NEWS FROM THE CENTER FOR MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES
DUKE UNIVERSITY

Spring 1999 for Fall 1998

The annual News from the Center is designed to inform the Medieval and Renaissance Studies faculty and students about the activities of the Center and our colleagues. As the Center has been remarkably busy this year, this edition of the News for 1997-98 is appearing late, but it should be back on schedule next fall.

Executive Committee

The Director and Chair of CMRS continues to be David Aers. Ron Witt is the Director of Undergraduate Studies for 1998-99, and Helen Solterer continues as the Director of Graduate Studies. The rest of the Executive Committee includes Sarah Beckwith, Leigh DeNeef, Ed Mahoney, Francis Newton, Ann Marie Rasmussen, Tom Robisheaux, and David Steinmetz.

New CMRS Office Location

Due to renovations beginning in the area where the Center's office has been located, in 09B West Duke Building, the Center has been moved right nearby to 08D West Duke Building. After the renovations are completed, Michael Cornett will have the choice of remaining in 08D or of moving back into 09B. To find the Center, go downstairs to the end of the building and down the hallway that passes by the Math Help Room. The Center is at the end of this hallway.

New E-mail Lists and Website

It has become clear that the Center has needed an effective means to communicate among our constituents. Michael Cornett is establishing a communications infrastructure that will draw into the program undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty, as well as graduate students and faculty at neighboring institutions. Comprehensive e-mail lists of Duke faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and affiliates (such as visiting, retired, and independent scholars) have been made, which may serve to circulate announcements and information pertinent to medieval and Renaissance studies in the Triangle. Contacts have been made with the UNC Medieval Studies Committee; our announcements are being forwarded for distribution on their e-mail list. Unfortunately, the UNC Renaissance group does not yet have an e-mail list. Anyone who would like to have an announcement distributed to these lists may send it to Cornett at CMRS@duke.edu.
Cornett is also developing a website designed to bring together critical information which currently is scattered and especially difficult for undergraduates to keep track of. Our students have expressed a real need for this. Pitchaya Sudbanthad, a Duke senior, was hired to help with the technical work. To date, the section on undergraduate studies is nearly complete (see more below), while the graduate section, only partially done, awaits further development. The events calendar includes all known lectures, seminars, concerts, and other programs going on at Duke and UNC, and sometimes at other area institutions. Most items include links to detailed information. Anyone planning an event should check this calendar to forestall scheduling conflicts with already-planned events. Any items for the calendar sent to Cornett will be added. The website URL is: www.duke.edu/~jmems/cmrs. Bookmark it for handy access to the calendar and information on the Center.

Sponsored Events

“Body/Matter/Spirit” Symposium

The major CMRS event of the 1997-98 year was the symposium on “Body/Matter/Spirit” sponsored by the Joint Committee in Medieval and Renaissance Studies of Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University, held on November 7-9, 1997. Featured speakers, who examined the change and continuity of human identity from the medieval period to the early modern, included Michael Camille (University of Chicago), Jonathan Dollimore (University of Sussex), Debora Shuger (UCLA), and Nancy Siraisi (CUNY Graduate Center). This symposium represented a significant attempt to encourage interdisciplinary discussion among faculty and students at Duke, UNC, NCSU, and other North Carolina universities and colleges. It more than fulfilled the organizers’ expectations, proving to be an extraordinarily engaging and fruitful intellectual exchange. The symposium also served as a touchstone for a special issue of the Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies, which was published in fall 1998.

The symposium was generously supported by the Dean of Arts and Sciences, Duke University; the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of the University of North Carolina; the Dean of Research and Graduate Studies of North Carolina State University; the Deans of the Graduate School and Divinity School of Duke University; the chairs of the Departments of English, History, and Religion at Duke University; of Women’s Studies at the University of North Carolina and Duke University; personally by Lucy Daniels Inman; and by the Josiah Charles Trent Memorial Foundation.

Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär

The Center supported The Second International Conference of Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär, “Constructing Publics: Cultures of Communication in the Early Modern German Lands,” held on April 16-18, 1998, at Duke University. Ann Marie Rasmussen and Tom Robisheaux were the Duke organizers of the program, and Michael Cornett was in charge of local arrangements. Over eighty participants attended from the United States and Europe. This second meeting at Duke was a huge success, and FNI wishes to continue holding its triennial meetings at Duke, the next to be in the spring of 2001.
The Undergraduate Program

The Executive Committee has made it a priority this year to improve the visibility of the undergraduate program. The fact that very few of our courses have been listed in ACES has kept the program in the dark for students looking for majors, minors, and electives. Michael Cornett investigated the problems and developed a plan for making changes, which involved assigning permanent cross-listings to all the 120 plus courses in nine departments that may be taken for the major and minor. The 1999-2000 Undergraduate Bulletin includes all these courses with new MED numbers, as well as many clarifications about our program requirements. These changes mean that the Center must now schedule its course offerings (typically around 30) each semester. The Executive Committee approved the creation of a graduate assistantship that would support this work. Caery Evangelist (Dept. of Philosophy) has been appointed the scheduling officer working under Cornett's supervision.

Another area of weakness that Cornett identified has been the lack of personal contact outside the classroom with our majors and minors. All new majors and minors are now contacted by the Center with a friendly welcome and introduction to the program. Students are receiving announcements via the undergraduate e-mail list, and the undergraduate section of the website includes all the information one needs to navigate the program: updated course requirements, list of courses available for CMRS credit, directions on advising, and fall and spring course offerings with links to the FOCUS Program, Undergraduate Bulletin, the Registrar's List of Approved Course Descriptions, Course Synopsis Handbook, and ACES.

In the 1998-99 year, Ron Witt and Michael Cornett are reinstating a past tradition of hosting an undergraduate luncheon in the Oak Room. This may well be the primary opportunity for some majors and minors to meet each other for the first time.

Students also have the opportunity to gain valuable experience working at the Center, and their excellent help has been critical to its wellbeing. Patrick Haley and Maggie Thompson were undergraduate assistants last year; this year Maggie Thompson and Michelle Kalas are assistants.

In May the Center sponsored an elegant Commencement Buffet Luncheon for majors and minors and their families. Together with Ron Witt, Michael Cornett, and Ann Marie Rasmussen, we hosted around forty people, double last year's number. Graduating majors (5) included Allison Bevan, Peggy Galbraith, Patrick Haley, Kevin Kornegay, and Ellen Smith. Graduating minors (3) included Kelly Davis, Robert Kaufman, and Lauren Turner.

This year’s undergraduates in the program (16) include 9 majors: Phuong Doan, Rabia Geha, Erin Gilson, Michelle Kalas, Joo Lee, Eva Sayre, Christopher Scott, Catherine Signorile, and Heather Wasserstrom; and 7 minors: Lindsay Cohn, Adam Decker, Justin Fishkin, Joann Kleinneir, Erin McNamara, John Rohrs, and Jonathan Spanier.
The Graduate Program

The following students are receiving a Medieval and Renaissance Studies Fellowship for 1998-99: Aric Anderson (Philosophy), Paul Gaziano (History), Paul Graeve (English), Thomas Osborne (Philosophy), Julie Paulson (English), Andrew Sparling (History), and Edwin Tait (Religion).

The following have received funding for study and research: James Bloom (Art History), grant from the Center for International Studies for study of early Netherlandish art in spring 1999; Laura Foster (Art History), Kress Fellowship; and Jennifer Perlmutter (Romance Studies), FLAS Fellowship for dissertation research in Paris.

Incoming graduate students in Medieval and Renaissance Studies include the following: Aric Anderson (Philosophy), Katherine Crassons and Paul Graeve (English), Paul Gaziano and Joanna Kucinski (History).

The following graduate students completed their Ph.D. in 1997-98 and have begun new teaching positions this year: Amy Froide (History), University of Tennessee at Chatanooga; Colleen Seguin (History), Valparaiso University.

Faculty News


**Thomas Brothers**, Music: Prof. Brothers was appointed to Associate Professor at Duke (May 1998). He is teaching “Music of Josquin des Prez” as this year’s specific topic for “Music in the Renaissance” in conjunction with a symposium on Josquin. Publications: *Chromatic Beauty in the Late Medieval Chanson: An Interpretation of Manuscript Accidentals* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

**Diskin Clay**, Clasical Studies: Prof. Clay is teaching an undergraduate seminar on Dante’s *Divine Commedy* during the spring 1999 semester.

**Valeria Finucci**, Romance Studies: Prof. Finucci received a research grant from the Renaissance Society of America, a European Studies Course Development Award from
Duke University, and an Award for Planning New Research Initiatives in the International Field from Duke University.


**Cynthia Herrup**, History: Prof. Herrup was a Distinguished Visitor last year at the Centre for British Studies, University of Adelaide (Australia); was appointed Associate Editor of the *New Dictionary of National Biography*; appointed to the editorial boards of *JMEMS* and the *Huntington Library Quarterly*; and was Faculty Marshall at Duke’s Commencement. She is teaching a semester seminar entitled “Going to Law” at the Folger Shakespeare Library in spring 1999.


Louise Rice, Art History: Prof. Rice was a Visiting Senior Member of Linacre College, Oxford University in 1997-98. Publications: *The Altars and Altarpieces of New St. Peter's: Outfitting the Basilica, 1621-1666* (Cambridge University Press, 1997). She has a Junior Faculty Leave this year in Oxford and Rome.


Annabel Wharton, Art History: Prof. Wharton was the recipient of a major grant from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts (1997-98). She is teaching a course entitled “Destinations: Pilgrimage and Tourism” in the spring 1999 semester, following her stint in the fall term at the Duke in Florence program.

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