Vagantes

TENTH ANNUAL VAGANTES
**MEDIEVAL GRADUATE
STUDENT CONFERENCE**

University of Pittsburgh
March 3–5, 2011

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, MARCH 3

1:30–2:30pm	Registration, Room 501, Cathedral of Learning*
2:30–2:40	Welcome remarks, Julia Finch, University of Pittsburgh
2:40–4:00	**Session I: Performance and Ritual**
4:00–4:20	Coffee break
4:20–4:30	Keynote introduction, Jennifer Waldron, Director, Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program, University of Pittsburgh
4:30–5:30	"Salvation, Sex, and Subjectivity," Dr. Bruce Venarde, Professor of History, University of Pittsburgh
5:30–6:30	Keynote reception

FRIDAY, MARCH 4

9:00–9:30am	Registration and coffee (Room 501)
9:40–11:00	**Session II: Reception, Memory and Identity**
11:00–11:20	Coffee break
11:20–12:40pm	**Session III: Knowing Women: Gender and Identity**
12:40–2:20	Lunch
2:30–3:50	**Session IV: Borderlands, Landscapes and Journeys**
3:50–4:10	Coffee break
4:10–5:30	**Session V: Seeing the Other**

* all conference events will take place in Cathedral of Learning, Room 501, unless otherwise noted

SATURDAY, MARCH 5

9:00–9:30am	Registration and coffee (Room 501)
9:40–11:00	**Session VI: Medieval Masculinities**
11:00–11:20	Coffee break
11:20–12:40pm	**Session VII: Medieval Words, Spoken and Written**
12:40–2:20	General meeting with provided lunch (Board of directors meeting to follow)
2:30–3:50	**Session VIII: Spaces Real and Imagined**
3:50–4:10	Coffee break
4:10–4:20	Keynote introduction, Kerilyn Harkaway-Krieger, Indiana University
4:20–5:20	"Medieval Texts and Postmodern Readers: Reading the Middle Ages in 2011," Dr. Rosemarie McGerr, Professor of Comparative Literature and Chair of Medieval Studies, Indiana University
5:20–5:30	Conference closing remarks, Julia Finch, and Diane Fruchtman, Indiana University
5:30–6:30	Keynote reception
6:45–9:00	Dinner reception for conference presenters and participants, Frick Fine Arts Cloister

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**Bruce Venarde, Department of History, University of Pittsburgh
"Salvation, Sex, and Subjectivity"**

After a review of some scholarly perspectives on sexuality and identity, this paper will examine the religious and sexual concerns of three male clerics in Western France, ca. 1100: the errant evangelist and monastic founder Robert of Arbrissel and the writer-bishops Marbode of Rennes and Baudri of Dol.

Professor Venarde earned his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He is currently Professor of History, Classics, and History of Art & Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh. His recent book publications include an edition and translation of *The Rule of St. Benedict* (forthcoming, May 2011), *Two Women of the Great Schism: The Revelations of Constance of Rabastens by Raymond de Sabanac and Life of the Blessed Ursulina of Parma by Simone Zanacchi* (with Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, 2010), and *Les deux vies de Robert d'Arbrissel: Légendes, écrits et témoinages/The Two Lives of Robert of Arbrissel: Legends, Writings, and Testimonies*, a trilingual collaboration with five French scholars (2006). Other current projects include "Sickness and Health in Western Europe, 500-1100," a study of health care in the Middle Ages through social and cultural practices concerning illness and wellbeing.

**Rosemarie McGerr, Department of Comparative Literature and Chair of the Medieval Studies Institute, Indiana University
"Medieval Texts and Postmodern Readers:
Reading the Middle Ages in 2011"**

Recent developments in technology and critical theory do not necessarily replace more traditional "tools" in Medieval Studies, but offer a wider range of options for achieving our goals in teaching and research. Many of the newer tools enhance our ability to work with the most basic research materials that survive from this period and reveal the need for us to ask new questions about them. Professor McGerr's presentation explores some of the ways in which older and newer "tools" can work together profitably across the fields that contribute to Medieval Studies in 2011.

Professor McGerr is Chair of the Medieval Studies Program and Professor of Comparative Literature at Indiana University. Her scholarly interests include texts that cross boundaries of various sorts – translations, illustrated texts, and scholarly texts that have been adapted for new audiences. Her book publications include *Chaucer's Open Books:*

Resistance to Closure in Medieval Discourse (1998), and *The Pilgrimage of the Soul: A Critical Edition of the Middle English Dream Vision, Vol. I*, for Garland Medieval Texts (1990). She is currently at work on the second volume. Other current projects include *Reading the Laws of the Land: Discourses of Kingship, Grace, and Justice in a Fifteenth-Century Manuscript of the Statutes of England*, a legal manuscript which uses illustrations to present information about kingship and justice to an audience of men and women in the English royal court.

SESSION I: PERFORMANCE AND RITUAL
Chair: Marco Dozzi, University of Pittsburgh

The "Clothes of Righteousness" as a Move toward Outwardness in the Medieval Period
Trevor Babcock, Indiana University

In her book *Performance of Self*, Susan Crane makes the compelling case that secular medieval subjects ascribe to what Charles Taylor defines as the "honor ethic." Or in her own words, "Secular elites understand themselves to be constantly on display, subject to the judgment of others, and continually reinvented in performance." Such a view, Crane argues, "rejects the broadly modern dichotomy between an inner self that preexists social interaction, and a subsequent outer self that conceals a more inner nature."

I will contend that Crane's theory finds startlingly strong purchase in the medieval sacred, where one might expect to find an emphasis upon inwardness. To achieve this I will examine the biblical trope of "the clothes of righteousness" as interpreted by late medieval English poetry, specifically as presented in short passages from *Cleanness*, the *Clerk's Tale*, and *Piers Plowman*. These scenes in which clothing is foregrounded vary on axes of both literal/allegorical and sacred/secular, though not unproblematically. I have chosen them in order to explore the question of sacred medieval interiority as against a secular backdrop.

Though there is, of course, a core interiority to Christianity (e.g. divisions of spirit/flesh), the idea of being clothed in righteousness is so shocking in these texts because it would seem medieval Christianity posits a preexisting inner self in relation to an outward self of appearances and performance, then emphasizes the outer, seemingly contingent self. But, for the medieval Christian, the performance *is not her own*. Like a courtesan decked beyond her rank, the Christian takes on the robes of righteousness which act as a sign of a self they, the clothes, create. God's own righteousness sustains an exteriority "con-

stantly on display, subject to the judgment of others" that the Christian's performance cannot.

The Performance of Separation at Escomb Church
Ashley Lonsdale Cook, University of Wisconsin

Escomb Church is one of the few surviving stone examples of Christian architecture from seventh-century Anglo-Saxon Northumbria, present day Northern England and Southwestern Scotland. At Escomb, a Roman arch separates the apse from the nave both visually and physically. In recent scholarship, medieval art historians have studied spatial boundaries within churches such as curtains, screens and portals to discuss how physical separation within a church constructs the worshiper's experience of sacred space. This paper examines *On The Tabernacle* by Bede, a seventh-century Anglo-Saxon monk and theologian. Bede's treatise on the construction of the Old Testament tabernacle for the Ark of the Covenant allegorically relates the physical structure of a sanctuary to the pious behavior of contemporary seventh-century Christians. Bede's treatise mentions specific colors, materials, and measurements as symbols of theological and eschatological concepts within contemporary Anglo-Saxon Christianity. This paper posits the existence of a sanctuary curtain in Escomb Church and argues that curtains create a performative space where Anglo-Saxon spirituality is physically enacted.

"Though he bere hem no breed": Allegory, Altruism, and the Problem of Poverty in Langland's England
Ben Utter, University of Minnesota

Rampant poverty in fourteenth century England compelled writers such as Langland to grapple with the inescapably visible problem of wealth disparity through the use of allegory, in imagined debates between personified figures such as "Hunger," "Poverty," "Covetousness," and "Greed." During this same period, England was witness to an odd sort of ritualized altruism, as public officials acknowledged the plight of the poor in material, if not terribly practical ways: the ancient near-Eastern ritual of *pedilavium*, or foot-washing, was revived, the mayor or other town noble symbolically ministering to the local poor by washing the feet of a beggar on Holy Thursday. Moreover, it was common on feast days to invite twelve beggars to the banquet—leaving the rest of the hungry, presumably, to make do with the leavings on the alms plate. Thus, response to social inequality in late medieval England took the form of a curious simultaneity of symbolic maneuvers, the use of symbols as literary subjects coinciding with the popular use of subjects as symbols.

What correlation, if any, existed between the use of allegorical figures to stand in for the abstract problem of poverty, and the use of individual beggars to stand in for the entire community of the needy? This paper will attempt to theorize the relationship between the writing that took place in an allegorical mode, and the apparent willingness to discharge the Christian obligation to the poor through symbolic gestures. An examination of allegory in light of sacramental theological assumptions suggests that both of these apparently contradictory responses have their origin in and were facilitated by contemporary religious practice and widely-held beliefs concerning the nature of the incarnation and the Atonement for sin. It may suggest, moreover, that the nature of medieval allegory itself partakes in the same sacramental imagination that permitted the perhaps too-literal interpretation of Christ's injunction that "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

SESSION II: RECEPTION, MEMORY AND IDENTITY
Chair: Julia Finch, University of Pittsburgh

The Sign of Christ, the Sign of Salvation: an Exalted Cross in a Late Medieval Armenian Gospel Book
Orsolya Mednyánszky, Tufts University

A late medieval Armenian folio with the special iconography of the Exalted Cross is hiding in the Armenian Library and Museum of America in Watertown, MA. Having been neglected by scholarship, the folio will be closely examined in this paper for the first time. After the short discussion of the basic technical, attributional and iconographical questions, the main emphasis of my investigation is to detect the possible functions of the special imagery as a part of a Gospel Book.

The first and foremost question posed by the Watertown Cross is how such a static and abstract depiction became part of the narrative prefatory cycle of fifteenth-century Armenian Gospel Books. I will propose that the folio fulfilled manifold apotropaic and devotional functions, making the manuscript appropriate for personal use of a monk. To anchor my investigation about the function, I will consider the inscriptions of the folio as the point of departure.

I will conclude that the Exalted Cross of Watertown must have had an additional essential purpose: to reinforce the monophysite faith of the viewer, the carrier of Armenian identity. The Cross of Watertown is

a very Armenian representation, as it depicts Christ in a monophysite way: his two natures are intended to be portrayed as a whole. The Exalted Cross is thus the concise credo of Armenian faith.

The Mark of the Beast: Revisioning the Medieval Bestiary in the Twentieth Century
Raina Polivka, Indiana University

In the turbulence of the Middle Ages, Europeans turned to the seemingly reliable and sensible natural world to find meaning for the scary and transient state of human existence. Observing nature allowed medieval society to apply the moral lessons of the Bible to the corporeal realm of animals and plants in order to provide spiritual guidance in their daily lives. While later societies would define themselves against the natural world, considering it base and primitive, medieval culture linked their own presence in the physical world with that of the animal kingdom.

The bestiaries of the Middle Ages exemplify this identification with the natural world. While the bestiaries clearly served a pedagogical function, much of the history surrounding them, for whom they were made and why, remains speculative. Indeed, this enigmatic "genre" of medieval writing and imagery has provoked scholarly dialogues about theories of inspiration, purpose, and origin on the one hand, and on the other, has inspired re-interpretations and reconfigurations of the bestiary mode in late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century publications. At stake, however, is the threat of an overly broad use of "bestiary" argued by Willene Clark in his book, *A Medieval Book of Beasts: The Second-Family Bestiary* (2006). This paper, then, will first discuss what is meant by the term "bestiary" through the examination of theories underlying the mode of the bestiary and its role in medieval society in order to attach a historically-derived definition. Using the Second-family Latin bestiaries (ca. 1180-1250) as a point of comparison, these theories will then be applied to contemporary renderings of the bestiary, specifically those of the twentieth-century modernist poets. Finally, this comparison will lead to an examination of the relationship between image and text as portrayed in A Bestiary (1955) compiled by Richard Wilbur and the twelfth-century Aberdeen Bestiary (Aberdeen University Library, Univ. Lib. MS 24) in order to contemplate how the genre of "bestiary" figures in to the artists' works as well as in to the consciousness of its readers.

The Danes in Medieval Romance: Myth, Memory, Identity
Daniel Wollenberg, University of Pittsburgh

One of the most ubiquitous themes in late medieval and early modern popular beliefs about the English past was the wanton destruction of buildings and towns and other atrocities committed by invading Danes over centuries. Traditions about fierce battles with the Danes and eventual English triumph permeated medieval historical romances and chronicles as well as early modern antiquarians' texts and, apparently, the imaginations of many English persons. The cruelty of the Danes became proverbial: place names, buildings, stone circles, and geographical and topographical features were explained according to their connection between courageous locals and the brutal Danish armies who oppressed them. Indeed, "memories" of the fierce Danes came to overshadow all other perils and conflicts from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. These "memories" of the nation's historical triumphs and trials, like most popular beliefs about the past in the later medieval and early modern periods, were not grounded in genuine oral tradition passed down through the generations; rather, they had literary origins. My paper explores the interlacing of romance and history, examining how festivals, customs, and myths about the Danes developed in late medieval and postmedieval England as a result of the dissemination of medieval historical romances, in which the Danish yoke and the great cruelty of the Danes became traditional.

SESSION III: KNOWING WOMEN: GENDER AND IDENTITY
Chair: Diane Fruchtman, Indiana University

The Role of Historian in the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*
Kristen Tibbs, Marshall University

Commissioned by Queen Emma and written by an unknown author, the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* serves as an eleventh century example of a female voice speaking through the medium of a male text. This paper will analyze the unknown writer's perception of his role as historian along with the tasks and responsibilities he must fulfill when writing on behalf of Queen Emma. Furthermore, Queen Emma's unknown degree of authorial presences in the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* is also important to consider when studying the author's own authority as the writer. Because this Latin text is written at her behest, Queen Emma's potential influence in the writing is significant in order to analyze how the author completes his responsibility as a medium for a female voice. By attempting to determine whether the author uses the text to bolster his personal influence on the writing of history, we can better understand

how the writer fulfills his task as a commissioned author. In this paper, I consider the significance the author plays as an historian as well as Queen Emma's potential influence as the female voice which is transmitted in the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*.

Confrontation and Submission: Images of Peasant Women on English Misericords
Betsy Chunko, University of Virginia

Scenes carved on late-medieval liturgical furniture known as misericords have been described as surprisingly secular, despite the limited (clerical, masculine, celibate) viewing audience. Much of this imagery depicts domestic settings and features peasant women—from peaceful genre scenes of female subjects preparing meals and spinning to examples in which viragos mercilessly beat submissive husbands. Yet just how did such secular and at times violent vignettes come to exist in the choirs of medieval English churches for a male viewership? Are they somehow proto-feminist? And if so, whose concerns do they reflect?

I argue that these peasant-depictions reflect specific aspects of English culture within a framework of sexual politics, demonstrating common exchange between woodcarving, religious writing, and vernacular literature. In tackling the above questions, we must recognize that such scenes of women featured in a range of attitudes and occupations mirrored the domestic relations of those in the cleric's fold according to the conceptions of the Good and Bad Woman, as taken from sermon rhetoric on writings by Church Fathers like Tertullian and Jerome. To suggest that certain images were seen as quaint or picturesque exposes an anachronistic illusion; in their original socio-cultural viewing contexts, these scenes were anything but innocuous. Likewise, while husband-beating is in many ways part of an English literary phenomenon—evinced, for instance, in Chaucer's translation of the *Roman de la Rose's* La Vieille into the unapologetically sexual and violent Wife of Bath—its success as a theme in the fabric of the medieval church allowed the cleric to successfully draw on the realities of daily life, subduing the threat of disorder and misconduct. Ultimately, they served to remind the male cleric of his professional responsibility to educate the masses according to the literature of his own profession, at times utilizing as well popular vernacular sources.

The Loathly Lady and the Riddle of Sovereignty
Arwen Taylor, Indiana University

What do women want? When Freud asks this question, he is, ostensibly, looking for an answer; when Guinevere asks it, in *The Wife of*

Bath's Tale, she already knows the answer. The speech act she performs in asking thus takes the locutionary form of a question, but does the illocutionary work of something much more complicated. Both knowing the answer to the question herself, and knowing that the knight she is addressing does not know it, she violates the expected felicity conditions for asking questions, twice over. Her question is both ritual and challenging, seeking neither the answer, nor even to discover whether the knight knows the answer, but to challenge him to find the answer. She is, in sum, asking less a question than a riddle.

This paper will examine the conversational practice at play in the posing of this central riddle in Loathly Lady Tales such as the *Wife of Bath's Tale*, the "Tale of Florent" in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, and *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnelle*. As a moment of crucial narrative tension, the riddle establishes the stakes for the parallel unfolding of narrative and truth in the ensuing tale. Moreover, the discursive and informational structure of these riddles contributes to the distribution of power within these texts – who has information, who demands information, and who goes looking for information? – especially as they take the form of ritual and/or challenge in the context of courtly exchange. In particular, the role of the loathly ladies themselves, as third-party interlocutors not involved in the initial riddle-exchange, have the power to repair, fulfill, or subvert the riddling conversational fractures that sent these knights on their quests in the first place.

SESSION IV: BORDERLANDS, LANDSCAPES AND JOURNEYS
Chair: Karen Adams, University of Pittsburgh

"Cette province frontière": beside(s) France and Espagne in *chanson de geste*
Ann Topham, University of California, Los Angeles

Most twelfth and thirteenth-century *chansons de geste* that focus on interactions in the west between the Christians and pagans divide the epic world into apparently discrete and antithetical halves: "la douce France" and "l'Espagne." A closer study of the geographic area where the two meet as represented in *Le Cycle de Guillaume d'Orange* reveals a swath of territory rather than a rigid and stable boundary between them. It is easy to overlook the existence and importance of this region in epic landscape; forgotten by those in the north, it constantly battles against a return to the paganism from which it emerged. Drawing on a number of poems from this cycle and using the methodology for looking at the complexities of cross-confessional, cross-linguistic and trans-

national interactions suggested by the field of Mediterranean Studies, I hope to nuance our understanding of this genre by distinguishing the unique aspects of this geographically and culturally shifting region. It is a place where the clearly divided world of epic is dissolved; where military success depends not on straightforward physical prowess, but sneakier strategies that depend on an intimate knowledge of the other and the willingness to perform that knowledge; and where improbable interactions and provocative alliances are as commonplace as pitched battle.

It's not that these poems disprove the well-known refrain from *La Chanson de Roland*; the Christians are still right and the pagans are still wrong. But here between France and Espagne, that seems a little beside the point.

Re-Framing the Marginalized: An Examination of Center-Periphery Relations in the Bayeux Tapestry
Lindsey Hansen, Indiana University

The Bayeux Tapestry is one of the most mysterious objects of the medieval period. As a result of the lack of primary sources documenting its provenance, the majority of the scholarship on the Tapestry has focused on establishing its national origin, the patron and artist(s) responsible for its creation, its date of completion, and its intended placement. While in some cases the margins of the Tapestry have been employed in these attempts to determine its stylistic origins, the complex relationships that exist between the borders and the central narrative of the work of art itself are discussed only infrequently. This paper examines the role of the margins in the making of meaning in the Bayeux Tapestry. It proposes a new categorization of the marginal figures in order to realize more fully the extent of the relationships that exist between the borders and the central narrative that they frame. By investigating interactions between individual marginal images and the central events with which they are juxtaposed, this re-organization functions to restore the power of the margins that has been negated in much of the discourse on the Tapestry.

Circles of Contemplation in *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain*
Camin Melton, Fordham University

Both *Pearl* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* tell of journeyers moving from familiar environs into supernatural landscapes to be tested, only to return again to the known world, dwelling on the progressive "truths" they are to have learned. The poems share a number of affinities, the formal and symbolic being the most pronounced, but little has been made of this "circular journey" structure that frames and informs both works. *Pearl* has been the subject of intense critical scrutiny regarding its relationship to such Christian Mystical material as Bonaventure's *The Journey of the Mind to God* and to "dream-vision" texts like Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*. Those critics who focus on this context read the Dreamer's vision as a mystical experience culminating with an enrapturing contemplation of God. But these criticisms fail to account entirely for the Dreamer's bittersweet return to the physical world and generally ignore the formal implications that must certainly have some bearing on even the most allegorical interpretation. *Sir Gawain*, on the other hand, has never been studied in terms of its mystical tendencies at all. It is my intent, then, to explore these poems as mystical experiences, in which the circular journey reflects a "circle of contemplation," pointing up the poet's familiarity with and thorough understanding of mystical practices and the depth of instruction available therein. I will also attempt to account for his ability to recast the devotional act of *ruminatio* into the form of a secular poem directed to the laity.

SESSION V: SEEING THE OTHER
Chair: Adam Oberlin, University of Minnesota

To See or Not to See in the Middle Ages: Blind Jews in Christian Eyes
Brooke Falk Permenter, Rutgers University

Early and medieval Christians used the concepts of sight and blindness as *topoi* for distinguishing between Jews and Christians. Jews were understood as blind to the advent of Christ, while Christians saw Him, accepted Him and watchfully awaited His return. Both the New Testament and patristic writings explored the character of the blind Jew. However, despite general agreement about the metaphorical visual impairment of Jews, the reasons for and sources of their blindness remained a subject of debate. Some texts argued that the affliction was a necessary part of the revelatory path to Salvation, while others vehemently accused Jews of stubbornly refusing to see the truth. As blindness continued to evade clear definition throughout the Middle Ages, one symbol of the condition emerged in artistic representation: the blindfold. This paper argues that the iconographic convention of the blindfold extended early Christian discourse on Jewish blindness into the conversion concerns of the high and late Middle Ages.

Synagoga dons the earliest blindfolds. Despite her covered eyes, overturned tablets, broken staff and falling crown, she stands regally op-

posite Ecclesia at the Crucifixion and cathedral portals. Eventually, the blindfold was used as a symbolic marker, not unlike the already common hooked noses of "Jewish" faces. However, the blindfold and the hooked nose differed in their permanent implications. Because it is a physiognomic feature, a Jew could, presumably, never escape his nose. The blindfold, though, was a symbol of the obstinate Jewish choice not to push the cloth away from one's eyes. Later medieval images, in which the blindfold is present but only partially conceals the eyes, confirm the unwillingness of the Jews to see. For Christians, the blindfold symbolized a missed opportunity for Jews. For modern viewers, it is a visual manifestation of mounting Christian frustration over the persistent Jewish rejection of Christianity.

The Turk as a Tool of God:
Augustinism and the Battle of Nicopolis
Charles-Louis Morand-Métivier, University of Pittsburgh

Philippe de Mézières' *Epistre Lamentable et Consolatoire* (1397) deals with the defeat of French and Burgundy forces against Sultan Bayazid during the Battle of Nicopolis (1396). The author emphasizes that this massacre, which is considered by crusades historian Christopher Tyerman to be the "last crusade", was largely caused by the behavior of French chivalry. Philippe accused them of having forgotten the real objective of the crusade, which was to rescue Christian kingdoms of the east, in order to try and win the battle by themselves, without following the strategy that had been developed by crusading generals. Michel Pintoin, in his *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denis*, also expresses this faulty behavior. The knights are being reproached not to have respected the rules of war by slaughtering Turkish prisoners. Crusades were justified by the theory of Just War developed by Saint Augustine, which acted as the most important legal document to justify war against Muslim kingdoms. I will posit that, in the works of my authors, the knights are being accused of having flouted this sacred document, and are hence "punished" by God who used the Turk as a "Verge divine" (divine whip) as referred to by Philippe de Mézières. The traditional images of the two belligerents (the evil Turk and the almost holy knight) are hence distorted to question the consequences that this event will have on French chivalry in general.

"Seeing is believing": *Ekphrasis,* **mythology, and Christian**
correction in the *Eupolemius*
Julian Yolles, Harvard University

The eleventh-century biblical epic *Eupolemius* describes an allegorical battle of Good and Evil, interrupting the narrative a number of times to present an *ekphrasis*. Each *ekphrasis* contains a depiction of an Old Testament narrative and concludes with a summary of a pagan myth that is explained as the result of the pagan poets' erroneous exegesis. Through the transposition of images, the poet uses *ekphrasis* as a compelling rhetorical technique to prove the falsity of the pagan poets' fictions. At the same time, this ekphrastic strategy poses a number of problems: what role does the pagan myth have in the *ekphrasis*, seeing as how they are merely appended to the various *ekphraseis*? If the tales of poets are criticized as being mere fictions, how is this to be resolved with the fictitious nature of the artifact that is described? A two-fold approach will be offered: first, to consider the *ekphraseis* in terms of ancient and medieval epistemology and theories of perception, which center on *imaginatio*--the creation and reception of images as part of the process of cogitation--and how this relates to the idea of fiction; second, to analyze the *ekphraseis* in terms of classical rhetoric as a technique "to bring an object before the eyes of the reader" and stir up emotions. The creation of a visual through *ekphrasis* supplants the reader's false beliefs by placing a correct image in his *imaginatio*, and is also rhetorically effective due to the affective force of vividness (*enargeia*) of the *ekphrasis*.

SESSION VI: MEDIEVAL MASCULINITIES
Chair: Kerilyn Harkaway-Krieger, Indiana University

Debating *Drengskapr:* **Theme and Meta-Theme in the Performance**
of *Mannjafnaðr* **in the Icelandic Sagas**
Jonathan Broussard, Louisiana State University

The *mannjafnaðr* episodes of the Icelandic sagas present opportunities for Norse men to both perform their own honor and masculinity as well as to debate various issues related to the general concept of Norse masculinity: *drengskapr*. While previous literature has dealt with both of these topics in detail, little attention has been paid to the themes of each *mannjafnaðr*. The patterning reveals thematic consistencies in the points of discussion of each verbal duel; these patterns point to a meta-theme, the overarching question being debated by the duelists. Analysis of these meta-thematic questions reveal that each *mannjafnaðr* debates specific aspects of Norse masculinity that relate directly to the events of the saga presenting it. As intertexual points of discussion, the meta-themes reveal that the proper performance of *drengskapr* was contextual and not fixed. To illuminate these themes and this discussion as it relates to the sagas and to the broader conception and discussion of Norse masculinity, I present two case studies: the *Magnussona* section of the *Heimskringla* and the *Morkinskinna* wherein the combatants debate *drengskapr* in the context of kingship.

Reading *ofermod* in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
William Biel, University of Tennessee

When Sir Gawain arrives at the Green Chapel to uphold his end of the Green Knight's beheading game, he not only fails to reveal the green girdle given him by Bertilak's wife; but after receiving the knick from the Green Knight, Sir Gawain's defensive leap and outburst reveal a state of panic in the knight of the Pentangle. This duplicity and cowardice make Gawain's behavior at the Green Chapel one of the most problematic passages in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Sir Gawain's ignoble deeds stand in particular contrast to an older form of English courage, which here shall be referred to by the Old English word *ofermod*, as expressed in *The Battle of Maldon*. This term, *ofermod*, is the subject of much semantic debate, as are the quality of Byrhtnoð's tactical decisions by which he demonstrates his *ofermod*. Regardless, there is obviously a celebration of Byrhtnoð's actions as an expression of a heroic ideal of bravery, evidenced best in Byrhtwold's exhortation to his companions to maintain fidelity to their dead lord even at the cost of their own lives. Although *Maldon* is largely pagan, as opposed to the deeply Christian context of *Sir Gawain*, the disdain of death implied by *ofermod* is not incompatible with Christian faith. Additionally, the social context of the alliterative revival as a return to pre-invasion English values allows a comparison of the worldview in *Maldon* and Gawain's trial at the Green Chapel in which Byrhtnoð's *ofermod* functions as a lens through which to view Sir Gawain's failures.

SESSION VII: MEDIEVAL WORDS, SPOKEN AND WRITTEN
Chair: Matthew Kendrick, University of Pittsburgh

(Im) Potent Speech in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*
Timothy Adams, University of Pittsburgh

Within the fields of literary and rhetorical studies, my research attempts to read Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* via contemporary critical discussions of the efficacy of language in communicating truth. The paper examines narrativity and character (non) speech within the text, while considering some recent thinking about language and consciousness by critics such as David Benson, Mark Lambert, Myra Stokes, Ann Taylor, and R.A. Shoaf. Preoccupation with the (in) efficacy and (un) reliability of language is woven into the structure and the dialogue of Chaucer's text. This paper points to authorial questioning of the mutability of language as embodied by the rhetorical stances of both the narrator and the characters within the poem. I try to situate instances of disingenuity, fabrication, and rhetorical failure amid what stands out

as a tenuous relationship between language and truth in the narrative. The paper traces Troilus's journey from a loss of faith in language, through to rhetorical collapse, and ultimately toward a remarkable recapturing of voice. I also interrogate Criseyde's ambiguous speech, Pandarus's dissimulation, and the narrator's spoken promises, broken and kept. Critical concern with language as a reliable method of representation extends from classical rhetoric through to post-structuralism. I'm interested in expanding the scope of the paper to incorporate some thinking about Chaucer's understanding of Aristotelian rhetoric and to elaborate, in particular, on Shoaf's application of Heidegger to Chaucerian discourse.

Toward a Historical Phraseology: the Medieval Lyric
Adam Oberlin, University of Minnesota

This paper presents the salient features of poetic phraseology in several strands of the medieval love lyric tradition (primarily the German Minnesang). Unsurprisingly, linguists and literary scholars almost universally contend that the poetic manifestations of vernacular literature in the High Middle Ages are indeed literary – they are textual products largely divorced from common speech. This logical perspective unfortunately extends illogically to linguistic methodology, resulting in the proposition that only the linguistic features of speech are 'properly' suited to historical phraseological analysis. While the problem was first addressed in the 1980s, the field moves slowly and no new studies of the theoretical apparatus behind historical phraseology have appeared since then, only reiterations of the problems and the scope of the field.

I argue for the inclusion of poetic phraseology within the 'canon' of lexicographical and historical linguistic methods that inform modern phraseological and corpus linguistic studies. My main contribution is the turn toward poetic phrasal language as a bearer of phraseologically important markers, particularly with regard to the composition and development of poems and poetics. There is also—and equally importantly for scholars less interested in the formal aspects of language use—a broader significance to viewing literary phrasal groups in this way, namely within the jointly exhaustive dichotomies of innovation and tradition, continuity and change, orality and literacy, imprinted upon every field and subfield within the wide discipline of medieval studies. I challenge the nature of the transitional spaces in oral formulaic theories, genre studies, and methodological blind spots that radiate from the seemingly humble formulaic unit with the lyric as a practical case, but the problems and possible solutions extend across all varieties of medieval textual studies.

Beowulf 1553b: **A Controversial Period**
Douglas Ryan VanBenthuysen, University of New Mexico

The release of the fourth edition of Frederick Klaeber's *Beowulf* by R.
D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork, and John D. Niles in 2008 was an important
moment in the history of Beowulfian scholarship. This edition retains
most elements of Klaeber's introduction, appendices, and copious notes,
while adding to these many references to scholarly works that have been
written since the 1950 publication date of Klaeber's third edition and
today. The fourth edition then effectively blends the time-tested scholar-
ship of the third edition with new scholarship and discoveries.

The fourth edition editors have made many editorial emendations to
the text. Some of these are based on new discoveries; see, for instance,
their discussion of the lines from folio 179r—the severely damaged
manuscript page—based on discoveries made by Kevin Kiernan in using
ultra-violet light and digital enhancement in the preparation of The
Electronic Beowulf. Another type of emendation, an example of which
will be the subject of this paper, is alteration based on critical editorial
interpretation. Case in point: in line 1553b, a period has been added to
the end of the line, following *hālig God*, which effectively changes the
way that God functions in the scene.

In this paper, I will first show the punctuation used in the lines sur-
rounding *hālig God* (lines 1547a–1562) in both editions—providing
a translation and illustrating the alteration in meaning. I will then
examine the punctuation change in terms of poetic style, metrics, and
grammar.

SESSION VIII: SPACES REAL AND IMAGINED
Chair: Amy Cymbala, University of Pittsburgh

Guardian Angels in Romanesque Catalonia
Mark Summers, University of Wisconsin

In this paper, I will investigate the many-eyed Seraphim in the fresco
paintings from San Clemente de Taüll and Santa Maria de Taüll, two
small churches in Catalonia, now preserved at the Museu Nacional d'Art
de Catalunya in Barcelona. Dating from the early twelfth century, these
frescoes illustrate dominant themes of Romanesque mural painting,
but the inclusion of many-eyed Seraphim in the both scenes suggests
a function beyond the basic Eucharistic themes emphasized in Catalan
church decoration. Following current approaches to the method in-
troduced by Otto Demus, I will combine a brief look at iconography,

liturgical instruments, and the writings of the early medieval theolo-
gian Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite with a reading of the placement
of the Seraphim within the broader context of the architectural space
in order to determine how they functioned for their community. This
reading of the many-eyed Seraphim in the fresco programs of San Cle-
mente and Santa Maria de Taüll suggests that the painted figures are
both guardians of liturgical ceremony and visual mediators between the
visible sanctuary on earth and the invisible heavenly throne.

gens Anglorum: **Manufacturing a British Geography in Bede's**
Ecclesiastical History of the English People
Cooper Childers, Marshall University

As has been the focus of an enormous amount of research and com-
mentary within Bedan studies, Bede's deployment and manipulation
of the available historiography produced by past historians within the
narrative of the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* represent
significant features of Bede's historical practice. Bede's deployment of
and manipulation of historiography dealing with Britain extends from
Orosius' *Seven Books of History against the Pagans* to Pliny and Soli-
nus; however, Bede's relationship with Gildas, a sixth century Briton,
remains highly complex due to the differing purposes toward which
each produced texts treating solely British history to the exclusion of
the Continent except when relevant. Bede's purpose of providing the
Anglo-Saxon Church and, by extension, the Anglo-Saxons themselves
with a history of their own people similar to that of the Old Testa-
ment's historical narrative treating the nation of Israel remains dia-
metrically opposed to Gildas' intent in *On the Ruin of Britain* which con-
demned the Britons for their moral wickedness while proposing that the
Anglo-Saxon invasion was God's judgment on the Britons for their sins.
Despite these radically different purposes, Gildas and Bede's historically
oriented texts actively manufacture Britain as a distinct geo-cultural
space. Gildas and Bede's textual manufacturing of Britain as a distinct
space demonstrated the uses toward which history could be employed in
both the sixth and eighth centuries, and by the ninth century, medieval
historiography incorporated the textual manufacturing of ethnic and
geo-cultural space in order to function as a legitimizing factor within
the historical narratives of various ethnicities and political entities in
early medieval Europe.

"Ful blissfully in prison maistow dure": Pleasure and Imprisonment in the Knight's Tale
Corey Sparks, Indiana University

Arcite departs from Palamon by wishing him enduring pleasure in his imprisonment. Arcite laments his newly-gained freedom as an imprisonment that is far less pleasing than Palamon's. Troubling any easy binary between captivity and freedom in the *Knight's Tale*, Chaucer thus imagines imprisonment as a site for productive pleasures. These productive pleasures, I will argue, threaten to suspend the captives indefinitely and make them exchangeable with one another. At stake in such an imagining are the philosophical, political, and poetic uses for which the trope of imprisonment gets deployed. While myriad literary critics note imprisonment as part of the *Tale*'s Boethian themes, considerations of the *Knight's Tale* rarely, if ever, attend to Palamon and Arcite's imprisonment as more than a literary trope. This paper will thus reconsider the pair's captivity as having much more at stake than a knowing nod to a philosophical source. In order to trace the imbrications of prison and pleasure in the *Tale*, I will be following the thread of several related questions: To what poetic, political, and philosophical ends does Chaucer complicate or even confuse the boundaries between captivity and freedom? What implications does pleasure have for our understanding of the function of imprisonment? Such questions suggest that imprisonment gives Arcite and Palamon a space in which they can produce poetic outpourings and enjoy the homosociability of those outpourings. Furthermore, I will argue that Chaucer represents pleasurable imprisonment as obscuring the political ideologies that imprisoned the pair in the first place; the poetic pleasures mask threats to Palamon and Arcite's subjectivites even as those pleasures are what the romantic, imprisoned lovers wish for.

NOTES