact any member of the committee to find out how you can be part of this outreach.

In addition to a membership drive, NCS will hold a pre-conference day before the London Congress begins, on 10 July, 2016. This day will be devoted to high school teachers and teaching. It will provide an engaging forum where teachers can meet one another, meet other members of the NCS, and share teaching ideas and concerns. The day's program will include conversations with leading Chaucer scholars, in which the traffic will be two-way (established Chaucer scholars will learn from high school teachers, and vice versa), lunch, two afternoon roundtables, and a wine hour with the Trustees, sponsored by the NCS. After this first day, everyone will be part of the regular sessions and conversations of the NCS meeting, which includes many sessions devoted to teaching.

Future scholarship and the *querelle des femmes*: the NCS Postdoctoral Fellow for 2016-17

Another way in which NCS supports and encourages new scholars is through our Postdoctoral Fellowship. I announced in February that our second NCS Postdoctoral Fellow (2016-17) will be Dr Cynthia Rogers. Dr Rogers received her PhD in 2015 from Indiana University Bloomington. She was the Helen Ann Robbins Pre-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Rochester in 2012-13. Her project for the next academic year is to work on a monograph, *The Manuscript Context for Querelle des Femmes Poems in the Chaucerian Inheritance*. The project will analyze the interplay of texts in the Findern MS (CUL Ff.1.6), and

produce a transcription for a teaching edition of the manuscript. Findern gives us an unusually clear view of the interactive reading practices of late medieval and early Tudor readers, containing both texts by famous authors such as Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, Hoccleve, and Roos, and also original poetic responses written by the manuscript's gentry creators in response to love questions posed in those main texts. Broadening out from this comprehensive look at a single manuscript, in 2016-2017 Dr Rogers will be pursuing a connected research project in which she analyzes the late medieval and early Tudor reception of Middle English *querelle des femmes* (nature of women debate) poems, particularly those by Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, Hoccleve, and Roos. Taking Findern's treatment of *querelle* texts as a starting point, she will look at the larger context for these texts in other manuscripts. Cindy takes up her post at Saint Louis University on September 1.

I would like to thank warmly the other members of the Awards Committee for their work in reaching our decision: Susan Crane (NCS President), Sarah Stanbury (NCS Trustee), and Candace Barrington (NCS Trustee).

We wish all the best to our outgoing Fellow, Dr Holly James-Maddocks, who this month has taken up a prestigious three-year Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship at the University of Birmingham, where she will continue to work on the illuminators of fifteenth-century English poetry manuscripts. NCS hopes that our Postdoctoral Fellowship is providing Chaucer scholars with a new and significant opportunity to launch themselves into future scholarship and future careers.

Cautiously optimistic: the NCS Endowment

The Society's endowment stands at \$532,282.64, as of 5/23/2016. I am delighted to say that after a period of fluctuations, the market has recovered somewhat, and NCS is, as they say, cautiously optimistic. We rely on the endowment to produce a 5% surplus of \$25,000 each year, based on a principal of \$500,000, in order to fund the annual NCS Postdoctoral Fellow. I'd like to thank all our members who responded over the past 6 months to President Susan Crane's appeal

for the endowment. Please continue to donate. We are grateful for your generous support.

Next President and New Trustees

In Spring 2016, Society members elected a new President and four new Trustees, to replace President Susan Crane and Trustees Ardis Butterfield, Tom Hahn, Lynn Staley, and Sarah Stanbury when their terms of office end in 2016. The new appointees are:

Ardis Butterfield (President)
Anthony Bale (Trustee)
Simon Horobin (Trustee)
Patricia Ingham (Trustee)
Emily Steiner (Trustee)

Thank you to all the members that voted in the online ballot. Your participation is important to our processes of shared governance.

Obituary

NCS announces with deep regret the death in early May 2016 of Judith Bronfman, after a battle with cancer. Professor Bronfman had been a member of the New Chaucer Society since its founding, and attended almost all of our biennial congresses. The memorial service was held on Sunday, May 15 2016 at the Riverside Memorial Chapel, 180 West 76th Street, New York. Judith Bronfman earned her doctorate in English at New York University. She has taught at the School of Visual Arts and served as Director of Governmental and Community Affairs at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the City University of New York. An obituary by NCS member Valerie Krishna will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter and will be posted on the website.

What members do: 2016 NEH Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*

A four-week NEH Seminar on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* will be held this summer, 18 July to 13 August 2016, at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. The Seminar will be directed by Susanna Fein and David Raybin, with guest faculty Ardis Butterfield, Richard Firth Green, Robert Meyer-

Lee, and Stephen Fliegel (Curator of Medieval Art, Cleveland Museum of Art). Selected participants will receive a stipend from the NEH. For further details about the program, please consult the Seminar website: <http://www.kent.edu/english/neh-chaucer>.

Eagle propulsion

NCS's Facebook April Fool's Day post reached 3,168 people. The spoof announcement fooled one or two readers:

NASA announces that the Orion spacecraft that it is building for the first manned flight to Mars will be renamed Geoffrey, in honor of the narrator of Chaucer's poem *The House of Fame*, who was carried on an epic journey to the stars by an eagle. Paul Dulcarnoun, a spokesperson for NASA, said: "NASA put out a request on Twitter to rename the spacecraft. Geoffrey was the overwhelming choice. We were surprised at first, but we figured that it was super-appropriate. Most of the guys working on the project have read Chaucer at some point in their college career, and they were like 'Yeah, the father of English poetry boosted into space by eagle propulsion: what a hero! Great name!' So we went with it. At the very least it will remind everyone who's following the exciting story of putting humans on Mars of a little bit of literary history. At NASA we like to do that – we're not all about STEM." <http://www.nasa.gov/.../nasas-spaceport-of-the-future-reaches...>

I wish all our members around the world a pleasant winter or summer, and I look forward to welcoming many of you at the London Congress in July.

Ruth

NEW MEMBERS NEEDED FOR NCS FINANCE COMMITTEE

Financial decisions for NCS, such as investments, annual budgets, dues, and publication contracts, are made by the Executive Director in consultation with the four-member Finance Committee. Two new terms on the committee will begin in July 2016, replacing current members Ardis Butterfield and Simon Horobin. The committee's charge is detailed in the Constitution, Article XII, <http://newchaucersociety.org/pages/entry/constitution>. Please send nominations and self-nominations to the current President, Susan Crane, at susan.crane@columbia.edu.



THE 20th BIENNIAL CONGRESS OF THE NEW CHAUCER SOCIETY

LONDON 2016

JULY 10th-15th

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JUNE 15, 2016

For details and registration visit

<http://newchaucersociety.org/pages/entry/2016-congress>

The biennial NCS Congress is approaching and this year it will be held on the leafy and beautiful campus of Queen Mary, University of London, located at Mile End (site of Richard II's meeting with the rebels of 1381). QMUL is easily accessible to central London via tube (Central Line) and bus. There are plenty of rooms with en-suites in the on-campus dorms. The conference kicks off with the plenary session "Did Shakespeare Live in Chaucer's London?" and features four full days of paper sessions, round tables, a poster session, a book exhibit, and fabulous receptions. Evening events include a reading by the poet Lavinia Greenlaw, whose most recent book is *A Double Sorrow: Troilus and Criseyde* (12 July; followed by reception); a performance by Poculi Ludique Societas of *The Pride of Life* (13 July); an appearance at the Global Chaucers meeting by Patience Agbabi, author of *Telling Tales* (13 July, after *The Pride of Life*); and an Evening of Medieval Music by Opus Anglicanum (13 July, also after *The Pride of Life*; be sure to book tickets for this event). An afternoon is set aside for excursions: there is still space on the visits to Eltham Palace, the Westminster Palace Library and Muniments, St Paul's Cathedral Library, and to the Barber Surgeons' Hall. The site of the final reception and Biennial Chaucer Lecture by Stephanie Trigg will be The Brewery, near the Barbican, a beautifully restored eighteenth-century brewery; this will be followed by a fabulous multi-course banquet in the stunning reception rooms at the Brewery. A trip to Canterbury on the Friday after the conference caps off the week. Please register before 16 June 2016; this will help in the planning in the Congress and a late registration fee applies after this date. We're looking forward to welcoming you to our wonderful city, the very city in which Chaucer lived, ate, drank, worked, and wrote.

REPORT ON THE 2014 NCS SURVEY

On April 23, 2014, I invited all members of the New Chaucer Society to participate in a survey of the Society. The email invitation read:

“I am undertaking this survey for the purposes of my own research, as part of a project that considers ‘The Two Chaucer Societies.’ Although NCS has allowed me to use its membership list for contact purposes, the Society is not sponsoring this research nor is it responsible for the content or the administration of the survey.”

At the 2014 NCS meeting in Reykjavik, I presented a fuller paper on “The Two Chaucer Societies,” but this report focuses solely on the responses to the survey and will briefly summarize each section as well as include some representative comments. The survey, with 27 questions and space for comments, was sent to the full membership of approximately 1,200. The 411 responses are a higher than average return for email surveys and would seem to indicate members’ commitment to NCS and their wish to make their views known.

(Note: numbers and percentages below refer to responses to each specific question. Since not everyone answered every question, some totals are less than 411. Also, for some questions, more than one answer was allowed, so the total may be more than 100%.)

Questions 1-3 asked when members first joined NCS and how long they had been members. Of the 407 who answered this question, 16 (3.93%) joined in the founding year, 1977, and 51 (12.53%) in the first five years (through 1982). In contrast, 32 (9.2%) were in their first year of membership, and a solid half (185 or 53.17%) for 1-10 years. Of the remainder, 81 (23.27%) have been members for 11-20 years, and 42 (12.07%) for 21-30 years.

Questions 4-8 asked about the reasons for joining and remaining a member of NCS. Respondents said the following were “very” or “somewhat important”:

- “to hear others’ new work” (383 or 99.74%);
- “to network with other Chaucerians” (361 or 94.5%);
- “to present new work” (337 or 90.11%);
- and “to travel to locations relevant to Chaucer” (156 or 44.57%).

Forty respondents also cited other reasons, including to “receive *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*,” “in order to attend the Congress,” and “transatlantic contact.” Most respondents (356 or 91.75%) said their expectations for joining NCS had “been met” or “exceeded.” The 32 (8.25%) who said their expectations had “not been met” listed a variety of reasons, including costs, venues, programming, conference atmosphere, etc. (Some specific responses appear at the end of this report.)

Questions 9-11 asked about membership in other academic organizations. Most respondents (342 or 89.06%) named the Medieval Academy of America, the International Arthurian Society, the Medieval Association of the Midwest, the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship, and others, noting that the medieval focus of these organizations was the most important factor in their memberships.

For me, questions 12-15 were the heart of the survey, as I wanted to understand what members knew and felt about both the “old” Chaucer Society (CS) and the new. Question 12 thus quoted the official NCS 2013-14 statement – “The purpose of the New Chaucer Society is to provide a forum for teachers and scholars of Geoffrey Chaucer and his age.” – and asked whether this was “an accurate description of the goals” of the current Society. Of those responding, 225 (61.14%) thought this statement was “very accurate,” while 140 (38.94%) thought it was “somewhat accurate.” Most of the 100 who commented in this section indicated that the statement was fine in general, but others felt that because pedagogy has been neglected it wasn’t accurate to put “teachers” in primary place. Some decried the lack of emphasis on Chaucer, while others wanted to promote the study of Chaucer specifically. Some questioned the usefulness of having Chaucer “define” an “age,” while still others wondered what was meant by “a forum.” Nonetheless, of the 355 who answered the next question (13), more than four fifths (297 or 83.66%) would not “suggest modifying” this statement.

When presented in question 14 with the goals of the original Chaucer Society founded by F.J. Furnivall in 1868 – “to do honor to Chaucer and let lovers and students of him see how far the best unprinted

manuscripts of his works differed from printed texts” – 210 (58.5%) agreed that the goals of today’s New Chaucer Society differ markedly. “Perspectives on Chaucer” was the difference identified most often (231 or 71.08%), followed closely by “assumptions about editing” (227 or 69.85%); 127 (39.98%) also cited “membership.” When asked if the goals of the original society were also implicit in those of the current society, 210 (58.5%) said, “No.” The 181 comments included some surprise that there had been an earlier Chaucer Society. Opinions varied widely as to whether the earlier emphasis on editing had been more recently neglected or re-vitalized or had become irrelevant today. Some preferred the “scholarship” of NCS to the “worship” implicit in the CS statement; others lauded what they saw as the earlier “public spirited . . . approach.” For some, “professionalization” trumped “honouring and loving,” while for others “honor” (variously defined) was still at the heart of the enterprise.

Questions 16-18 asked about members’ employment. Fully half of the 355 respondents (178 or 50.14%) said they were “tenured professor[s]”; 29 (8.17%) were on the “tenure track”; 13 (3.66%) were “permanent non-tenured faculty”; and 18 (5.97%) were “contingent/part-time faculty with terminal degree[s].” Fifty-two (14.65%) said they were graduate students; 43 (12.11%) were retired; eight (2.25%) identified as independent scholars; and four (1.13%) primarily as administrators. Among the 18 (5.07%) who checked “other,” some wrote “lecturer (permanent, British system),” “librarian,” “secondary school teacher,” “permanent faculty in system without tenure,” and “postdoc research assistant.” Two thirds (221 or 66.17%) of 334 respondents worked at research universities; another quarter (92 or 26.74%) at colleges granting the M.A. or B.A.; and seven (2.1%) at two-year institutions. Most were employed in the U.S., followed by the U.K. and other Anglophone countries; France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and Turkey were among countries mentioned at least once.

Teaching Chaucer was the focus of questions 19-23. While more than half (217 or 61.39% of 354 respondents) taught Chaucer “regularly,” some (51 or 14.41%) did not at all. Almost two thirds (186 or 61.38%) said they usually taught Chaucer at least

once a year, but 121 (39.93%) usually did so either every two years or irregularly. Comments by the last group ranged from “unfortunately, no longer required by my dept.” to “I teach Chaucer every year as part of a survey [and] a Chaucer course irregularly.” Retirees noted their past experiences as well. Of the 305 who answered question 21, almost all said they taught Chaucer at the undergraduate level (281 or 92.13%), half (152 or 49.84%) said M.A., and less than one third (97 or 31.8%) doctoral. Almost half (149 or 49.01%) said they taught Chaucer in an entire semester or term course on the *Canterbury Tales*; somewhat fewer (132 or 43.42%) said in a mixed Chaucer course (some *Canterbury Tales*); one quarter (76 or 25%) said in a completely non-*Canterbury Tales* course; and more than three quarters of the respondents (238 or 78.29%) said within a survey such as British or Medieval Literature. Of the 102 who said they did “not teach Chaucer” at all, 37 (43.53%) had “no opportunity” to do so; four (4.71%) had no wish to do so; 28 (32.94%) said they taught “other medieval literature instead.”

Questions 24-26 asked about members’ “primary scholarly identity.” Eighty (23.05%) identified primarily as Chaucerians; preferences among the remaining four fifths (281 or 80.98%) included: “medievalist,” “premodern scholar,” “medieval historian,” “Langlandian,” “German philologist,” “rhetorician,” “historical theologian,” “Hispanist,” “literary critic,” “codicologist,” “digital medievalist,” and “comparatist.” In addition, some identified themselves through their primary fields of interest, such as “romance,” “crusading literature,” “Middle English and Anglo-Norman,” “gender and queer studies,” “classical tradition,” “med/ren poetics,” “Julian of Norwich,” “Bible and Medieval English Lit,” “linguistics and media,” “book history,” “hagiography,” “Ricardian poetry/Occitan,” “medieval drama,” “medieval devotional culture,” “Boccaccio,” “Old Norse/Old English,” “medieval Latin and vernacular poetry,” “Lollard Studies,” and more. Of the 93 who responded about the importance of NCS to their identities as Chaucerians, half (47 or 50.54%) said NCS was “very important.” About the importance of NCS to their identities as scholars, more than half of 353 respondents (212 or 60.06%) stated that NCS was “somewhat important,” while almost one quarter (87 or 24.65%) said it was “very important.”

The final question (27) asked for members' thoughts about the mission of the New Chaucer Society and recommendations for change. The 131 responses ranged widely, as can be seen below.

Some focused on the conferences:

- “Seems to me the conferences have a real interest in transnational perspectives on Chaucer.”
- “I love being part of the New Chaucer Society, but wish its capacity was big enough to embrace all willing participants.”
- “NCS is key as main venue for finding out about development and what’s new in Middle English studies; broader focus of past few congresses has been wonderful.”
- “Going to awesome locales is awesome, but for those of us with limited research support (not to mention families, etc.), it can be very difficult.” [many responses along these lines]
- “I actually dread and often avoid NCS conferences. They are cliquish and hierarchical.”
- “While I think NCS is a very useful forum, I don’t find it an especially welcome one. It is rather US dominated and hierarchical and the thematic focuses of sessions often doesn’t appeal to me.”
- “I’ve noticed that liberal arts college faculty and faculty at branch state university campuses are not present in appreciable numbers. If we want teacher-scholars to truly be part of NCS the conference needs to make more of an effort to enable (and welcome) their participation.”
- “The NCS conference is one of the best I go to. Unlike some other conferences ... people seemed to respect everyone, rather than looking over one’s should for someone more important to talk to.... I think it is crucial that this collegiality remain.”
- “I wish there were a meeting not during the summer on a periodic basis [like the branch meetings of other organizations].”
- “Please get onto a three year cycle so as not to clash so often with other conferences.”
- “Because we meet every two years, ... it would be great if there were some mechanism that would allow us to respond a bit more quickly to pressures on medieval studies, English departments, colleges and universities.”
- “Holding congresses in ... perhaps Australia/New Zealand, or Japan, in the future.”
- “The insistence on having graduate students on every panel has resulted in too many sessions and



London, British Library MS Harley 7334, fol. 185v. C. 1410. *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340–1400), including the Tale of Gamelyn.

sessions that aren’t reliably strong.”

- “My highest priorities for NCS are sustaining the excellence of SAC and facilitating congress participation for graduate students and junior faculty.”

Some spoke about the overall mission and focus of NCS:

- “Ultimately I feel a focus on Chaucer is limiting. ... [F]ocusing on one person does lend itself to canonizing tendencies.”
- “The NCS is doing well. It’s become more inclusive over the years.”
- “Pedagogy. We must make this a more important feature, with the aim of attracting high school teachers of Chaucer.”
- “There is a thinly veiled animosity in Chaucer studies against ‘newer’ modes of criticism and interpretation that aren’t even all the ‘new’! ... [M]ost of the queer scholarship on Chaucer is treated as if it comes from left field: belittled and ignored.”
- “I worry about ‘reforms’ that might splinter our

community – it’s good, I think, to maintain a strong and growing society.”

- “Continuing to reach out to grad students and younger scholars should remain high on the ‘to do’ list.”
- “I would like more emphasis on authors and topics beyond Chaucer itself, to make the society more inclusive to other medievalists.”
- “I wish there some way to integrate adjuncts and two-year schools into the NCS.”
- “This is a CHAUCER society, not a medieval society. There are very few extraordinary authors in any canon.”
- “Don’t lose the commitment to historical scholarship that was central to the original Chaucer Society.”
- “I hope that the Society respects the older scholarship while continuing to be open to the new.”
- “I’d like to see NCS continue its efforts to be a truly international organization by encouraging and supporting the scholarship of non-Anglophone scholars and teachers.”
- “I really think the society needs to refocus its attention on the texts.”
- “Just keep going as you do. It’s very much appreciated.”

Some responded to the survey itself:

- “NCS needs to maintain its very difficult balance between focus and insularity, and ensure that its officers stay in touch with its members. This survey is a very good step.”
- “Not sure what this survey is about, but I hope it won’t be an attack on the tenuous way in which our field holds a lot of people together.”
- “I wish our questionnaire had allowed for more nuanced replies (such as multiple answers, past tense for recent retiree’s teaching experiences, etc.)”

- “Get surveys developed by professionals.”
- “Thanks for taking the time to get perspectives and opinions of members.”

Members also made additional suggestions:

- “Take the journal online!”
- “Renew... mentoring system.”
- “If you want Chaucer to have name recognition and you want students to study his works, we had better start doing things like throwing *Canterbury Tales* readings in April, the way that the Folger Shakespeare Library throws huge birthday parties for William Shakespeare every April 23rd.”
- “There could be more effort to get teachers of Chaucer in dialogue with famous Chaucer scholars.”
- “NCS should think about an annual prize for the best essay written by a graduate student.”
- “Lobbying for [new jobs to replace retiring medievalists] is maybe something NCS can do.”

I want to thank the officers of the New Chaucer Society for allowing this survey, and I am grateful to everyone who responded, with particular appreciation for thoughts about “The Two Chaucer Societies.” I hope others will find it as interesting as I did to hear what colleagues were thinking, in such numbers and with such passion, even though this can only be an incomplete snapshot of NCS in the Spring of 2014. While I have refrained from drawing conclusions here, I nonetheless hope the results will be useful for our continual reconsideration of the aims, organization, and values of NCS. Those interested in knowing more about the survey responses should feel free to contact me directly.

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PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ginsberg, Warren. *Tellers, Tales, and Translation in Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales*. Oxford University Press, 2015. An electronic version is available at Oxford Scholarship Online:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199577774.001.0001>

Johnson, Neil. *Chaucer’s The Legend of Cleopatra*. Marius Press, 2016. NCS members are eligible for a discounted rate: email books@mariuspress.com with a return email address for details.

OTHER CONFERENCES AND CALLS

SEMA October 6-8, 2016: Place and Power

The Southeastern Medieval Association (SEMA) invites proposals for papers on the theme of “Place and Power” for its 55th meeting, October 6-8, 2016. The meeting is hosted by the Marco Institute for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and University of Tennessee Knoxville and will take place at the Downtown Hilton, Knoxville, Tennessee.

We invite individual submissions and panels from all disciplines exploring any aspect of medieval places and medieval powers as they were conceptualized, experienced, imagined, and embodied. We welcome papers considering, but not limited to:

- Places as spaces, territories, and/or boundaries
- Sacred and profane spaces
- Practices of power
- Geopolitics and the environment
- Gendered and sexualized power

As the conference date coincides with the 950th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings, we also seek sessions and papers pertaining to the Norman Conquest. We desire a variety of methodological approaches to the theme, including eco-criticism, landscape studies, gender studies, and environmental perspectives. Proposals on other medieval topics or relating “Place and Power” to teaching are also welcome. Several sessions will be devoted to undergraduate research so we encourage submissions from undergraduate students.

Please submit proposals for sessions and for individual papers at <http://goo.gl/forms/Xi6JTYSnjk> no later than **June 1, 2016**. For more information, see <https://southeasternmedieval.wordpress.com>.

MAMO III

The Middle Ages in the Modern wOrld

The third iteration of MAMO (Middle Ages in the Modern wOrld) will take place in Manchester between 28 June and 1 July, 2017, after successful conferences in St Andrews (2013) and Lincoln (2015).

We invite submission of proposals for panels, roundtables, and individual papers by **30 September 2016**. Panels can consist of three short papers (20 minutes) or four of fifteen minutes’ duration; roundtables should consist of no more than six speakers. Abstracts and proposals should not exceed 250 words and should be sent, as attachments in Word, to mamo.conference@manchester.ac.uk.

Further information – about keynote speakers and events surrounding the conference – will appear on the MAMO website: themamo.org.

For inquiries please contact the organisers: Anke Bernau, David Matthews, and James Paz, on the following address: mamo.conference@manchester.ac.uk.

The IV INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE JOHN GOWER SOCIETY



The Congress will take place on the campus of the University of Durham (UK), 9-15 July, 2017, in conjunction with the biennial meeting of the Early Book Society. The theme of the Congress for both Societies is “GOWER, HIS CONTEMPORARIES, AND THEIR LEGACY IN MSS AND EARLY PRINTED BOOKS, 1350-1550.”

Formal Call for Papers will be issued soon. Questions should be addressed to RF Yeager: rfyeager@hotmail.com or Martha Driver: marthadriver@hotmail.com.

CHAUCER AND THE LAW Biennial London Chaucer Conference 30 June – 1 July 2017

Institute of English Studies, Senate House, University of London

Keynote addresses by Professor Sebastian Sobekki (University of Groningen) and Professor Emily Steiner (University of Pennsylvania).

Proposals are invited for 20-minute papers on topics related to fourteenth- and fifteenth-century literature, culture and law for the 2017 Biennial London Chaucer Conference. This two-day conference aims to consider ideas about the law in the age of Chaucer and in relation to the works of Chaucer and his contemporaries, probing questions about legal practices and culture, justice, regulation and instruction, and the consequences of making and breaking laws.

Interdisciplinary topics and approaches are most welcome. The conference hopes to bring together scholars and postgraduate students working in a range of disciplines and departments.

Topics may include (but are not limited to):

- Canon Law
- Common Law
- crime and punishment
- outlaws
- legal bureaucracy and scribal culture
- laws of nature
- laws of love
- gender, sexuality and the law
- literary ‘laws’ (genre, decorum, metre)
- rules for living/religious rules
- the Old Law and the New Law
- divine justice
- Chaucer as Justice of the Peace
- the Man of Law and the Manciple
- cross-cultural encounters and the law
- breaking laws
- evidence, authority and proof
- eyewitness testimony
- languages of the law
- iconographies of the law

Please send proposals of 250 words to Alastair Bennett, Natalie Jones and Jaclyn Rajsic at londonchaucer@outlook.com by **30 September 2016**.

Digital Editing and the Medieval Manuscript Roll/Fragment
Yale University, 18-19 November 2016

These graduate workshops cover topics in the paleography of manuscript rolls and fragments, manuscript transcription and scholarly editing, XML, text encoding and the TEI schema. No prior paleography or encoding experience is required of participants, who learn the fundamentals of digital editing while tackling the challenges posed by manuscript rolls or fragments. Practical training sessions inform collective editorial decision-making: participants will undertake the work of transcription and commentary, and tag (according to TEI P5) the text and images of non-codex manuscript documents. Each workshop results in collaborative editions of the documents studied. The workshops are free of charge.

The call for participants in the Yale November workshops (which offer two strands: “Rolls” and “Fragments”) will be posted on the workshop website (<http://digitalrollsandfragments.com/workshops/>) on 1 May. Organizers are also planning a workshop at University College London, to run in summer/autumn 2016; this call will also be posted on the website. For more information, please email organizer Anya Adair at digitalmanuscriptrolls@gmail.com.

OTHER NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPECIAL EVENT

Medieval Emotions & Contemporary Methodologies: a research workshop

BIRKBECK, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

FRIDAY, JULY 8th, 2016

The recent turn to the history of emotions in the arts and humanities has generated a great deal of exciting new scholarship. But what are the methodological and scholarly challenges of working on this material? Does the ‘history of emotions’ have a methodology? How far does an account of medieval emotions depart from other scholarly modes of investigation? Which theoretical tools do we bring to bear on medieval emotions, and which have we tended to neglect?

Such questions inform this research workshop, to be held at Birkbeck, University of London on 8th July 2016. In this workshop we aim to facilitate open discussions, in response to a series of short presentations, about the scholarly challenges of working on medieval emotions. Admission is free but contributors must register in advance at this site. Refreshments and a light lunch will be provided.

This workshop is a collaboration between the School of Arts at Birkbeck and the Australian Research Councils Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions.

Confirmed contributors: Anke Bernau (Manchester), Rita Copeland (Pennsylvania), Stephanie Downes (Melbourne), Bruce Holsinger (Virginia), Ella Kilgallon (Queen Mary), Rebecca Fields McNamara (Sydney)

For registration, please visit

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/medieval-emotions-contemporary-methodologies-a-research-workshop-tickets-20415324786>

The New Chaucer Society

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