

NEW ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS AND GRADUATE REPRESENTATIVES

The SMFS is pleased to announce the appointment of five new members to the Advisory Board and three new Graduate Representatives to the Board. Beginning in the fall, they will each serve a three year term (2003-2006). Please read their short statements below as a way to get acquainted. Many thanks to all who agreed to be nominated and much gratitude to the outgoing members whom they replace.

New Advisory Board members

Virginia Blanton

University of Missouri-Kansas City

I am really excited about the opportunity to serve on the advisory board. I would like to develop ways to coordinate intergenerational dialogue about jobs, about teaching, and about research. The SMFS mentoring program has been so valuable to me—and I would like to think about additional ways that we can coordinate communication between those who have been members since the inception of the Society, those who joined in the last fifteen years, and those who have recently become members. It seems to me that there is a wealth of knowledge about teaching, writing, publishing, and grant proposing that could be shared to help newer scholars through the academic maze, and I would be more than happy to help coordinate this effort.

Theresa Earenfight

Seattle University

My research concerns gender and political history, particularly women's political power and authority. I am editing a collection of essays entitled "Contested Power: Queens in Medieval and Early Modern Spain," and finishing a monograph on a fifteenth-century Aragonese queen, Maria of Castile (1416-58). My next project, the focus of SMFS sessions at Kalamazoo 2004, is women and money. As a board member of the SMFS I would continue the *Subsidia* series to include bibliographies (like the recent one on Spain) for eastern Europe, Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia, Greece, the Balkans, and early medieval Italy. Research on these regions is transforming not only the study of women and gender but also the entire field of medieval studies. I would encourage articles concerning the pedagogical problems involved in teaching students something doubly new to them—for instance, Polish peasant women, gender in medieval Russia, and inheritance in medieval Czech lands. I remain concerned about the state of the profession, particularly the resistance, even hostility, from peers and students who question the need for feminist analysis. This is not new, but issues of sexism in teaching evaluations, peer review, tenure, and publishing have surfaced with disturbing frequency lately, making strong professional organizations devoted to feminist scholarship and professional concerns more important than ever.

Susannah M. Chewing

Union County College

I have found the SMFS to be an extremely productive, supportive, and challenging group throughout the years and hope to see it continue to grow with respect to mentoring, support for feminist scholarship, and its position as one of the few organizations within medieval studies that not only encourages but also demands diversity within the academy. My own interests, devotional literature, critical theory, and female spirituality, have always been well-represented within Medfem and SMFS. A direction in which I would like to see the Board and the organization go is to continue its broad emphasis on medieval subjects, not only those associated with gender and sexuality but also those which are sometimes perceived as less appealing to feminists and gender scholars but which we teach, study, and continue to pursue. We may all be more-or-less “feminist” in some aspect of our work, but we should also explore our unique approaches to other aspects of academic work, scholarship, pedagogy, and even our relationships within and beyond our institutions.

Felice Lifshitz

Florida International University

I am honored to be joining the SMFS Board. In last year's elections, three candidates (including myself), emphasized above all their desire to see the SMFS become more active and visible internationally; one of those candidates, Montserrat Cabré, was elected to the Board. An agenda of increased international visibility and activism is clearly worth pursuing, and I would simply like here to reiterate my commitment to such an approach. The SMFS can make a real difference in the intellectual and professional lives of female and feminist scholars in many different nations and cultural contexts, and I would like to help support such efforts. My own expertise, experience and connections lie primarily in what is now Germany and France, for the vast majority of my own research and publications have concerned the early medieval history of those regions. I am currently writing a study of religious culture and gender ideologies based on eighth-century manuscripts from the Main valley; my most recent publication related to that project is “Demonstrating Gunt(z)a: women, manuscripts and the question of historical ‘proof’” in *Vom Nutzen des Schreibens*, eds. W. Pohl and P. Herold (Vienna, 2002).

Paula Rieder

University of Nebraska-Kearney

I got my Ph.D. from U of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in 2000. I've been an assistant professor in the History department at the University of Nebraska at Kearney since fall 2000. I work on women and religion in society (my dissertation is on churching of women in northern France 1100 to 1500). On the advisory council I would like to promote greater interdisciplinary cooperation and collaboration, especially in areas such as music and art.

New Graduate Representatives

Jennifer Borland

Stanford University

My dissertation project (advised by Suzanne Lewis) centers on a multicultural series of images from the twelfth century (from England, Ireland, Germany, and elsewhere) which represent particularly abject, grotesque bodies of women. I am interested in locating these images in their specific contexts in order to better understand audience experience, and to this end I am engaged with ideas that come from feminist and film theory. As a graduate representative serving the SMFS, I would like to work with the President to increase graduate student participation in the annual mentoring exchange. Related to this, I would like to find new ways for graduate students (and recent PhDs) to meet each other and engage with each other's work beyond Kalamazoo. Finally, I want to contribute to increasing the "visibility" of art history and art historians as part of the SMFS and medieval studies in general.

Jen Gonyer-Donohue

University of Washington

Without a medieval feminist scholar in my own department, I have benefited greatly from being a member of the SMFS community. Now I would like to give back what I received by becoming more actively involved. As a graduate student representative on the SMFS Advisory Board, my two main concerns will be to further expand the current forms of graduate student support and to investigate developing a collaborative pedagogical resource for newer faculty members and teaching assistants. Currently, I am a member of the planning committee for the 2004 Medieval Academy Meeting in Seattle and the graduate student member of my departmental Undergraduate Education committee. In the past, I have served as the departmental representative for the UW Graduate and Professional Student Senate, the vice-president of the departmental graduate student organization, and the chair of the Medieval Literature Colloquium. My dissertation is a feminist and mythographic reading of Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*; however, I find that the variety of medieval literature courses that I teach allows me to maintain interest and develop projects in a wider range of medieval texts and genres.

Myra Struckmeyer

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

My interest in feminism and medieval history stems—like for so many of us—from the intersection of my personal life and my research, in particular dissertation research on female Hospitallers in the High Middle Ages. I became interested in the SMFS when Jane Burns, Ann Marie Rasmussen, and Judith Bennett shared their enthusiasm with graduate students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I went to Kalamazoo shortly thereafter, took part in the mentoring program, and attended the SMFS business meeting where I found the welcoming and collegial atmosphere of which they had spoken. I have previous experience as graduate representative on childcare issues of UNC's Graduate and Professional Student Federation and as member of the Graduate Student Committee of the Medieval Academy of America.