

# BULLETIN

OF THE SOCIETY FOR RENAISSANCE STUDIES

## THE BLOODY TRUTH

LAURIE MAGUIRE, BONNIE LANDER  
JOHNSON & ELEANOR DECAMP

## RESURRECTING THE BOOK

MATTHEW DAY

ALSO INCLUDES: THE SRS IN IRELAND, WEBSITE  
RELAUNCH, AGM PAPERS AND MORE.

VOLUME XXXI, NUMBER 1

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to our second issue following our recent *Bulletin* redesign. You will see the changes continue in the articles featured here. Our conference reports are now a very different matter from before. Featured reports take the form of short articles that accessibly introduce the subject of the conference instead of reporting on panels and papers. In this issue, 'The Bloody Truth' reveals Renaissance attitudes to blood as matter, text, body, waste, remedy, soul and God, a way of thinking about identity or signalling difference. 'Resurrecting the Book' places the study of early modern material texts in conversation with questions about the role of the modern library. Changes to your SRS membership benefits also extend outside the *Bulletin*: the expanded functionality of our beautiful new website is featured in this issue. Congratulations to our webmaster Miles Pattenden on its successful relaunch in January.

While some things change, some things stay the same. The SRS in Ireland report highlights the many excellent talks and conferences the Society has supported in Ireland over the past few years through its regional fund. It will continue to do so. Scotland and Wales also have dedicated regional representatives and funds; you can find the name of your regional rep among the Council members listed on the back cover of the *Bulletin*. Towards the back of this issue, you will also find the papers for the Society's Annual General Meeting and Annual Lecture on Friday 2nd May in London. All members of the Society are warmly invited to attend both the AGM and lecture, or indeed either one of them.

In January we welcomed a new editor to the *Bulletin*'s editorial team. William Rossiter is Senior Lecturer in Medieval and Early Modern Literature at UEA, and is particularly interested in Anglo-Italian literary and cultural interaction in those periods. He has written on the Tudor poet Thomas Wyatt's translations composed whilst ambassador to France, Italy and Spain, and previously on Chaucer's engagement with Petrarch. Joanna Craigwood will be continuing to edit the *Bulletin* alongside Will for the next 3 years but we will sadly be saying goodbye to Ruth Ahnert after the next issue. Ruth will leave her legacy in the new *Bulletin* design she pioneered and we'd like to take this opportunity to thank her for her hard work and vision as editor.

**RUTH AHNERT**  
**JOANNA CRAIGWOOD**  
**WILLIAM ROSSITER**

Editors:  
Joanna Craigwood  
Sidney Sussex College,  
University of Cambridge  
jeie2@cam.ac.uk

William Rossiter  
University of East Anglia  
w.rossiter@uea.ac.uk

Editorial Board:  
The Hon. Chairman of the Society  
The Hon. Secretary of the Society  
The Hon. Treasurer of the Society  
The Editors

Website: <http://www.rensoc.org.uk/>  
Twitter: @SRSRenSoc  
You can also join our group on  
Facebook.

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## LETTER FROM THE HONORARY CHAIR

Every year there are new exhibitions of Renaissance art and new productions of early modern plays, many of which sell out, and yet within universities graduate studies in Renaissance fields seem to be facing a sharp decline. In large departments of English, History and Art History, in recent years the heartlands of Renaissance studies, there are now fewer staff and even fewer new research students who declare an interest in subjects earlier than 1900. Cushioned by the canonical role of Italian Renaissance art, of Shakespeare and of the reformation, early modern specialists in these disciplines may have felt themselves in some ways spared by the chronological tide sweeping modules and students towards the present. Strong enrolments may have prevented them from noticing that Ariosto, Tasso, Cervantes, Montaigne and Rabelais have been unable to staunch the drift towards the contemporary in Modern Language Studies.

Why might Renaissance subjects have lost some of their attractiveness to researchers and research students? Some reasons are likely to depend on the set of skills required. Many British students do not have the skills in Latin, Italian and French which are a requirement for advanced study of the Renaissance, let alone the Spanish, Greek or Arabic which will open up more challenging pathways. Renaissance specialists need training in palaeography and manuscript studies, and in bibliography and the history of early printed books. Increasingly they will also need to understand the construction of databases and the principles of mechanized data retrieval. Another set of reasons may relate to the perception that other fields may have more relevance to today's problems or more to say to present day individuals. Some people may believe that the Renaissance has been very thoroughly worked while

other fields still leave much more to be done.

How could Renaissance scholars and their professional organisations respond to these challenges? We may have something to learn from the ways in which classicists and medievalists have promoted and defended their subjects.

On the issue of skills I think we should take a dual-track approach. We should certainly recognize that (as in Russian or Oriental literature) a great deal of interesting work can be done with little or no access to texts in the original languages (the success of the I Tatti library makes it easier for weak Latinists to have at least some access to the original sources for our studies), but we should also argue that students who undertake language learning will need longer periods of study and more financial support and that society in general will gain from the skills which this extra time enables them to acquire. Our universities ought to provide short-term incentives to all students to learn languages, especially rare and difficult languages. Skills training is an area in which different universities should collaborate instead of competing. Most of the skills which we need to teach will better equip our students for many practical tasks in the changing electronic world in which they will need to make their livings.

Professors of Renaissance studies should ensure that we teach Renaissance art, literature and history to undergraduates. We should emphasize the necessarily interdisciplinary and international nature of our studies. We may need to follow our classical colleagues in being willing to use our detailed, scholarly knowledge to take on large questions and to address new texts. We may need to imitate them in arranging and accompanying trips to Italy (as art historians already do) and in securing funds for student travel as an essential foundation of our studies.



The Renaissance is amazingly rich in unknown works, poetic, dramatic, rhetorical, political, philosophical and religious. Some of these texts will throw new light on our past and our present. Scholars should be more willing to make leaps between disciplines and to use the literary and artistic brilliance of the Renaissance to enhance our picture of how Renaissance people lived, thought and felt. My sense is that the study of the Renaissance is very attractive and has a great future but those of us who are lucky enough to profess it may need to do more to promote our field of study than we have had to do in the recent past. Feeling under a little more pressure might encourage us to do better things which we should do anyway. Let's use the Society for Renaissance Studies *Bulletin* and website to share ideas on ways to encourage more students to undertake research on Renaissance studies.

**PETER MACK**

## SRS NEWS

### Annual Lecture and AGM

The Society's next Annual General Meeting will take place at 4.30pm on Friday 2nd May 2014 in the Lecture Theatre of the Warburg Institute, London. The agenda for the meeting and the minutes from last year's AGM can both be found at the back of this issue of the *Bulletin*.

The AGM will be followed at 5.30pm by the Annual Lecture. The Society is

pleased to announce that Alexandra Walsham, Professor of History at the University of Cambridge, will speak on the subject of 'Domesticating the Reformation: Material Culture, Memory and Confessional Identity in Early Modern England'.

A wine reception will be held in the Common Room of the Warburg Institute after the lecture.

### Prizes and Fellowships

#### SRS Postdoctoral Fellowship 2014–15

The Society invites applications for its Postdoctoral Fellowships, which support research in all aspects of Renaissance Studies. There is one award open to all suitable candidates for the academic year 2014–15.

Applicants for Fellowships must be graduates of British or Irish universities, with PhDs awarded in the last five years, and currently engaged in full-time research, part-time teaching or independent scholarship. The Fellowships are worth £6000 and should not be held in conjunction with a full-time postdoctoral or academic teaching post. The Society is developing a number of international links, including with the Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento, which can provide practical support for Fellows wishing to spend time in Florence.

The period of tenure is twelve months from 1 October 2014. Fellows are invited to attend meetings of the Society's Council and make a presentation at the end of the period of award. They are also required to submit a written report for publication in the Society's *Bulletin* and give the Society for Renaissance Studies as (one of) their affiliation(s) in publications and conference papers presenting the research.

Applicants should submit a CV and a 1,000 word project description, including a brief account of the candidate's research to date and statement of means of

financial support during that academic year. Two referees will also need to supply references.

Applications should be made via the Society's website: <http://www.rensoc.org.uk/funding/fellowships/postdoctoral>. The deadline is 31 May 2014.

#### SRS Study Fellowships 2014–15

Each year the Society invites applications for Study Fellowships, to support travel or, in exceptional circumstances, other research expenses for projects undertaken in connection with doctoral theses in the field of Renaissance studies.

The Fellowships are open to anyone registered for a postgraduate research degree in Britain or Ireland. Applications should take the form of a 1,000 word document with the candidate's institution, department, supervisor, year of study and principal sources of funding, contact details of one referee, and a description of the project for which funding is required, describing the relationship of the project to the finished thesis, and the specific amount of funding required. This should include a short budget detailing projected expenditure for travel, accommodation and subsistence during the proposed research trip. Although the maximum amount awarded for a single Fellowship is £1,500, the Society welcomes applications for projects

## FUNDING & PRIZES

The Society funds a number of initiatives to support scholarship within the field of Renaissance Studies including:

- Postdoctoral Fellowships
- Study Fellowships to assist doctoral students undertaking research visits
- Grants for conference organisers
- A biennial book prize
- The *Renaissance Studies* Article Prize
- An undergraduate essay prize
- A bursary scheme to promote research by curators, librarians and archivists in museums, libraries and archives in the UK and Ireland

Details of how to apply for these schemes will be advertised in this section of the *Bulletin* when the competitions open. For further information, please also see the Society's website: <http://www.rensoc.org.uk/>

requiring smaller or larger sums. Priority will be given to candidates at an advanced stage of their research. The Society is developing a number of international links, including with the Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento, which can provide practical support for Fellows wishing to spend time in Florence.

Fellows are required to submit written reports on their projects for publication in the Society's *Bulletin* and are expected to acknowledge the Society in any publications resulting from the research. They may also be

invited to give short papers at the Society's biannual conference. Applications should be made via the Society's website: <http://www.rensoc.org.uk/funding/fellowships/study>. The deadline for applications is 31 May 2014.

## SRS Museums, Archives and Libraries Bursary Scheme

The SRS Museums, Archives and Libraries Bursary Scheme is intended to provide financial assistance for museum, library and archive professionals to undertake original research towards a publication, exhibition or display on, or closely

related to, a museum, library or archive collection.

This Bursary scheme will provide financial support towards projects of finite duration (time-scale to be agreed on a case by case basis).

The scheme encourages diversity of projects and a broad UK and Ireland regional and national spread.

There is one application period per year. Application results will be available from around six weeks after the deadline. Details of the accepted projects will be posted on the SRS website. Please note that members of the selection panel will not enter into discussion about failed submissions.

The number of applications to be supported will vary according to the duration and cost of the successfully

funded individual projects.

Owing to finite resources, and to encourage diversity, the SRS Museums, Archives and Libraries Bursary Scheme will not assist more than two applicants from a single institution in any one year.

Applications must include: a completed application form; a *curriculum vitae*; a discursive outline of project plans, with expected timetable and outcomes; a budget proposal; and a declaration of any other grants related to this project received or applied for.

Completed applications must be submitted via the Society's website: <http://www.rensoc.org.uk/funding-and-prizes/bursary-scheme>. The deadline is 31 July.

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## SRS Biennial Conference

University of Southampton  
13–15 July 2014

The Society's Sixth Biennial Conference will take place at the University of Southampton, 13–15 July 2014. The conference theme is 'Performative Spaces'. There are 170 papers offered in the programme covering many aspects of this theme.

Plenary lectures will be given by Professor Lena Cowen Orlin (Georgetown University), Dr Simon Thurley, CBE (English Heritage), and Professor Greg Walker (University of Edinburgh) and there will be workshops on publishing and research funding and tours of historic buildings around the city.

For a full programme, and to register for the conference, please visit the website: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/srs2014/index.page>.

All delegates must be members of the Society for Renaissance Studies for the year 2014 at the time of the conference. The SRS has come to an agreement with the Renaissance Society of America: RSA members will not have to join the SRS to participate in this conference.

## SRS-Funded Conferences

Time and Early Modern Thought

University of York  
9–10 May 2014

Run jointly by the Universities of Lancaster and York, this conference will look at 'time' in the Renaissance. We will consider this topic broadly, addressing such questions as:

- Was there a 'concept of time', distinct to the period? What ideas of time were inherited from antiquity?
- How was time related to music and poetics, measure and proportion? How was it perceived, on the pulse, in the heart and on the brain?
- How was time related to timelessness, quotidian time to divine time? What did it mean, as Plato has it, to suppose time is a moving image of eternity?
- Was the relationship between time and mortality – emblematised in the Renaissance hour-glass and skull – terrifying or mere Renaissance kitsch?
- What were the functions of early modern antiquarianism and the obsession with chronologies?
- How does Renaissance theatre figure time, and what is the

relationship between dramatic time and quotidian time?

- What was the relationship between time and space, eternity and infinity?
- Who were the Renaissance theorists of time?

The conference will be held over two days, the first in the Treehouse, Humanities Research Centre, and the second in the beautiful surroundings of York Minster Old Palace Library, and will conclude with a concert given by the Minster Minstrels, a Renaissance-baroque early music wind group.

The conference particularly encourages early career and post-graduates working in any Renaissance discipline: literature, history, music, art, philosophy. It is organised by Kevin Killeen ([kevin.killeen@york.ac.uk](mailto:kevin.killeen@york.ac.uk)), Liz Oakley-Brown ([e.oakley-brown@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:e.oakley-brown@lancaster.ac.uk)) and Sam Ellis ([se654@york.ac.uk](mailto:se654@york.ac.uk))

## British Graduate Shakespeare Association 2014 conference

University of Stirling  
3–6 June 2014

The 2014 British Graduate Shakespeare Association conference will be held in the venerable old city

of Stirling. This is a landmark occasion: it is both the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth and the first time that the conference has come to Scotland.

The conference will explore questions of authority – for Shakespeare, in Shakespeare, and about Shakespeare. It aims to investigate the relationship between text, power and authority in the writing of Shakespeare and writing about Shakespeare. Shakespeare's works ask us repeatedly to think about what constitutes authority, about where authority lies, and about the performance of authority. Shakespeare's works also force us to think about textual authority. What is textual authority? What makes one text more authoritative than another? What role does copyright play here? How have ideas of textual authority changed over time?

Papers and panels will therefore address these questions, among many others. Topics to be discussed will include, but are not limited to, biblical and classical authorities, monarchy and sovereignty, and the representation and performance of power. Shakespeare's works have themselves repeatedly been used as authority, and we will also explore some of the different ways in which his plays and poems have been deployed in various times and places. How is Shakespeare used in schools? What is his relationship to discussions about national identity? In the year of the referendum on Scottish independence, we particularly welcome contributions that explore 'Scottish Shakespeare(s)'.

The conference will take place on the beautifully landscaped main campus of the University of Stirling. The programme will include lectures, papers, workshops, seminars, performances, and excursions to the Library of Innerpefferay (Crieff), Stirling Castle, and a local whisky distillery. There will also be special workshops and sessions directed at local schools. A highlight of the programme will be an outdoor performance of a Shakespeare play by the Glaswegian theatre company Bard in the Botanics. Confirmed

keynote speakers are Professor Margreta de Grazia (University of Pennsylvania), Professor Andrew Murphy (University of St Andrews), Professor John Drakakis (University of Stirling), Dr Colin Burrow (University of Oxford), and Dr Michael Bogdanov, co-founder of the English Shakespeare Company.

For further information, see the conference website: <http://shakespeare.stir.ac.uk/>

### **Dramatizing Penshurst** Penshurst Place, Kent 8 June 2014

This conference, held at Penshurst Place, and featuring a Globe Education 'Read not Dead' staged reading of Lady Mary Wroth's *Love's Victory*, offers a unique opportunity to explore how site and writing connect in the work of the Sidney-Herbert family. How does the architecture of the great house, the gardens and the estate function as a symbolic site of community for this literary coterie? How, in turn, do the plays, poems, letters and stories recreate the site, dramatising it in fictive scenes?

The conference will explore how Penshurst Place operates as a repository of memories and tradition and simultaneously as a place of literary innovation (in sonnet sequences, lyrics, female-authored drama and pastoral romance).

Proposals for 20 minute papers which engage with these topics are invited to complement talks by literary scholars including: Professors Michael Brennan, Margaret Hannay and Mary Ellen Lamb, Alison Findlay, Paul Salzman, Akiko Kusunoki, Naomi Miller and Ilona Bell, Dr Katie Larson, and architectural historian of Penshurst Place Dr Susie West.

In addition to sharing ideas through papers and discussion, delegates will be invited to comment on the performance with the aim of moving planning a full on-site production in the future. A limited number of bursaries to support conference attendance by postgraduate students will be available, thanks to generous funding by the SRS.

All proposals (by 15 April at the latest) and enquiries should be

directed to: Professor Alison Findlay ([a.g.findlay@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:a.g.findlay@lancaster.ac.uk)) at Lancaster University rather than to staff at Penshurst Place or the Globe. Early registration and submission of initial proposals is recommended as space will be limited.

### **Katherine Philips 350** Marsh's Library, Dublin 27–28 June 2014

This conference to celebrate the life and works of Katherine Philips – poet, dramatist and letter-writer – will take place in Dublin, Ireland, on 27–28 June, 2014. The event will mark the 350th anniversary of the publication of her *Poems* (1664) and of her death the same year.

Plenary lectures will be given by Professor Elizabeth Hageman (University of New Hampshire) and Professor Sarah Prescott (Aberystwyth University). There will also be a special conference event: a visit to Smock Alley Theatre, where the very first production of Philips' play *Pompey* was staged in February 1663.

The conference organisers are Dr Marie-Louise Coolahan (National University of Ireland, Galway) and Dr Gillian Wright (University of Birmingham). For more details, including the programme, see the conference website: <http://katherinephilips350.wordpress.com>.

Accommodation is available at numerous hotels throughout the city (Marsh's Library is near St Stephen's Green and St Patrick's Cathedral), or try Trinity College, Dublin. It is advisable to book early.

To contact the organisers, please email [katherinephilips350@gmail.com](mailto:katherinephilips350@gmail.com)

### **Cathedral Libraries and Archives of Britain and Ireland**

University of York  
3–5 July 2014

The York Manuscripts Conference has been held biennially or triennially since 1986 and, with about 50 papers, is amongst the largest conferences in Europe dedicated to

manuscript studies. The Thirteenth York Manuscripts Conference, to be held on 3–5 July 2014, will have as its topic the Cathedral Libraries and Archives of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Plenary lectures will be given by Nigel Morgan (Cambridge), Christopher Norton (York), Rodney Thomson (Tasmania), and Magnus Williamson (Newcastle).

The Cathedral Libraries and Archives of Britain and Ireland comprise some of the most remarkable and least explored collections of medieval and early modern manuscripts. While predictably focused on theological, liturgical and devotional books, they also contain many medical, scientific and literary sources, as well as legal and administrative documents. In addition to the many collections that are still *in situ*, others are now being looked after elsewhere, or have been dispersed. The conference will include papers on medieval and early modern manuscripts which are or were once held by the cathedrals of Britain and Ireland, considering their varied contents, illumination, use and provenance; paper topics might also explore the formation, development and dissolution of the libraries themselves; connections between different collections; their location and cataloguing within the cathedrals; or the distinction between cathedral libraries and cathedral archives in a historical perspective. Papers which shed light on lesser known treasures and collections will be especially welcome. We invite papers from researchers in the fields of religion, history, art history, musicology, history of science, literature, codicology, conservation, and other cognate disciplines. Papers delivered at the conference may be considered for inclusion in a volume of selected essays.

The conference is organised in association with the Cathedrals Libraries and Archives Network (CLAN), which seeks to engender, coordinate, facilitate and promote research on the Cathedral collections, and to act as an interface between academic communities, church bodies and the wider public.

Hosted by the Centre for Medieval Studies and the Centre for Renaissance and Early Modern Studies at the University of York. Organised by Brian Cummings, Linne Mooney, Bill Sherman and Hanna Vorholt.

## Greek Texts and the Early Modern Stage

University of York  
14–15 July 2014

This colloquium will explore the impact of Greek texts on the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Although recent criticism has revitalised discussions of early modern engagement with Latin literature, there has been little attention to the way English playwrights responded to Greek writers. Yet Greek texts circulated at this time, in the original language as well as in translations and adaptations, and critics are beginning to explore their consequences for the period's literary production. Greek provoked strong responses for a number of reasons: its controversial associations with Erasmus, Protestantism and heresy; the spectre of democratic governance; the rebirth of interest in Galenic medicine; the pervasive influence of Greek culture on Latin literature; and the identification of Greece with the origins of theatre. Excavating the influence of Greek texts in this period comes with a set of challenges that require new approaches to classical reception. The distinctive complications surrounding the transmission of Greek texts give a new role to the history of the book in such work. The texts' simultaneous availability in original and mediated versions calls for new approaches to reading and intertextuality. The context of the early professional theatre, and therefore of viewers and readers lacking reliable familiarity with Greek texts, poses anew the question of the audience of classical reception.

Keynote Speakers: Gordon Braden (University of Virginia), Yves Peyré (IRCL – Montpellier III), Emily Wilson

(University of Pennsylvania). Roundtable discussion: Fiona Macintosh (Oxford), Charles Martindale (York) and Richard Rowland (York).

For more information, email the conference organisers, Tania Demetriou (York) and Tanya Pollard (Brooklyn College, CUNY and the Graduate Center) at [tania.demetriou@york.ac.uk](mailto:tania.demetriou@york.ac.uk) and [tpollard@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:tpollard@brooklyn.cuny.edu).

## Early Modern Women, Religion and the Body

Loughborough University  
22–23 July 2014

Plenary speakers: Professor Mary Fissell (Johns Hopkins) and Dr Katharine Hodgkin (UEL) with a public lecture by Alison Weir (evening of 22 July, Martin Hall Theatre).

This two-day conference will explore the response of early modern texts to the relationship between religion and female bodily health. Scholars have long observed that understandings of the flesh and the spirit were inextricably intertwined in the early modern period, and that women's writings or writings about women often explored this complex relationship. For instance, how did early modern women understand pain, illness, and health in a religious framework, and was this different to the understanding of those around them? Did women believe that their bodies were sinful? And were male and female religious experiences different because they took place in different bodies?

## Other SRS-funded conferences

Scholarship, Science and Religion in the Age of Isaac Casaubon (1559–1614) and Henry Savile  
3 July 2014, University of Oxford.

History as Fieldwork: Stereotyping in Renaissance Public Sphere  
25 July 2014, IHR.

For non-SRS-funded conferences see the website events calendar.

# Website Redesign

[www.rensoc.org.uk](http://www.rensoc.org.uk)

We would like to congratulate webmaster Miles Pattenden on the elegant redesign of the Society for Renaissance studies website, which went live on 13 January. I think we can all agree that he has done a wonderful job, with the technical assistance of Geoff Austin and Diane Mole. Not only is it much improved aesthetically, it also now offers greatly enlarged functionality both to Society members and the general public.

The new site is a fully interactive means of keeping up to date with the latest Renaissance and early modern studies news, events and calls for papers. If you were missing conference and events listings from the *Bulletin*, you will now find them on the website, where such announcements can be accessed and updated in a much more timely manner. You can even open up an online calendar showing all the events and deadlines at-a-glance, month by month – and submitting your own announcements is easy thanks to an online form.



Home page of the redesigned website.

The outward-facing areas also include brief articles and opinions concerning the study of the Renaissance. Look online now to read Jennifer Richards' discussion of Open Access and its significance for the Society's journal *Renaissance Studies* or Kevin Killeen on the role of

the scholarly edition in our research. The site provides public information on the Society's activities: updates on the biennial conference, how to apply for funding and prizes, and how to become a member, for example. The 'Seen Elsewhere' sidebar provides links to early modern discussions elsewhere in the online world.

SRS members stand to gain the most from the website through the password-protected members-only areas. Each member has a profile to which she or he can add research interests and publications. The members' forum currently includes such discussion threads as Teaching the Renaissance, Outreach & Impact and Renaissance Notes and Queries. And back issues of the *Bulletin* are available for members to download. Among the public-facing pages, one features recent publications by members – why not have a look and submit your book.

To find out more, visit the website. All its features are logged and explained in the SRS Online forum thread, which is an ongoing concern, so if you have any questions, they might well be answered there.



News and Events page, featuring useful calendar function.



## CONFERENCE REPORTS

### Resurrecting the Book

MATTHEW DAY



Folded book sculpture at the Library of Lost Books: *Katalog der Koniglichen National-Galerie zu Berlin* by Christina Mitrentse. Image copyright Kayleigh Bestwick 2013.

AS Alessandro Ludovico recently observed in *Post-Digital Print: The Mutation of Publishing Since 1894* (2012), predictions of the death of paper can be traced to the early twentieth century. Yet, notwithstanding Robert Darnton's eloquent plea in *The Case for Books Past, Present and Future* (2009), the almost daily comments in the press about the demise of the material book suggest that the codex in this century really might be on the same trajectory as the dodo at the end of the seventeenth. The actions of some of those most closely involved with these 'grossly material things' – to

borrow Virginia Woolf's phrase for fictions – lend support to such a view. In 2013, Fairfax County Library Service, Virginia binned 250,000 volumes, many in good condition, rather than recycle them; publishers make Kindle editions cheaper than paperbacks; and in November 2013, Bexar County, Texas opened an all-digital public library.

Yet pockets of resistance persist: fine printing editions and works such as Steven Hall's *The Raw Shark Texts* (2007) and Mark Danielewski's *The House of Leaves* (2000) which exploit the material text to create complexity, nuance and ambiguity suggest that

the physical book retains cultural significance. The new £189 million Library of Birmingham, which opened in September 2013 and hosted the conference, also lauds the codex. Not only does its Special Collections room facilitate much better access to its impressive but underused rare-book holdings, but its two-storey book rotunda is also a deliberate celebration of the aesthetic pleasure and inspirational effect of a wall of books. The Library also valorises library buildings. Contained within its golden top is the reconstructed, nineteenth-century Shakespeare Memorial Library, the architecture

giving physical form to the Library of Birmingham's perception of itself as a beacon of learning locally, nationally and internationally, with the celebrated poet at its pinnacle. Yet the Library's relocation was not achieved without loss and dissent. Unwanted books, discarded in the transition and salvaged from the skip, were transformed by book artists into objets d'art. Repurposed, they were displayed in November 2013 as a temporary exhibit, The Library of Lost Books (one exhibit is pictured on the previous page).

It was against this backdrop that scholars, librarians, book-artists, designers, publishers, historians and readers from fourteen countries came together to explore the notion of resurrecting the book at a conference on that subject held at the Library of Birmingham in November 2013. The event was jointly organised by Newman University, Birmingham City University, Digital Ink Drop and The Library of Lost Books; a Society for Renaissance Studies conference grant supported plenary speakers with Renaissance expertise and early modern graduate student bursaries. The deliberately broad subject sought to achieve a congruence of people who work on and with books in different ways but who seldom exchange their knowledge and understanding across disciplines: Renaissance scholars, for example, do not commonly mix with contemporary book artists.

The results were enlightening as discussions reached across specialism, time-frame, format, and topic and demonstrated what William Sherman has observed in the preface to his *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (2008): that the use, and not the reading of books, makes us wise. Discussions of the earliest Roman libraries were supplemented by a contemporary book artist's reflections on her treatment of the copy of Homer's *Odyssey* sent to her as part of the Library of Lost Books project, and a talk on the recently discovered copy of the works of Horace, annotated by preacher and poet John Donne, that shed light on the way classical texts gained new life in later work. The

conference thus juxtaposed the similarities and differences between literary appropriation of the written word and artistic redeployment of physical material. As plenary speaker Professor Nicholas Pickwood from the University of the Arts, London made clear, the modern book artist's practice as evidenced in The Library of Lost Books was closer in its consumption of materials to the Renaissance book-binder's habit of recycling loose sheets, medieval manuscripts and cancelled pages, than to that of Renaissance poets and preachers who recycled their Horace.

If one focus of the conference was on the materiality of texts, another was on the move to the digital. Many of the claims that have been made for the impact of the printing press on the Renaissance resonate with the issues raised by digitization today. Both facilitated an explosion in access to texts. Speaking on digitization, another plenary speaker, Professor Johanna Drucker from the University of California, Los Angeles highlighted the problems of obsolescence deriving from forty years of technological progress: updated and amended versions quickly render digital editions unstable and obsolete. Looking back to the Renaissance, Professor Drucker's perspective on digital texts came closer to the instability of early printed texts proposed by David McKitterick's *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order 1450-1830* (2005) than the fixity claimed for them by Elizabeth Eisenstein in *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1980).

A third strand of the conference pertained to the use and provenance of books. The third plenary speaker, Dr David Pearson, Director of Culture, Heritage and Libraries at the City of London Corporation highlighted the evidence of ownership and readership to be gleaned from marginalia and bindings – although he stopped short of commending the annotation of books held in City of London libraries. His call for richer recording of the evidence of provenance by libraries highlighted the way in which

the increasing interest in the materiality of the book necessitates developments in cataloguing, a call also made by Jeffrey Todd Knight in *Bound to Read: Compilations, Collections and the Making of Renaissance Literature* (2013). The absence of information in library catalogues and modern methods of preservation, which require staff with specialist training to access the books, mean that scholars of the early modern material text are inhibited in their work. Dr Pearson's focus on the material nature of evidence also begged important questions about how, in the digital age, we will find and gather the evidence of readership in the future.

In these circumstances, the Library of Birmingham's book rotunda, with its seventeenth- and eighteenth-century books on open view, is a praiseworthy celebration of the material in a digital age. It is manifest proof of what the conference itself confirmed, that, far from being dead and buried, the book is alive and well amongst designers, artists, historians, scholars, librarians, publishers and even readers – but that if research into the material book is to progress further, more needs to be done to facilitate it.

*Dr Matthew Day is Head of English at Newman University, Birmingham. Resurrecting the Book was held on 15-17 November 2013 at the Library of Birmingham. For more information see: <http://resurrectingthebook.org>.*

## CONFERENCE FUNDING

The conferences featured in this section all received Society for Renaissance Studies conference grants.

To find out more visit:

[www.rensoc.org.uk/funding-and-prizes/conference-grants](http://www.rensoc.org.uk/funding-and-prizes/conference-grants)

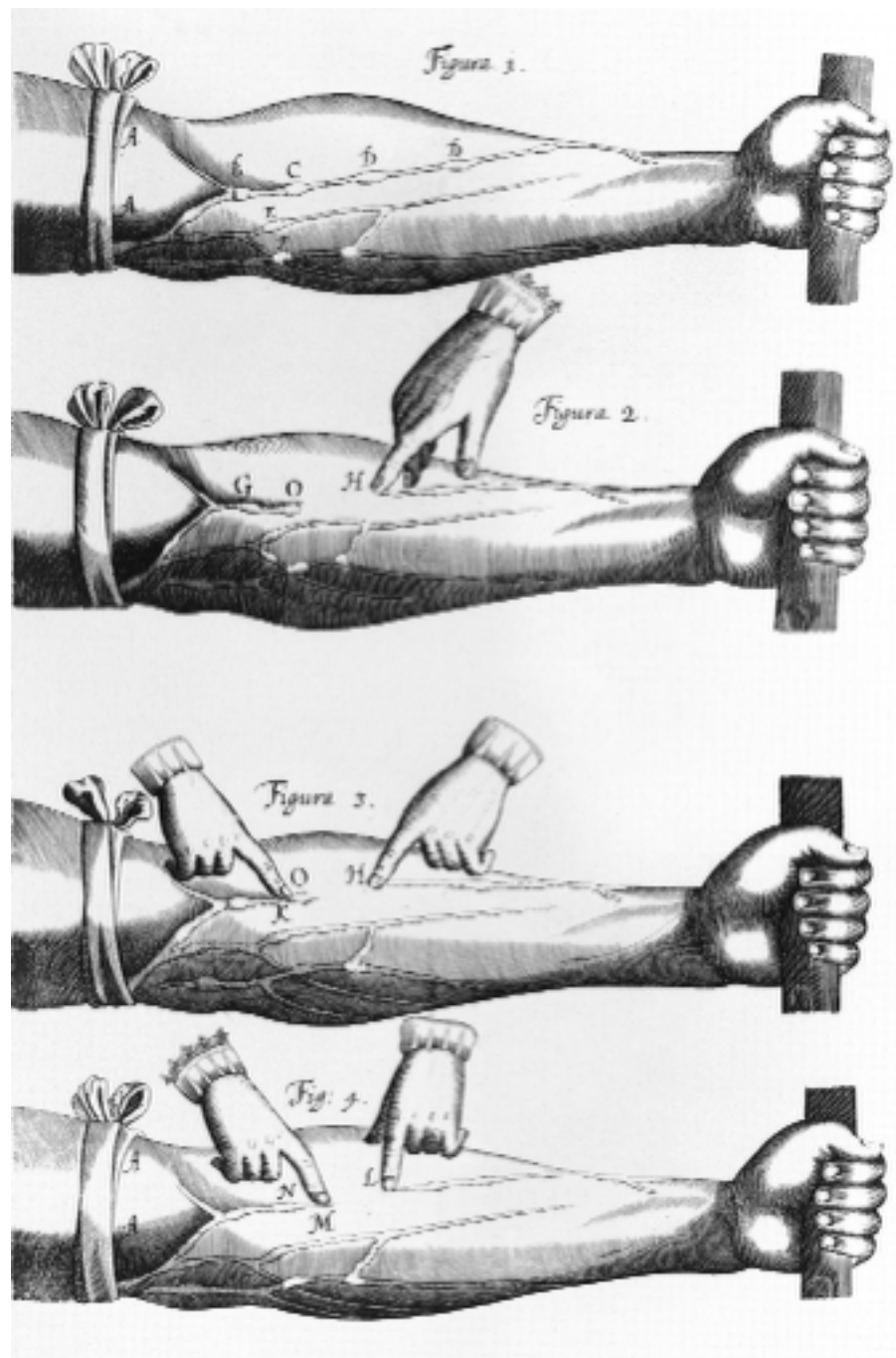
# The Bloody Truth

Laurie Maguire, Bonnie Lander Johnson & Eleanor Decamp

MUCH more than simply red fluid in human veins, blood was defined diversely by medieval and early modern theologians, doctors, satirists and dramatists as matter, text, body, waste, remedy, soul, God, and the means by which relationships were defined, sacramentalised and destroyed. The Blood Conference, an international event held at Oxford in January 2014, was the beginning of a larger project that brings together scholars, medical practitioners and artists to ask ‘What is Renaissance blood?’ Collaborators were encouraged to question how their deepened understanding of the cultural and scientific history of blood comes to bear on their encounter with artistic constructions of it in print, on stage and on canvas. While a number of studies on blood in the medieval and early modern period already exist, the field lacked a systematic inquiry into the full range of blood’s signification.

Interdisciplinarity was at the heart of the conference with speakers in the fields of history, art, medicine, music, Classics, folklore, manuscript studies and English literature discussing topics ranging from animal slaughter, the Eucharist, and therapeutic uses of blood to bloodlines, stage blood and blood transfusion. The conference had three interrelated aims: to uncover some of the unrecognised meanings of blood in the medieval and early modern period; to increase conversations across the historical divide; and to provide an intellectual framework for collaborative research.

The conference’s interdisciplinarity proved immensely fruitful because the subject of inquiry was at once so specific and ubiquitous. This is a point of crucial interest for interdisciplinary scholarship more generally. Because blood was such an over-determined and ever-present sign in medieval and early modern life and art, no one set of methodologies is sufficient to explain its various meanings and functions. The specificity of the subject matter also meant that papers concentrated



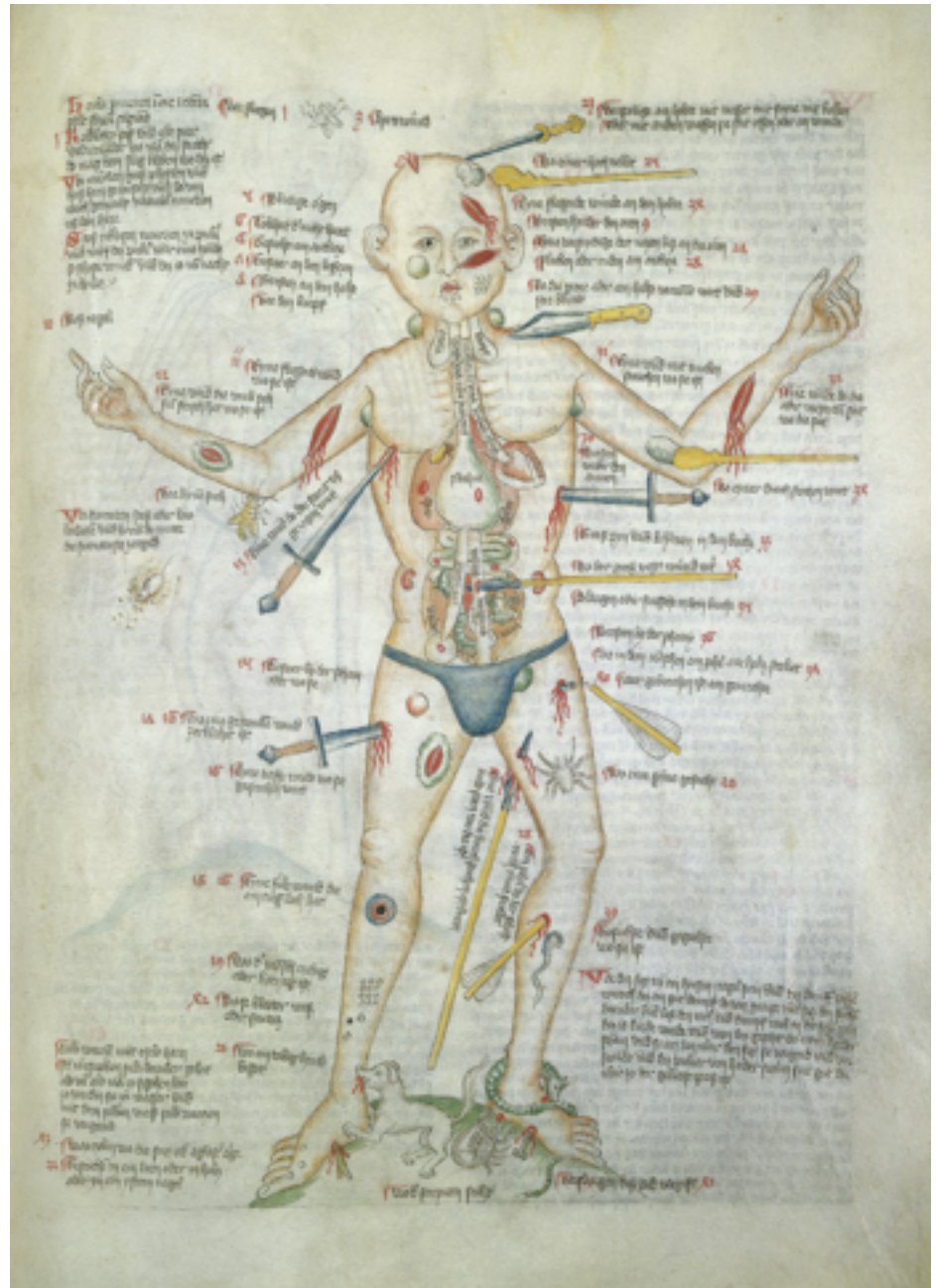
Experiments to demonstrate the function of the valves in the veins, engraving circa 1628, from W. Harvey, *Exercitatio anatomica de motu cordis* (Frankfort, 1628). Image: Wellcome Library, London.

closely on particular historical and cultural references to blood. Participants quickly developed a shared knowledge of these references and this knowledge provided us with a communal language that countered – or helped to ‘translate’ – any major differences in disciplinary and methodological vocabularies.

The conference concluded that blood was used by medieval and early modern writers and artists as a way of thinking about individual, national, familial, racial and religious identity – a finding in line with our expectations. More surprising was the discovery that blood also resisted being interpreted as a sign of difference or an expression of ‘true’



Above: Vein-man, ink and watercolour circa 1420-30, from Wellcome Library MS 49, folio 35v. Image: Wellcome Library, London.



Right: Wound-man with injuries, ink and watercolour circa 1420-30, from Wellcome Library MS 49, folio 35r. Image: Wellcome Library, London.

selfhood; it could signal the dislocation of the self or the mixing of subjectivities. On Henry V's battlefield, for example, spilled blood no longer signals the difference between gentle and common soldiers, but nor can it signal the glory of a united English struggle, for it is also 'contaminated' with French blood. In this, the perspective of modern medicine was especially revealing. Professor Mike Murphy of Oxford University Hospitals reminded us that whole blood only has trace amounts of DNA; in modern transfusion, which is ordinarily conducted by separating blood into its constituent parts, a donor's blood ultimately cannot be traced back to them.

The conference also revealed that blood was a multifaceted interpretive tool: a way for medieval pedagogues to read their students' humoral aptitude and 'administer' learning and discipline accordingly; a means of coding cloth both in dressing the skin

and in bedecking chambers; a miraculous symbol of divine grace at the heart of medieval blood cults as much as a satirical sign aimed at undermining the salvific efficacy of the cults' blood tokens; a method to explain why foreign wine ought not be purchased, for local wine best suits local bodies; and as a medical, alchemical or astrological sign through which specialists and patients might make sense of unusual bodies and the most terrible human suffering and loss. Images of the Vein-man, Zodiac-man and Wound-man in manuscripts held at the Wellcome Library helped to conceptualise most vividly blood's authority in deciphering the body's internal and external influences.

The dazzling excess of signification offered by blood suggests that historical references to it say more about the political, rhetorical and emotional negotiations – and the operations of power – from which these references emerge than they say about blood itself. Both in its historical and contemporary forms, blood's meaning relies as much on its point of reference as on any inherent understanding of its qualities and potency.

The conference sought to understand blood through artistic as well as intellectual means: through a production of the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*, an exhibition of paintings by Zachary Beer, and a performance of musical settings overseen by

Professor David Fuller of Durham University.

In the appropriate setting of St John's Chapel in Oxford, Professor Elisabeth Dutton of Fribourg University staged the medieval Croxton drama, a host-miracle play that at once calls for conversion to Christ and questions the means by which this occurs. The chapel setting of this production served to amplify the play's defence of a particular Eucharistic theology and the importance of converting to it. The production articulated blood as God and Trinity. But its modern costumes and characterisation also made explicit that all of its characters were 'infidels': the corrupt English Merchant proved the greater sinner than the unbelieving Jew. Professor Dutton's production demonstrated

that blood-as-God reduces difference most insistently, not just through conversion and communion but by proving that, from a divine perspective, all error is the same. It was in the chapel too that Professor Fuller explored the experiences of the communicant through text and music, drawing on a range of pre- and post-Reformation understandings of the wine-blood nexus in the Sacrament.

Zachary Beer's series *Hellbox to Haem* embedded the history of science's thinking on blood within the history of the printing press. A 'hellbox' was where damaged type was dumped: a repository of dead matter but also of broken (inverted, diabolical) language. The printing press forced language to be distinguished through new (morally-

freighted) means just as science's increasingly microscopic vision identified sites of biological difference within blood. The exhibition in turn spoke to literary examinations of blood as a printed stamp and inky signifier.

Following the conference a collection of essays, *Blood Matters*, is due in print by 2016. For information on The Blood Project please visit: [www.bloodproject.net](http://www.bloodproject.net).

*Laurie Maguire is Professor of English at the University of Oxford; Eleanor Decamp is an independent scholar, and development manager, The Sutton Trust; Bonnie Lander Johnson is fellow and lecturer, Selwyn College, Cambridge University. The Blood Conference was held 8–10 January 2014 at St Anne's College, Oxford.*

## *Theatrum Mundi*: Latin Drama in Renaissance Europe

Magdalen College, Oxford, 13–14 September 2013

**SARAH KNIGHT** University of Leicester

Original Latin drama was performed on school, college and university stages throughout the late fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe. These plays are as diverse in subject matter, genre and historical setting as their vernacular counterparts, but have tended not to receive the critical attention many deserve. The history of early modern Latin drama has often run in parallel to the history of educational institutions, and many of these plays reflect and, more rarely, challenge some of the ideas and practices which shaped the experience of students, tutors and visitors to the institutions during the Renaissance. Scholarly authors used institutional stages both to uphold political and religious orthodoxy – championing the monarchy on royal visits or exemplifying Jesuit pedagogy through drama – and also for experimentation in stagecraft, such as John Dee's mechanical beetle in a Cambridge production of Aristophanes' *Peace* in 1547, or Inigo Jones's creation of revolving scenery for James VI and I's visit to Oxford in 1605.

For many years not much has been written about this cultural phenomenon, but over the last five

years or so several essay collections have been published which explore in detail Latin drama of this period – frequently in comparative literary terms with its vernacular counterparts – and which have prompted more examination. These include *Early Modern Academic Drama*, edited by Jonathan Walker and Paul Streufert (2009), and, only last year, *The Early Modern Cultures of Neo-Latin Drama*, edited by Philip Ford and Andrew Taylor (2013), and *Neo-Latin Drama and Theatre in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Jan Bloemendal and Howard Norland (2013). On 13–14 September, the *Theatrum Mundi* conference brought scholars together to talk about the current state of early modern Latin drama studies and to extend that discussion as widely as possible across Europe.

The two-day event was largely structured around traditional presentations but to open up the discussion to practice as well as theory we also included a staging of an academic play, adapted as *Diaries of the Christmas Prince*, in the Laudian Library at St John's College, Oxford. The library also hosted a small exhibition of manuscripts during the conference, and we

organised a visit to the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama ([www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk](http://www.apgrd.ox.ac.uk)). Curated by Elizabeth Sandis (Merton College, Oxford), with the expert help of Stewart Tiley (Librarian, St John's College) and Michael O'Riordan (Archivist, St John's and The Queen's Colleges), the exhibition included, among other related works, the 'Christmas Prince' manuscript (SJC MS 52) on which the performance was based, and a manuscript of Joseph Crowther's late 1620s play *Cephalus et Procris* (SJC MS 217). The performance of *Diaries of the Christmas Prince*, translated from the Latin by Elizabeth Sandis and directed by Professor Elisabeth Dutton (Fribourg University) was an entertaining highlight, prompting conversations about theatrical practice throughout the conference.

The conference was organised under the auspices of the Society for Neo-Latin Studies and the Oxford Centre for Early Modern Studies. For more information on the programme and supporting organisations see: <http://edox.org.uk/projects/latin-drama-in-renaissance-europe-2/> and <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/snls/>

# The SRS in Ireland

DANIEL CAREY

Over the past six years, as Irish representative for the SRS I have been in the fortunate position of being able to support numerous conferences, seminars and talks in a variety of disciplines concerned with Renaissance studies both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland. Every institution on the island has benefited, from those in the south – the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, University College Cork, University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, and my own institution, the National University of Ireland, Galway – to the two institutions north of the border, the University of Ulster and Queen’s University Belfast. The only third-level institution outside the fold, thus far, is Limerick, which does not have an appointment in this area.

The period began in high prosperity in Ireland but quickly gave way in 2008 to the massive contraction of public funding for universities that accompanied the financial meltdown and the subsequent bailout of Irish government finances in 2010. This has made the budget available from the SRS especially valuable. In years gone by, friendly requests to heads of department or deans to cover the cost of a visiting speaker usually met with a positive

response, but the resources for doing so have in many cases disappeared. The sustenance provided to research in the Renaissance by the SRS’s yearly grant has made a genuine impact and offered the means to host events and maintain contacts with

Andrew Hadfield (Sussex), whose work has addressed the development and politics of early modern national identity, and its relationship to colonialism and republicanism. They include such US historians of the Italian Renaissance as Professor

James Hankins (Harvard), who works on humanist and neo-Platonic philosophies, and Professor Guido Ruggiero (Miami), a specialist in cultural micro-histories. We have equally been able to support visits by speakers at an earlier career stage with important research interests to communicate, most recently Dr Tom Roebuck (East Anglia), whose work on early modern antiquarianism addresses questions of collective cultural memory. The SRS has thus played a substantial role in widening international scholarly networks and exchange in Ireland.

The Society’s impact has also been felt at a more immediate level through fostering occasions that have drawn together Irish academics, from PhD students and postdocs to post holders throughout the university system. For example, a recent

conference at Queen’s University Belfast took place with Society assistance, organised by two PhD students, Paul Mulgrew and Denise Kelly, on the subject of time and space in early modern literature and culture. At Trinity College Dublin, PhD



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The 2013 Tudor & Stuart Ireland conference. The conference series was first launched with SRS support. For information about the 2014 conference visit the website featured on the poster.

academic colleagues in the UK and elsewhere.

Leading Renaissance scholars have attended Irish colloquia with SRS support. These figures include literary scholars such as Professor Cathy Shrank (Sheffield) and Professor

student Donna Canada-Smith held a conference in 2012 on the French garden as cultural palimpsest.

In 2010 Professor Brendan Dooley (University College Cork) held an event entitled 'Renaissance Now!' which engaged a series of major figures in discussion of the future of the field. One of the underpinning principles of that conference, as Professor Dooley has since outlined in a Youtube video bearing the same name as the event, is that 'the continuing allure of Renaissance times is really how our knowledge of this period seems to grow and seems to deepen in relation to our changing times'. 'Renaissance Now!' highlights the continued unearthing of new knowledge concerning the early modern period, and points to how this knowledge reveals our present concerns and assumptions even as we seek out those of the past.

During the period, two series have developed which testify to the strength of Renaissance studies in the country. Tudor & Stuart Ireland, launched as an interdisciplinary conference in 2011, has held two further meetings and will convene its fourth in 2014. The SRS supported

the initial event run by Suzanne Forbes, Neil Johnston and Eoin Kinsella at University College Dublin. The past three conferences have highlighted recurrent interests which point the way forward for Renaissance studies in Ireland and elsewhere. These interrelated interests include early modern Irish international relations; the socio-economic history of Tudor and Stuart Ireland; and – a crucial part of all three conferences – a series of excavated lives and life-writing studies.

The second series, the Irish Renaissance Seminar, was founded in 2010 by Jane Grogan and colleagues at University College Dublin, and has rotated throughout Ireland for half-day meetings on Saturdays a couple of times a year. Each event has had a separate theme, incorporating speakers at PhD and early career stages as well as a featured speaker. On a number of occasions the SRS has provided funding to individual organisers, ensuring that all of the institutions in Ireland dedicated to Renaissance studies have received encouragement in their work.

An important possibility created by the SRS funding has been the chance to forge connections with leading cultural institutions. A conference on 'Early Modern Europe and India: Politics, Philosophy, and Representation' took place at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin in 2012, and this summer, on 27-28 June, Dr Marie-Louise Coolahan (NUI Galway) and Dr Gillian Wright (Birmingham) will hold the 'Katherine Philips 350 Conference' at Marsh's Library in Dublin. Although limited resources do exist within institutions – despite the downturn – for convening conferences, they do not facilitate hosting them at external venues of this kind. The scope afforded by the SRS has opened new avenues for assisting scholarship in the Renaissance which I am sure will develop further still in the future.

*Daniel Carey is Professor of English at the National University of Ireland, Galway and Irish Representative for the Society for Renaissance Studies. For more information on the Society's regional activities in Ireland, Scotland and Wales follow the links on <http://www.rensoc.org.uk/society/about>*

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## FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

### Camilla Erculiani's *Lettere di Philosophia Naturale* (1584): A Critical Edition

ELEONORA CARINCI

Camilla Erculiani's *Lettere di Philosophia Naturale* (*Letters on Natural Philosophy*) (pictured overleaf), published in Cracow for the 'Stamperia di Lazaro' in 1584, is the only published work of a female apothecary who lived in Padua in the late sixteenth century. Indeed it is a unique case of a work on natural philosophy written by an Italian woman in the sixteenth century. The text includes four letters, three composed by Erculiani, and one by her correspondent Giorgio Garnerio (Georges Guarnier), a Burgundian

physician who graduated from Padua in 1577. The letters present Erculiani's explanation of the natural origins of the Flood through a number of scientific theories based on, or inspired by, Galenic and Aristotelian thought. The book is framed by several paratextual devices, including two poems, a dedicatory letter to the Queen of Poland, and a note to Erculiani's readers, in which she defends her ability as a woman to write about philosophy.

Erculiani's *Lettere* bring together a series of questions concerning the

figure of the author, the circumstances of the publication of her book, the role of apothecaries in the circulation of knowledge in sixteenth-century Padua, the relations between science, theology, Inquisition and women during the Counter Reformation, as well as gender issues.

In her *Lettere di Philosophia Naturale* Erculiani expresses her thoughts from a declaredly female point of view and inserts her text into the vibrant contemporary debate by and about women over their role in

Italian culture. At the same time, her works aim to contribute to contemporary scientific debate. Her pharmacy, called 'alle tre stelle' ('at the three stars') was located near the famous University of Padua, and was probably a place of meetings and discussions of scientific matters. It is therefore likely that Erculiani met in her shop a number of contemporary physicians, scientists and students – such as her correspondent Giorgio Garnero – who gave her advice, and possibly the opportunity to publish her work.

In her writings Erculiani develops her theories with reference to, but also standing at a distance from, a

well-established philosophical tradition, and her theories are in fact very original in the context of the contemporary scientific debate. The work itself provides a female perspective on science and is a clear response to the proliferation of popular vernacular scientific texts often addressed to a female audience, such as those by Alessandro Piccolomini. It is also the result of Erculiani's personal elaboration of eclectic knowledge probably deriving from conversations with scientists, books of receipt for pharmacists, and similar. The epistolary genre of the work is also interesting since letters have

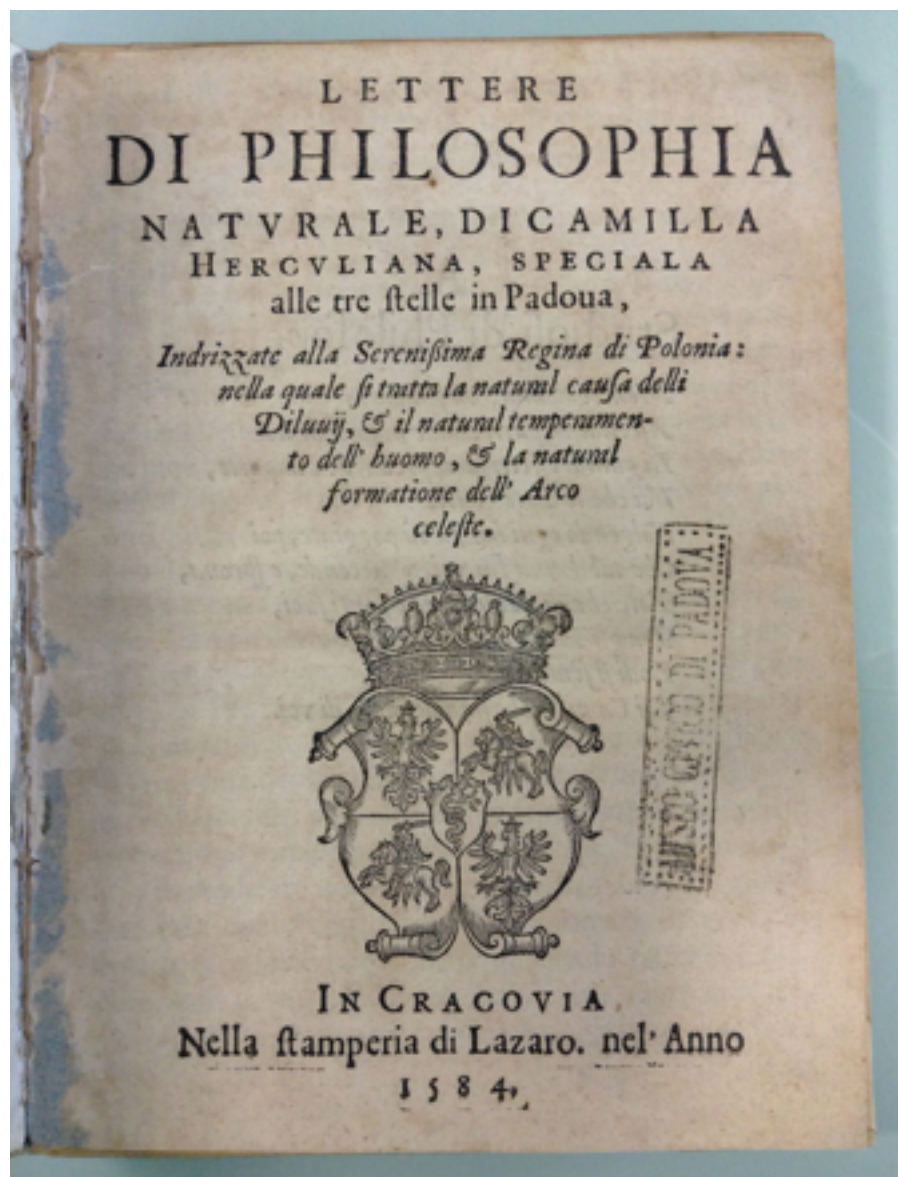
traditionally been considered a typically female genre. By presenting her ideas through letters Erculiani was able to explore controversial concepts in a quasi-dialogic form.

Through my research I've concluded that the *Lettere* was actually published in Poland with a publisher, Jan Januskowski, who had links to Padua and who was unconcerned about printing material that was not entirely orthodox. Erculiani's idea of the natural origin of the Universal Flood is in fact quite controversial, and although the book was published abroad, and the author insists on her philosophical and non-theological intentions, her work did not pass quietly or unnoticed.

According to a consilium published by the lawyer Jacopo Menochio at the end of the sixteenth century, Erculiani was accused for heresy by the Paduan Inquisition for heretical ideas included in her book. Menochio describes the trial in detail, reporting all the accusations and interrogations, and defending Erculiani, but does not tell us what the outcome was. This document makes Erculiani's book an important example of how scientific texts and women's writings were treated by the Inquisition, providing information about the contested relationships between science, theology, and the Catholic Church at the time.

The Society for Renaissance Studies Rubinstein fellowship was crucial to allow me to conclude my research on Erculiani successfully. It provided me with the peace of mind to dedicate myself to full-time research, which I could not afford otherwise, and allowed me to prepare the critical edition of Erculiani's *Lettere* which will appear soon in 'The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe' series (Toronto, CRRS).

Thanks to my research new archival documents concerning the life of the author, her background and her cultural network came to light, offering to Renaissance scholarship a clearer picture of the circumstances of an author nearly unknown, which would be of interest to scholars in many fields but especially those studying Italian Studies, History of



Camilla Erculiani, *Lettere di philosophia naturale* (Cracow: Stamperia di Lazaro, 1584), Padua, Biblioteca Civica, CF.1030.5, fol. a1r. Image courtesy of the Comune di Padova, Assessorato alla cultura, authorization n. 0055281, 03/03/2014.



Science, Intellectual History, Religious History, History of Women, Women and Gender Studies, and Philosophy.

In order to produce a critical edition of Erculiani's *Lettere*, I had on the one hand to find more archival documents on her life, family and cultural network, as well as further information about her trial for heresy; on the other hand, my aim was to define the genesis of her theories through analysis of the natural-philosophical literary tradition.

My research in the Italian archives was very productive, considering that I was looking for information about a nearly unknown woman who was never mentioned by contemporary writers, and who did not belong to an important family. In the Paduan archives I found several documents concerning Erculiani's family, as I was lucky enough to identify Erculiani's father's notary. Camilla was the daughter of the merchant Andrea Gregghetti. She first married in early 1560s the apothecary Aloviso Stella, presumably the first owner of the pharmacy 'alle tre stelle', and then, after his death, she married the apothecary Giacomo Erculiani in 1573. Her dates of birth and death are still unknown, but she was probably born around the mid-1540s and possibly died either around 1585, immediately after her trial, or after 1605, when her husband died. During my research I also managed to better identify Erculiani's correspondents and recognize some connections she might have had with the University of Padua.

Unfortunately I could not find any further documents concerning the inquisitorial trial, because the archive of the Paduan Inquisition was taken and almost completely destroyed by Napoleonic soldiers in 1797. Thus, I could confirm that the only known document concerning Erculiani's inquisitorial trial to date is Menochio's *consilium*, and it is quite unlikely that any proceedings of the trial survived. However, I managed to date the trial between 1584 and 1585, and to demonstrate that it was in fact undertaken by the Paduan inquisitor. I also excluded – at least according to the extant documentation held in the Archivio di Stato di Venezia and in

ACDF in Rome – that the Venetian and the Roman Inquisitions were involved in Erculiani's case. This lets us suppose that she was not condemned, as every serious case requiring a condemnation had to be denounced to Rome.

Thank to the Society for Renaissance Studies Fellowship I worked in several libraries in Italy and in Britain, in order to establish the genesis of Erculiani's *Lettere* and to provide my edition with a documented apparatus of notes. I analysed a great number of vernacular texts on natural philosophy and meteorology, including Italian translations of Aristotle and other texts on scientific topics addressed to a general audience, such as Alessandro Piccolomini's works, as well as other texts connected with medicine and apothecary that Erculiani might have read. While it is possible to trace in such literature the sources of most of the theories Erculiani uses to demonstrate the natural origin of the Flood, it is quite difficult to identify specific models. What is certain is that the possibility of the natural origin of the biblical Flood is something absolutely original, and it is never mentioned in any sixteenth-century meteorological work: the Universal Flood was considered without doubt a supernatural event, and did not need scientific explanation. My conclusion is that Erculiani developed her theory by herself, moving from some Aristotelian and Galenic concepts such as generation and corruption, and theories of elements, together with some aspects which seem to refer to the hermetic tradition, learned from books and from discussions with physicians and natural philosophers frequenting her shop, as well as from her apothecary's knowledge, based on books and her own experience.

Concerning Erculiani's readings, it is worth mentioning that in her dedicatory letter to the Queen of Poland, Erculiani certainly refers to the *Libro Secondo di Marco Aurelio* (Venice: Giolito 1553), Alfonso de Ulloa's Italian translation from Spanish of Antonio Guevara's work, which includes historical fiction,

(false) letters by historical characters, and suggestions for being a good prince, as well as advice on successful marriage. Erculiani refers directly to this text when she offers examples of ancient women, famous for their knowledge. Interestingly, the same female examples (a bit different from the traditional ones deriving from Giovanni Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*) are mentioned by Leonardo Fioravanti in his *Dello Specchio di scientia universale* (Venice: Valgrisi 1564) and Maria Gondola, author of the dedicatory letter of her husband's dialogue on Aristotle's *Meteorology* (Niccolò Vito da Gozze, *Discorso sopra le Meteore di Aristotile*, Venice: Ziletti, 1584). The *Libro di Marco Aurelio* was very popular at the time, but the fact that Erculiani and other figures involved in the diffusion of science to a general audience refer to it, seems to place Erculiani even more firmly within contemporary scientific debate, and offers the possibility of several speculations concerning her cultural network.

During the period of the fellowship, in conjunction with a British Academy/Leverhulme small grant – which allowed me to travel to the US and to meet and work together with my collaborator Hannah Marcus, who translated Erculiani's text into English – I visited archives and libraries in Italy and abroad and disseminated the results of my research in a number of international conferences, including the RSA conference (San Diego April 2013); the SIS biennial conference (Durham, July 2013); and the Reading Conference in Early Modern Studies (Reading, July 2013).

At the same time, my article 'Una "speziala padovana": Camilla Erculiani's *Lettere di Philosophia naturale* (1584)' appeared in *Italian Studies* 68. 2 (2013), updated with my new archival discoveries. I plan to submit the final version of the bilingual critical edition of Erculiani's *Lettere* to the publisher this spring.

In conclusion, my academic career benefited enormously from the Rubinstein fellowship and I am very grateful to the Society for Renaissance Studies for awarding it to me and giving me the opportunity to undertake my research.

## Jennifer Evans



In 2012 I was very fortunate to be granted a Society for Renaissance Studies post-doctoral fellowship which provided me with the support I needed in order to take a year out from teaching, to develop a new research project, and to work on turning my doctoral thesis into a monograph.

The research project I developed during the fellowship is titled 'Men's Sexual Health and Masculinity in Early Modern England.' This project considers the relationship between men's health and their manliness, manhood and positions as patriachs. Masculinity in early modern England rested upon the male body exhibiting potency, strength, and rationality. Understandings of the healthy male body were therefore a foundation for ideas about gender and sexuality. The project questions both how medical discourse perceived the male body when it experienced sexual and reproductive failure and how men may have felt about these problems. Significantly the project focuses on the seventeenth century. Current research on the relationship between masculinity and men's bodies focuses primarily on the period after 1700. However, it tends to overlook that these ideas were necessarily predicated upon seventeenth-century articulations of masculinity and the body. The explosion of print culture in the seventeenth century produced a rapid expansion in works relating to

the body, health and reproduction. These provide an unrivalled corpus on which to base a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between early modern masculinity and the body.

Conducting research into this wide body of literature has filled most of the time of the fellowship. Principally I consulted numerous medical treatises, written by physicians and other medical writers, and surgical treatises. The resulting body of material will form the core of the evidence for the monograph. In addition I began to consult a range of other sources including conduct literature, medical advertisements, family correspondence and manuscript recipe collections compiled by men. The conduct literature will be used alongside the medical and surgical treatises in the first section of the book to establish how disorders of the reproductive organs were believed to affect masculinity and the ability to achieve patriarchal manhood. The other genres will be used in conjunction with the observations recorded in printed surgical treatises to establish how men responded to episodes of reproductive and sexual ill health. Were they reticent to seek help from medical practitioners? Were they treated in the home by female relatives? Did they discuss and share information about such disorders openly? The surgical observations have revealed that surgeons could be judgemental about behaviours that led to a man's ill health, particularly if they had put themselves in danger through excess or lack of care. The highest levels of scorn were reserved for those who had caught the venereal disease. Despite this disparaging attitude, it would appear that surgeons, and other medical practitioners, were not excessively concerned that men would be 'less manly' having experienced a problem with the reproductive organs or genitalia. Only when the body was threatened with castration did surgeons express concern that these men might become infertile and less manly. The manuscript recipe

collections highlight that there was relative freedom for men to discuss problems of this nature. They were not necessarily hindered by embarrassment or shame. In particular remedies for stones in the bladder and voiding bloody urine were shared and recorded in men's recipe books.

Each week I present some of the ideas arising out of this research on a blog I created during the fellowship called Early Modern Medicine (<http://earlymodernmedicine.com/>). I have contributed short articles on men's relationships with their practitioners, the dangers certain diseases or activities posed to men's health and their masculinity. Sara Read has also contributed numerous articles on women's bodies, health and medicine. The blog has been very successful and reaches an audience of academic and non-academic readers.

Over the course of the fellowship I have written up some of this research into an article entitled "'They are called Imperfect men': Male Infertility and Sexual Health in Early Modern England'. This article has been accepted for inclusion in a collection on *Infertility in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, edited by Catherine Rider and Daphna Oren-Magidor, to be published in *Social History of Medicine*. The article examines the ways in which medical writers believed men could be rendered infertile, as well as impotent. It argues that the assumption that infertility was always blamed on women is inaccurate. Medical texts included numerous tests designed to establish whether a man was infertile, as well as testing the woman. These tests would not have been required if the fault always lay with the woman.

As well as working on the new project the fellowship has allowed me to complete the publications stemming from my doctoral research. Firstly, I completed the manuscript for the monograph of my doctorate (forthcoming with the Royal Historical Society's Studies in History series). The book, entitled *Kindling Cupid's Fire: Aphrodisiacs and Reproduction*

in *Early Modern England*, explores sexual stimulants which were thought to affect the body between 1550 and 1780. Having outlined the various types of sexual stimulants and how they were believed to work, the book considers some specific contexts within which aphrodisiacs were encountered. It investigates the use of aphrodisiacs to treat infertility and impotence caused by witchcraft. Finally the book looks at the two specifically female aetiologies of barrenness – a lack of menstruation and miscarriage – and asks whether aphrodisiacs were used to remedy these problems.

I also wrote an article during my fellowship, building on my doctoral

research, entitled ‘Female Barrenness, Bodily Access and Aromatic Treatments in early modern England’ (forthcoming *Historical Research*). This article investigates how the use of specific perfumes may have allowed medical practitioners to negotiate access to the female sexed body. It discusses how the use of smell to diagnose barrenness was described in general medical texts, midwifery treatises and treatises for women. It then looks in the same genres of medical texts to discuss the ways in which perfumes and aromatic treatments were used and described in the treatment of female barrenness. I also presented this research at the ‘Infertility in

History, Science and Culture’ conference at the University of Edinburgh in June 2013.

In September 2013 I took up a position as Lecturer in History at the University of Hertfordshire. My time as a post-doctoral fellow for the Society allowed me to consolidate my research profile and certainly contributed to me securing a lecturing position. In this new job I will be applying ideas from both my doctoral research and my new research to my teaching and the experience I have gained this year gives me a stable foundation from which to move forward with both my teaching and my research.

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## Sara Read

The post-doctoral fellowship I was granted for the academic year 2012–13 allowed me to carry out preliminary research into what it meant to be an overweight woman in the Renaissance and Restoration periods. My previous study of menstruation and the female body confirmed Michael Stolberg's argument that ‘the way in which early modern physicians gendered obesity reveals some remarkable differences’, differences which will be pursued by the present research. The English Renaissance provides a logical starting place for this research because the term ‘obesity’ was first recorded in this era. This is perhaps unsurprising given that people had increased access to sugar, with one estimate suggesting that consumption rose four-fold in the last four decades of the seventeenth century.

Elena Levy-Navarro's *The Culture of Obesity in Early and Late Modernity: Body Image in Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, and Skelton* (2008) provides some discussion of early-modern attitudes to obesity and gender, whilst the historical study of obesity more broadly is one which has begun to attract scholarly attention with the publication of texts such as Sander Gilman's *Obesity: The Biography* (2010) and *Fat: A*

*Cultural History of Obesity* (2013). Likewise, there is Michael Stolberg's article ‘“Abhorreas pinguedinem”: Fat and Obesity in Early Modern Medicine (c. 1500–1750)’, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* (2011); Georges Vigarello's *The Metamorphoses of Fat: A History of Obesity* (2013); and Christopher E. Forth's article ‘The Qualities of Fat: Bodies, History, and Materiality’, *Journal of Material Culture* (2013). This is a growing field, which my research develops with its focus on attitudes to women's bodies. This focus in turn contributes to the wider social history of early modern women.

In the course of my research it has become clear that there are several distinct themes to the presentation of early modern obesity. The first theme is exemplified in a satirical verse by Thomas Lodge. Writing in a format that anticipates the advice columns which came into print in the eighteenth century, Lodge answers a female correspondent who has apparently asked his advice on how to lose weight. His answer centres on an exposition of the medical position which states that there is a difference to be determined as to whether a person is carrying natural or non-natural fat. Natural fat was that to which a person was disposed and



there was nothing, Lodge argued, that could be done about this, whereas non-natural fat was the sort gained by eating too much. This distinction is significant for the way in which body size is presented in early modern midwifery guides, which deal non-judgementally with the matter. So, for example, Thomas Raynalde (1545) noted that ‘gross and fat’ women might have difficult labours but that this was equally true of women who were ‘spare and lean’. The midwife Jane Sharp (1671) also follows Raynalde and advises obese women to deliver in a prone or ‘grovelling’ position to make it as safe as possible, by giving the best



Sebald Beham (1500-1550), *Death and Three Nude Women*, engraving, private collection. Image: Wikimedia Commons.

chance of the pelvis opening. The more general medical texts of the period make it clear that early modern society shared our contemporary concerns about the health implications of being overweight.

A key focus of this project will therefore be on medical understandings of the body. Following brief assertions on this subject in the Hippocratic corpus, early modern medical texts repeatedly explain that 'fat' women

will have difficulty in conceiving babies because their wombs were thought too slippery to support a pregnancy. The issue of how obese a woman had to be to risk this complication is still far from clear and something my research is aiming to uncover further through close reading of the explanations of what being obese meant. I will examine the extent to which the medical writing grew from this concern for health or was guilty of adding salacious cases for sensationalist reasons.

Aside from exploring the medical position and its literary manifestation, my research has identified a correspondence between obesity and joviality which existed in the early modern imaginary just as it recurs as a stereotype nowadays. The Earl of Rochester contends that Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford, 'looked too fat and jolly / to be disturbed with care and melancholy', his intended insult highlighting wider cultural assumptions about the association between weight and humour. Rochester's description of the bishop also suggests that it was considered acceptable to be overweight, but how far this carried over into popular portrayals of female characters is something that I will investigate.

Some plumpness was considered sexually attractive in women, and therefore desirable. In the 1677 adaptation of Thomas Middleton's *No Help like a Woman* (published as *The Counterfeit Bridegroom*), the character Sam asks 'is there no Gentleman (think you) of Worth and Credit, that will not open his Bed to warm a plump, handsome, charming naked Lady?' Yet this association is complicated by another link drawn between being a 'fat' woman and being sexually incontinent. A popular seventeenth-century joke reads: 'Will sayes his wife's so fat, shee scarce can goe' but concludes that in fact the wife is 'wondrous light', which puns on the second meaning of the adjective as 'unchaste'. The joke is evidence that those deemed 'fat' suffered marginalisation or ridicule, both in literary representations and in wider cultural contexts.

The final strand of my research is exemplified by Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), in which a direct comparison is made between Ursula, a famously obese character, and Eve – and by extension all women – as Ursula states that she will 'melt away to the first woman, a rib again' (II.ii.50-1). This connection illustrates the need for the project to take into account obesity's religious dimension. The doctrinal upheavals of the Reformation entailed a refiguring of the nature of sin, including the deadly sin of gluttony. The implications of this refiguring of

gluttony, alongside the practice of using fast days as proscribed methods of worship, needs to be part of any cultural history of obesity. This strand in my research will offer further insight into attitudes to obesity and also add to the body of knowledge on religious observance in a changing world. These various strands of my research, taken in sum, provide the ground plan of the monograph I intend to produce on this topic.

My research in this area led to an MA class on the topic last year, as part of the early modern body module I co-teach. I am looking forward to presenting a paper from this research at the Renaissance Society for America's annual conference in New York in March next year. At the start of my fellowship I was awarded a contract by Palgrave Macmillan for the publication of a monograph which grew from my PhD thesis, and the

fellowship meant that I had space to work on the final revisions for the previous project, while beginning my new one. My book *Menstruation and the Female Body* was published in October 2013. I would like to place on record my gratitude to the Society for the grant, which allowed me to continue in academia, at a time when this was far from certain, and led to me getting a position as Lecturer in English at Loughborough University.

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: AGENDA

The Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, London  
Friday 2 May 2014, 4.30 pm

1. Notification of AOB (notice to reach the Secretary 24 hours before the AGM)
2. Acceptance of the Minutes of the AGM held on 3 May 2013
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes
4. Report of the Chair (Professor Peter Mack)
5. Report of the Vice-Chair (Professor Andrew Hadfield)
6. Report of the Hon. Secretary (Dr Gabriele Neher)
7. Reports of the Treasurer (Dr Piers Baker-Bates) and Independent Examiner (Mr David Terry)
  - i. Approval of the financial statement and report for financial year 2013
  - ii. Appointment of the Independent Examiner for financial year 2014
8. Reports of the Editors:
  - i. *Renaissance Studies* (Professor Jennifer Richards)
  - ii. *Bulletin of the Society for Renaissance Studies* (Drs Ruth Ahnert, Joanna Craigwood and William Rossiter)
9. Appointment of Officers:
  - i. Honorary Treasurer
  - ii. Honorary Secretary
10. Elections to Council (at time of going to press March 2014):
  - i. Scottish Rep
  - ii. Webmaster
  - iii. Nominations are invited for 3 or 4 places on Council; nomination forms to be submitted to the Secretary Dr Gabriele Neher by 28 April 2014; contact Dr Neher for forms (see sidebar for details)
11. The *Renaissance Studies* Essay (Article) Prize
12. SRS Southampton 2014
13. Future Programmes and Events
14. SRS Conference 2016 and beyond
15. AOB

All SRS Members are warmly invited to attend the AGM.

The Society's Annual Lecture will follow the AGM. Please see the back cover of the issue for full details.

Any inquiries concerning the AGM should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary:

Dr Gabriele Neher  
Department of Art History,  
Humanities,  
The University of Nottingham  
NG7 2RD

e-mail:  
gabriele.neher@nottingham.ac.uk

tel:  
0115 951 3184

# MINUTES OF THE 2013 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, London  
Friday 3 May 2013, 4.30pm

## Principal officers present

Professor Judith Bryce (Chair);  
Professor Peter Mack (Vice Chair); Dr  
Gabriele Neher (Hon. Secretary); Dr  
Piers Baker-Bates (Acting Hon.  
Treasurer)

## Business

1. Notification of AOB – none received.
2. The Minutes of the AGM 4th May 2012 were accepted (Proposed: Piers Baker-Bates; Seconded: Peter Mack)
3. Matters arising from the Minutes: none.
4. Report of the Chair (Professor Judith Bryce)
  - a. The Chair apologised for the delay in posting the *Bulletin* and explained that the delay was due to a printer's error.
  - b. She then turned to outline the financial position of the SRS in response to the changing climate for publishing following the Finch Report and in the light of debates about Open Access publishing. While the SRS is in reasonable financial shape, the Society faces a period of severely reduced income, and the Society will respond by reducing some of its outgoings.
  - c. In the first instance, the Chair reported that the Society will appoint one (not three) post-doctoral fellowship for 2013 with the current round of applications closing on May 31st 2013.
  - d. The Chair is very pleased to report that the Society awarded its first Biennial Book Prize at the Manchester SRS Conference to Dr Sjoerd Levelt; the next biennial book prize will be

awarded in 2014. Deadline for submissions is December 2013. Following on from the initiatives reported to the AGM in 2012, she also announced the first recipients of the Museums and Galleries bursary scheme (Peter Black and Xanthe Brooke); for the Undergraduate Essay Prize (Adam Smith); and Schools Essay Prize (Harriet Mansell). The Chair thanked the members of Council who had served on the selection committees for their work on these initiatives.

- e. The Chair congratulated Dr Jerome de Groot and his team on the success of the SRS Manchester 2012 Conference.
  - f. The Chair thanked out-going Officers and Council Members.
  - g. She concluded her final report as Chair by thanking the incoming chair, Professor Peter Mack, for his support over the past three years, and spoke of the honour and privilege of having been associated with the SRS.
5. Report of the Vice-Chair (Professor Peter Mack)
    - a. The Vice-Chair spoke of the valuable service that SRS continues to provide for the community of Renaissance scholars and students of the Renaissance, and gave his thanks as incoming Chair for the careful stewardship of Professor Bryce who leaves the Society in excellent shape.
    - b. The Vice-Chair outlined the challenges to come, particularly in financial terms, and declared himself the incoming 'austerity chair', with a manifesto that would by necessity need to focus less on an expansion of

the Society's portfolios, but rather concern itself with a consolidation of core activities.

- c. He asked members to respond to the questionnaire distributed both via the *Bulletin* and electronically via SuveyMonkey in order to help Council identify the activities most valued by the membership.
6. Hon. Secretary's Report (Dr Gabriele Neher)
    - a. The Hon. Secretary informed the membership that in 2014, the Society would be electing its next Hon. Secretary, and that nominations would be sought.
  7. Hon. Treasurer's Report (Dr Piers Baker-Bates)
    - a. The Acting Hon. Treasurer reported a current balance of £55,441. Income generated by *Renaissance Studies* and membership fees has increased.
    - b. AGM members approved the financial statement and report for the financial year 2012. (Proposed: Gabriele Neher; Seconded: Peter Mack).
    - c. David Terry was appointed Independent Examiner for the financial year 2013.
  8. Editor's Report: *Renaissance Studies* (Professor Jennifer Richards)
    - a. Professor Richards thanked the editorial team for their hard work in creating a very successful year for the journal, and also the continuing members of the Editorial Board
    - b. She outlined some of the Open Access debates for the membership and reiterated the Vice-Chair's words about the need for the Society to be prudent.

- c. Professor Richards also reported that Council had voted down a proposal from the publishers, Wiley-Blackwell, for a 6.5% price increase for the journal for 2014.
- d. Dr Jill Burke reported on the Special Issues.
9. Editors' Report: *Bulletin* (Dr Ruth Ahnert, Dr Joanna Craigwood, Helen Graham-Matheson)
- a. Dr Ahnert reported a successful year for the *Bulletin* and expressed her thanks to Helen Graham-Matheson for standing in as editor during Dr Craigwood's maternity leave.
- b. The editors are working on an overhaul of the look and content of the *Bulletin*, which will launch in October 2013. It will be in full colour and A4 format. The editors are always grateful for suggestions for content.
- c. Deadlines for contributions are 15 August 2013 for inclusion of materials in the October Issue and 15 February 2014 for inclusion in the April issue.
10. Election of Officers and Council Members (with tenure until May 2016 except where otherwise stated)
- a. Professor Andrew Hadfield was elected Vice-Chair. From 2016 to 2019 Professor Hadfield will lead the Society as its Chair.
- b. Dr Piers Baker-Bates was appointed Acting Hon. Treasurer until May 2014.
- c. Dr Liam Haydon was elected for a first term as Membership Secretary.
- d. Dr Rachel Willie was elected for a first term as Welsh Representative.
- e. The following Ordinary Members of Council were elected: Dr Jose Perez de Diez; Dr Jerome de Groot; Helen Graham-Matheson; Professor Richard Wistreich.
11. The SRS Annual Essay (Article) Prize for 2012 was awarded to Yael Sela Teichler for her article 'My Ladye Nevells Booke: music, patronage and cultural negotiation in late sixteenth-century England', *Renaissance Studies*, Volume 26, Number 1, February 2012, pp. 88-111.
12. SRS Conferences
- a. The dates for Southampton 2014 have now been fixed for 13-15 July 2014.
- b. Council have awarded the 2016 Conference to Glasgow, and are now inviting bids for hosting the 2018 Conference (details to be announced in the October *Bulletin*).
13. AOB. There was no further business.
14. Date of the next meeting. The next Annual Meeting will take place on Friday 2 May 2014 at the Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, London, at 4.30 pm. It will be followed by the Annual Lecture.



# SOCIETY FOR RENAISSANCE STUDIES ANNUAL LECTURE

SRS members are warmly invited to attend the Society's Annual Lecture at The Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, London, following the Society's AGM, on Friday 2nd May, at 5.30pm:

Professor Alexandra Walsham (University of Cambridge)

'Domesticating the Reformation: Material Culture, Memory and Confessional Identity in Early Modern England'

A wine reception will be held in The Warburg Institute Common Room following the lecture.

## THE SOCIETY FOR RENAISSANCE STUDIES

Founded 1967

### COUNCIL (April 2014)

Prof. Peter Mack (Hon. Chair)  
Prof. Andrew Hadfield (Hon. Vice Chair)  
Prof. Judith Bryce (Chair *ex-officio*)  
Dr Piers Baker-Bates (Hon. Treasurer/ OU Rep.)  
Dr Gabriele Neher (Hon. Secretary)  
Dr Liam Haydon (Membership Secretary)  
Dr Alexander Samson (Fellowship Officer)  
Dr Alison Thorne (Scottish Representative)  
Dr Rachel Willie (Welsh Representative)  
Prof. Daniel Carey (Irish Representative)  
Dr Harriet Knight (Schools Representative)  
Prof. Ceri Sullivan (Conference Co-ordinator)  
Dr Miles Pattenden (Webmaster)  
Prof. Jennifer Richards (Editor, *Renaissance Studies*)  
Dr Jill Burke (Associate Editor, *Renaissance Studies*)  
Dr Andrew King (Book Reviews Editor, *Renaissance Studies*)  
Dr Debra Strickland (Exhibition Reviews Editor, *RS*)  
Dr Scott Nethersole (Exhibition Reviews Editor, *RS*)

Dr Joanna Craigwood (Editor, *Bulletin*)  
Dr William Rossiter (Editor, *Bulletin*)  
Dr Caroline Campbell (Museums & Galleries Officer)  
Dr Kate Harvey (SRS Postdoctoral Fellow)  
Council Members without portfolio:  
Dr Sarah Alyn-Stacey  
Dr Harald Braun  
Dr Jerome de Groot  
Dr Andrea Gáldy  
Ms Helen Graham-Matheson  
Prof. Claire Jowitt  
Dr Kevin Killleen  
Dr Claire Norton  
Dr Liz Oakley-Brown  
Mr José Perez Díez  
Dr Regina Poertner  
Dr Adam Smyth  
Prof. Richard Wistreich

Membership of the Society is open to anyone interested in Renaissance studies and to institutions. All members receive issues of the *Bulletin*, which is published twice yearly, in April and October. Membership is also a precondition of attending the biennial conference and applying for the various prizes and funding schemes. Details of how to join the Society can be found on our website: [http://www.rensoc.org.uk/join\\_us](http://www.rensoc.org.uk/join_us). The annual subscription is £20 for individual members, £35 for institutions, £25 for overseas members and £15 for students. Copies of back issues of the *Bulletin* are available to members from the Editors at £2 each.