

and ironic ends by Chaucer in the Wife of Bath's "Prologue", the authors seem dated in their positing of a "Marriage Group" in the Canterbury Tales (which suits their argument nicely) and provide somewhat rusty bibliographic references to Chaucer studies. This is the weakest section of an otherwise robust book. Still, the reading of the Wife of Bath's "Prologue" is indeed enriched by the ample analysis of misogamous argumentation that has preceded this chapter. And, the authors' treatment of Chaucer's simultaneous ridiculing of celibate propaganda, while cataloguing the woes of marriage ("Dame Alice's prologue, however, is a dissuasio disguised as a persuasio" (152)) underscores the complexities of Chaucerian poetics and his concern for exposing patriarchal language. The works discussed in this chapter, in general, display a kind of exuberant, satiric secular misogamy where marriage is depicted as a painfully miserable state for men in which wicked wives have their way.

Reading Bram Dijkstra's odd but interesting Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture (Oxford, 1986) at the same time as Wykked Wyves made me dizzy with the comparisons between the nineteenth-century "scientific," "medical," and literary authorities on the inherent evil and inferiorities of the female—whom Dijkstra quotes at length—and the nearly identical words of their various classical and medieval counterparts discussed in Wykked Wyves. It was a shame Dijkstra, whose disturbing abundance of literary and iconographic examples overwhelm the reader with the pervasiveness of misogyny in all aspects of fin-de-siècle culture, could not have had the Wilson/Makowski volume at hand as he wrote, to anchor his cultural analysis in the wider misogynous tradition and to discern where the particularly virulent strain of nineteenth-century misogyny arose. And this is indeed a value of Wykked Wyves for feminist studies: the authors have convincingly demonstrated that the politics of distrust and hatred of matrimony—and of the power of women—is in the very fabric of Western culture and continues to be reified out of political and economic necessity. As the authors remind us, "links between life and literature are clearly justified;" "the motifs that surfaced in a specific era did so neither randomly nor as artistic flourishes divorced from experience (163). Wykked Wyves is both learned and engagingly written. It needs to be on your bookshelf.

Christine M. Rose, English, Portland State University

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



FUTURE ISSUES OF MFN



THE GENERAL EDITOR of MFN for 1992-93 will be Thelma Fenster, Center for Medieval Studies, Fordham University, Bronx, NY 10458

Subscription Information: As of September 1, 1992, contact Regina Psaki, Romance Languages, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403

Books to be reviewed: Send copies of books to be reviewed to Roberta Krueger,
Romance Languages, Hamilton College, Clinton, NY 13323

ALL future submissions to MFN (especially bibliography entries) should conform to the
MLA Style Manual.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



1. **ADVISORY BOARD** to the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship
We would like to include a graduate student on the Advisory Board. Advisory Board members meet once a year at Kalamazoo.

2. **Archivist for MFN**

We need an archivist who will take charge of preparing and distributing back issues of MFN.

Please send nominations (or nominate yourself if you are interested in either position) to Thelma Fenster at the address on page 23.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR YOUR LIBRARY



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MENTORING PROGRAM:

Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship



AT THE MAY 1992 MEETING in Kalamazoo, the need for a mentoring program to match graduate students and post docs with senior women in their fields was discussed. The program would allow established women to share their wisdom and expertise with those beginning their careers. Practical advice about job applications, tenure reviews, and publication strategies could be supplemented with moral support and general sharing of information. Volunteer coordinators will match women according to field and, if possible, geographic region. No matter where we are in the academy, we all can benefit from an expanded network.

Women willing to serve as mentors should contact:

Leslie Cahoon
Dept. of Classics
Gettysburg College
Gettysburg, PA 17325

Women who would like a mentor should contact:

Kathryn Betts-Wolfkiel
811 Hibbard Road
Wilmette, IL 60091

PUBLICATIONS TASK FORCE:
Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship

‡

AT ITS MAY MEETING, the Society agreed to establish a task force to monitor mainstream journals, checking for the proportion of women authors represented, the inclusion of articles written from a feminist perspective and the participation of women on editorial boards. This task force will act as a watchdog and will lobby journals to foreground women's issues. Anyone who would like to assist in the process should contact:

Kathleen Biddick
Dept. of History
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN 46556

or

Marilyn Desmond
English Dept.
SUNY/Binghamton
Binghamton, NY 13901

CALL FOR PAPERS ON LESBIAN HISTORY

‡

HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS/RÉFLEXIONS HISTORIQUES is projecting a special edition in 1992-93 devoted to LESBIAN HISTORY. Send inquiries and manuscripts to:

Vivki L. Eaklor, Guest Editor
Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques
Division of Human Studies
Alfred University
Alfred, NY 14802

Submissions are welcome on a variety of topics as long as they address specifically historical questions of lesbianism and its past(s). Manuscripts should be 30-35 pages, double-spaced (including notes) and written in English. Submissions should follow the Chicago Manual of Style. Deadline for papers is July 1, 1992.

CALL FOR ESSAYS ON ANGLO-SAXON TEXTS



SUSAN SIGNE MORRISON AND NANCY L. CONNER invite essays for a proposed collection reevaluating marginalized Anglo-Saxon texts. The papers should discuss issues of pedagogy and the political implications of canon formation, as well as new approaches to critically neglected texts. Particularly welcome are essays that interpret Old English texts—such as charms, riddles, texts incorporating runes, homilies, bestiaries, and hagiography—in their cultural context, as well as those which investigate the gendering of narrative voice in Old English poetry. Essays should be 15-30 pages and should conform to the MLA Style Manual. Send inquiries or abstracts to Susan S. Morrison, Dept. of English and Comparative Literature, California State University/Fullerton, Fullerton, CA 92634; (714) 773-3163. The deadline for submissions is February 1, 1993.

CALL FOR PAPERS ON CHAUCER'S WOMEN



SUBMISSIONS ARE INVITED FOR AN ESSAY collection entitled Chaucer's Women and Conventional Imperatives. Papers of 20-25 pages should address the role of literary, social, and/or cultural convention(s) in Chaucer's creation of female characters. Authors may consider women in tales told by men as well as Chaucer's female narrators. Special attention should be given to Chaucer's manipulation of received convention and conventionally determined models for female behavior.

Inquiries or abstracts by July 1, 1992; completed papers by September 1, 1992 to:

Prof. Laura L. Howes
Department of English
301 McClung Tower
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996

CONFERENCE REPORT: GENDER AND MEDIEVAL STUDIES

WHAT IS A TEXT?
JANUARY 7-8, 1992



ANOTHER VERY SUCCESSFUL meeting of the Gender and Medieval Studies group (see MFN 7, pp. 16-17; MFN 11, pp. 21-2) was held at Aberdare Hall, University of Wales College of Cardiff, organized by Ruth Evans and Sioned Davies.

The following papers were given:

- Felicity Riddy (York), "Self-textualization: The Example of Julian of Norwich"
- Gopa Roy (Middlesex), "Seint Pael forbeot wummen to preachin' (Ancrene Wisse). What Kind of Woman Is Seinte Katerine?"
- Rosemund Allen (QMW, London), "John Gower: Bodily Recreation in the Text"

- Catherine Lafarge (Birkbeck, London), "Sexuality, Sin and Henryson's *Orpheus*"
- Guy Halsall (Birkbeck, London), "Burying the Author? Graves as Texts in the Study of Merovingian Women"
- Ross Balzaretti (Nottingham), "Gender, Archaeology, Text"
- Sarah Kay (Girton, Cambridge), "Genealogy and Gender in Jean de Meun"
- Louise Hawood (QMW, London), "Gradiissa: A Fictional Female Reader in/of a Male-authored Text"
- Carolyn Larrington (St John's College, Oxford), "What Does Woman Want? A Feminist Reading of *Skirmismal*"
- Michael Clanchy (QMW, London), "Joan Fitz Payn's Bridal Book: Invoking Fertility in the *mise-en-page*"
- Lesley Johnson (Leeds), "Return to Albion: Feminist Approaches to British Historiography"

The next meeting will be held in early January 1993, at the University of Liverpool, on the subject of "Gender, Literacy, Orality." It will be organized by Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (Department of English, University of Liverpool), to whom all inquiries, offers of papers, etc., should be addressed. Arrangements were discussed at the Cardiff meeting for a fund in memory of Dr. Kate Westoby to assist postgraduate participation in the Gender and Medieval Studies conferences; further details of this will follow. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne is also organizing the production of a "Voices of Medieval Women" tape (to be recorded at the Liverpool conference in 1993). Again, further details can be obtained from her.

Lesley Johnson, English, Leeds University

WOMEN'S CLASSICAL CAUCUS PAPER AND ESSAY PRIZES

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THE WOMEN'S CLASSICAL CAUCUS will award two prizes annually for the best oral paper and the best published article on: gender and/or race issues in classical antiquity; women's history in classical antiquity; feminist analyses of aspects of classical antiquity and/or the classical tradition. One need not belong to the Women's Classical Caucus in order to receive the award. Those interested are encouraged to nominate their own or another's work, for these awards. Categories are:

1. The best oral paper delivered at the 1991 APA/AIA meetings. The paper should be submitted as a transcribed oral paper, just as delivered.
2. The best article published during 1991. Winners receive a certificate of recognition, \$100, and a WCC t-shirt.

Send nominations and papers or copies of articles to:

Barbara McManus, WCC Secretary, Department of Modern and Classical Languages, College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, NY 10805.

Deadline: October 1, 1992. Awards will be announced and distributed at the APA/AIA meeting this December (1992) at the reception sponsored by the WCC, LesbianGay Caucus and APA Committee on the Status of Women and Minorities.