

Spring 2009 ♦ Engl. 451/551 (#33874/35123), COMP-L 480 (34486) WMST 479 (#35656)
TTh 3:30-4:45 ♦ HUM 108

Dr. Obermeier

Uppity Medieval Women

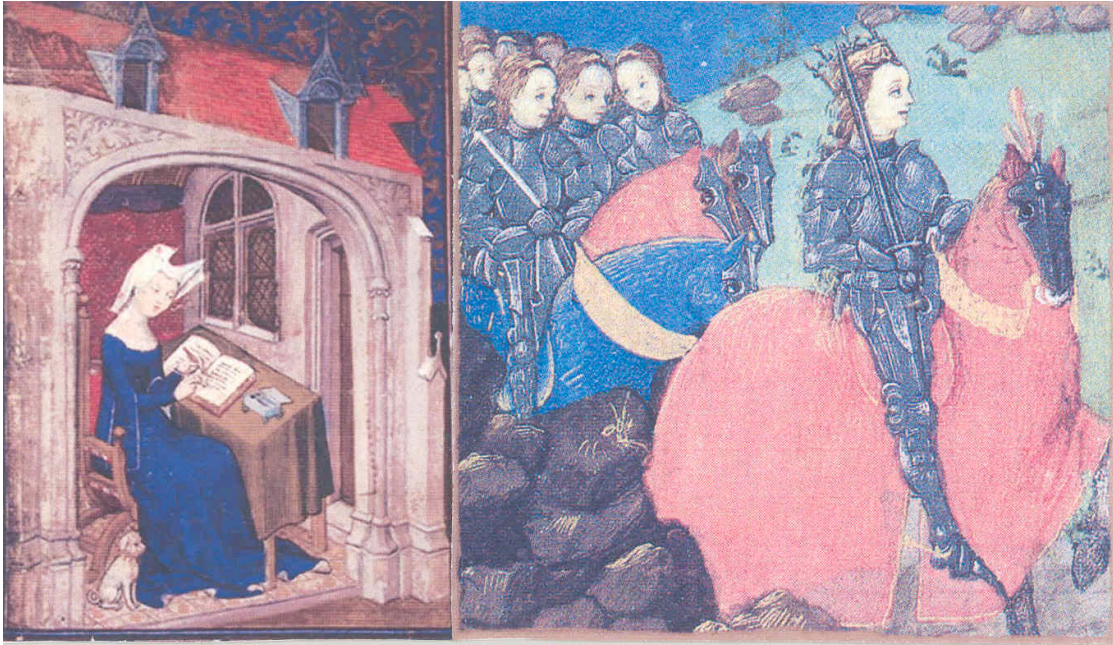
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Required Texts

Abelard and Heloise. Ed. William Levitan. Hackett, 2007.

The Book of Margery Kempe. Ed. Lynn Staley. Norton, 2001.

The Lais of Marie de France. Trans. Glyn S. Burgess and Keith Busby. Penguin 1986.

Obermeier, Anita, and Gregory Castle. *Guide to Style*. 2005. On class webpage.

Ovid, *Heroides*. Penguin, 1990.

Pizan, Christine de. *The Book of the City of Ladies*. Penguin, 1999.

Silence: A Thirteenth-Century French Romance. Ed. Sarah Roche-Mahdi. Michigan State UP, 1999.

The Trial of Joan of Arc. Ed. Daniel Hobbins. Harvard UP, 2007.

Class webpage: <http://www.unm.edu/~aobermei/Eng451551/index451551.html>

Most all other readings are and/or will be put on eReserve: link on class webpage. Password = Pizan451.

Hardcopy Reserve link for further research is also on class webpage.

Course Requirements

Undergraduates:

1 4-5-page paper	worth 10%
1 8-10-page paper	worth 25%
1 In-class midterm	worth 10%
1 In-class final	worth 20%
Oral Group Presentation	worth 5%
Written Responses	worth 15%

Graduates:

1 4-5-page paper	worth 10%
1 15-page paper & Literature Review	worth 30%
1 In-class midterm	worth 10%
1 In-class final	worth 20%
Oral Group Presentation	worth 5%
Written Responses	worth 10%

Class Participation worth 15% Class Participation worth 15%
Grading is done on a standard 0-100 scale. For grading rubrics and scale, see class webpage.

Tentative Syllabus

(Texts are to be read for the day indicated. Responses are to be handed in on the day indicated.

Undergraduates are encouraged to read the Optional material, but are not required to do so.)

eReserve (eR); link on class webpage (CWP)

- T 1.20 **Introduction to the course.** Jane Chance, “Introduction” to *Gender and Text in the Later Middle Ages* (eR).
- TH 1.22 **Ancient Women:** Hippocratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian Gender Theories (eR); Sappho (CWP); Sulpicia, “Eleven Elegies” (eR).
- T 1.27 **Ovid’s *Heroides*:** “Hypermnestra to Lynceus,” “Medea to Jason.” “Paris to Helen,” “Helen to Paris,” “Penelope to Ulysses,” “Dido to Aeneas,” “Sappho to Phaon”; Juvenal, “Satire VI.”
Response 1 due.
- TH 1.29 **Women in the Early Christian Tradition:** Biblical Women; Proba, “The Creation of Adam and Eve” (eR); Jerome, “Against Jovinian” (eR); Aquinas (and Anselm), “Summa Theologiae” (eR). Optional: Sherry Ortner, “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?” (eR).
- T 2.3 Guido delle Colonne, “History of the Destruction of Troy” (eR); Hrotsvit of Gandersheim, “Letter” (CWP), Prefaces (eR), “Dulcitius” (eR). Optional: H  l  ne Cixous, “The Laugh of Medusa” (eR).
- TH 2.5 **Hildegard of Bingen:** Selections from *Letters* and *Songs* (eR). **Response 2 due.**
- T 2.10 Hildegard cont.: Selections from *Scivias* (eR); Excerpts from “The Life of Christina of Markyate” (eR). Optional: Julia Kristeva, “Women’s Time” (eR).
- TH 2.12 **Abelard and Heloise:** The *Historia Calamitatum*, 10-21, 43-46; Letters 2 and 3.
Optional: Judith Bennett, “Medieval Ideologies of Gender” (eR).
- F 2.13 **Last day to change grading options.**
- T 2.17 Abelard and Heloise cont.: Letters 4 and 6. Optional: Jo Ann McNamara, “The *Herrenfrage*: The Restructuring of the Gender System, 1050-1150” (eR). **Response 3 due.**
- Th 2.19 **Marian Images** (eR). There is much material in two files. Read what appeals to you.
- T 2.24 **Celtic Women:** Guest Lecture by Prof. Leslie Donovan. From the *Mabinogion*, “Pwyll Lord of Dyved” (eR); Morgan from the *Vulgate Lancelot* (eR).
- Th 2.26 Beroul, *The Romance of Tristan* (eR). **Response 4 due.**
- F 2.27 **Last day to drop a course without a grade.**
- T 3.3. **Marie de France: *Lais*.** Optional: Jennifer Willging, “The Power of Feminine Anger” (eR).
- TH 3.5 **Troubadours and Eleanor of Aquitaine:** *Troubadour* Poetry (eR); Georges Duby, “Eleanor of Aquitaine” (eR); Andreas Capellanus (eR). Optional: Toril Moi, “Desire in Language: Andreas Capellanus and the Controversy of Courtly Love” (eR).
- T 3.10 **Trobairitz and Hadewijch:** *Trobairitz* Poetry (eR); Hadewijch of Brabant, Excerpts from *Stanzaic Poems* (eR). Optional: Matilda Brucker, “Debatable Fictions” (eR). **Midterm Exam Prep. Response 5 due.**
- TH 3.12 **Midterm Exam.**
- 3.15-22 Spring Break

- T 3.24 **Silence: A Thirteen-Century Romance.** Read first half of English translation. **Paper 1 due.**
- TH 3.26 *Silence* cont. Read second half of English translation. Optional: Susan Bordo, “From Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body” (eR).
- T 3.31 **Boccaccio: Decameron**, “Third Day: First, Third, and Fourth Story,” “Introduction to Fourth Day,” “Sixth Day: Seventh Story” (CWP); Jean de Meun, *Romance of the Rose* (eR).
Optional: Laura diSisto, “Boccaccio, Friend or Foe?: An Examination of the Role of Women in the *Decameron*” (eR); Sheila Delany, “Flore et Jehane” (eR). **Response 6 due.**
- TH 4.2 **Margery Kempe: Video Presentation:** *Visions of Prophecy, Voices of Power. The Book of Margery Kempe*, preferably read the entire book and as many of the essays in the criticism section as you like, but concentrate on xxi-xxii, 3-46.
- T 4.7 *The Book of Margery Kempe* cont., 47-67, 78-108, 128-32; “The Trial of Walter Brut” (eR). **Response 7 due.**
- TH 4.9 **More Mystics:** *Shewings of Julian of Norwich* (202-7 in Margery Kempe book); Mechthild of Magdeburg, *The Flowing Light of God* (eR); Marguerite de Porete, *Mirror of Simple Souls* (eR). Optional: Caroline Walker Bynum, “Jesus as Mother” (eR).
- T 4.14 **Christine de Pizan:** “The Quarrel of the Rose” (eR); *The Book of the City of Ladies*, 5-65. Optional: Judith Kellogg, “Confronting Ovid: Christine de Pizan’s Re-Representation of Women” (eR).
- TH 4.16 *The Book of the City of Ladies* cont.: 78-80, 82-85, 91-92, 101-2, 105-110, 117-18, 122-24, 139-42, 147-52, 169-72, 195-98, 235-40; “The Tale of Joan of Arc” (eR).
Optional: Luce Irigaray, “This Sex Which Is Not One” (eR). **Response 8 due.**
- T 4.21 **Joan of Arc:** *The Condemnation Trial of Joan of Arc*, especially 220-222, 47-77, 90-93; Optional: Judith Butler, excerpts from *Gender Trouble* (eR).
- TH 4.23 *Trial of Joan of Arc* cont., 118-28, 130-54, 164-67, 182-95. Optional: Cordelia Beattie, *Medieval Single Women: “Classification in Cultural Context”* (eR). **Response 9 due.**
- T 4.28 **Woman as Witch:** Selections from the *Malleus Maleficarum*, Part 1 (eR).
Optional: Shulamith Shahar, “Witches and the Heretical Movements” (eR).
- TH 4.30 *Malleus Maleficarum* cont.: Part 2 (eR). **Review and Final Exam Prep. Response 10 due.**
- T 5.5 Group Presentations.
- TH 5.7 Class cancelled because of a conference obligation of mine. **Paper 2 due.**
- TH 5.14 Final Exam: 3:00-5:00 in HUM 108. Blue books are optional, but paper is required.

Course Objective

This course examines medieval discourse about women and by women. Even though many dichotomous labels exist for women in the Middle Ages—such as saint and sinner, virgin and whore—these belie the variety of subcategories within the spheres of medieval women: handmaidens to God, virgin saints, mystics, anchoresses, trobairitz, courtly ladies, ethereal *dolce stil nuovo* women, bourgeois merchants, lovers, witches, and writers. The course will explore female characters penned by male authors and works written by medieval women. Women in the Middle Ages can be “uppity” in a number of ways but especially through sword, pen, and sex. For instance, female authorship is a transgressive act. We will examine in which ways the writing of medieval men differs from the works by women, both in British and continental literary texts. For the theoretical framework, we will apply medieval authorship theories, ancient and medieval gender theories, and modern feminist approaches.

Learning Outcomes

At end of the course, students should be able:

- to shown an understanding of individual texts on the syllabus and their intertextual connections
- to evidence knowledge of the history of medieval women’s transgressions against societal norms
- to apply modern critical theories and evaluate how applicable they are in the study of medieval women
- to conduct research using appropriate methods and tools for Medieval Studies
- to write competent analytical response and research papers
- to identify, analyze, and synthesize the acquired knowledge and skills in tests and papers
- Specifically for graduate students: to come up with original research questions and execute them according to the principles above

Course Policies

1. Attendance is mandatory. Since your progress in the course will depend a great deal on what we discuss in class, I expect class attendance and participation (actual contributions to the class discussion). I will pass out attendance sheets, and it is your responsibility to sign the sheets. So if the sheet passed you by, come up to the desk and sign at the end of class. Your participation grade will be affected after **2** unexcused absences (from a B+ to a B for one additional absence, etc.). An excused absence is a doctor’s note, letter from an employer, etc. If you have an emergency, you can email or leave a message on my voice mail. **Note:** While you are welcome to check with me on what you have missed, I cannot “reteach” material you missed during my office hours or over email. Please consult with your peers for notes.

2. Tests and Papers: Separate instructions are posted on the class webpage for each test and paper. Tests are closed book and emphasize detail knowledge through ids, analysis and close reading through passage ids, and synthesis abilities through essay questions. Papers must conform to the presentational guidelines set forth in the *Guide to Style* or the *MLA* and be submitted on time. Papers should represent your best effort and will be graded accordingly. Please note that I encourage you to discuss topics, outlines, and rough drafts with me during my office hours or via email.

3. Written Responses: You are expected to write a 1-page response for each session indicated, discussing the readings for that day. These responses should be informal, journal-like, **typed** pieces, expressing your thoughts and reactions to the text. They help me see where an entire class might be lost, or what you are particularly interested in. In the past, I have really enjoyed reading about your thoughts; I get the feeling that I am sharing your experience. Don’t be afraid to express puzzlement and unfamiliarity, or delight and interest. I am interested in your untutored, uncritical reactions to the text. We will leave more structured and analytical writing for the formal papers.

4. Assignments: Students must attempt **all** assignments to pass the course. You cannot simply skip an assignment because you are happy with your grade at the time.

5. Pertinent Websites: My own website contains a file for this class with links to pertinent medieval sites and items on the syllabus that have web links. All handouts will be available from the website.

6. Plagiarism: Don’t do it! For clarification, see statements **#102-7** in *Guide to Style*.

7. The English Department affirms its commitment to the joint responsibility of instructors and students to foster and maintain a positive learning environment.

8. Equal Access: If you have a qualified disability that requires some form of accommodation to ensure your equal access to learning in this class, please see me as soon as possible so that we can work together to address your needs.

9. Cell Phones: Please turn them off or put them on vibrate.