

## Love, Sex, and Desire in the Middle Ages (LT 20)

In the Middle Ages, as today, the categories which organised love, sex, and desire were sites of contest and argument. This course explores these contested zones to ask how love, in all of its varied forms, shapes medieval literature and culture. From devotional writings to manuals for seduction, a vast array of medieval texts examine licit and illicit desires. Each seminar attempts to approach the difficult and obscure realm of love from a new direction, but, as will be seen, different kinds of text and different ways of thinking overlap to a considerable degree. Each seminar invites participants to read a number of 'core' primary and secondary materials, which will be circulated electronically in advance.

The 'Useful background' section lists a formidable range of theoretical approaches and wide-ranging historical and literary overviews of the medieval period. It would take a very long time to read all of these studies in the detail they require, but dipping into one or two that interest you would be a useful and rewarding exercise; some you might return to later in the term.

### Useful background

#### **Some foundational primary materials**

Augustine, *City of God*, book XIV only, in Augustine, *The City of God Against the Pagans*, ed. and tr. George E. McCracken et al., 7 vols, Loeb Classical Library, 411–17 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957–1972).

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

[Can be read in any good study Bible, but try to access the Douay-Rheims version, which closely follows the Vulgate. If you wish to consult the Latin text, use *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, ed. Robert Weber et al. (5<sup>th</sup> edn, Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007; first pub. 1969).]

#### **Some influential theoretical approaches**

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, tr. Robert Hurley, 3 vols (Harmondsworth: Viking, 1986; first publ. as *Histoire de la sexualité*, 1976–84).

Robert A. Padgug, 'Sexual Matters: On Conceptualizing Sexuality in History', *Radical History Review* 20 (1979), 3–23.

Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature, and Difference* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

Jonathan Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991).

Eve Kofolsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993).

Gayle Rubin, 'Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality', in *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).

Heather Love, *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

David Halperin, 'What Is Sex For?', *Critical Enquiry* 43 (2016), 1-31.

### **Important wide-ranging studies**

John Baldwin, *The Language of Sex: Five Voices from Northern France Around 1200* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1981).

Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1989).

James Brundage, *Law Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

Caroline Walker Bynum, 'Why All the Fuss about the Body? A Medievalist's Perspective', *Critical Inquiry* 22 (1995), 1-33.

Joan Cadden, *Nothing Natural Is Shameful: Sodomy and Science in Late Medieval Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Post-Modern* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

Georges Duby, *Medieval Marriage: Two Models from Medieval France*, tr. Elborg Foster (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

Mark Jordan, *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

Karma Lochrie, *Heterosyncrasies: Female Sexuality when Normal Wasn't* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

Robert Mills, *Seeing Sodomy in the Middle Ages* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

Pierre J. Payer, *The Bridling of Desire: Views of Sex in the Later Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

— — *Sex and the New Medieval Literature of Confession, 1150–1300* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2009).

— — *Sex and the Penitentials: The Development of a Sexual Code 550–1150* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984).

Nicolette Zeeman, *'Piers Plowman' and the Medieval Discourse of Desire* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006).

### 1. Spiritual desire: The Song of Songs

#### **Primary material**

The Song of Songs, in *The Vulgate Bible, Volume III: The Poetical Books*, ed. Swift Edgar and Angela M. Kinney, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 8 (Cambridge, MA, 2011).

Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermons 1–9 on the *Song of Songs*, in *On the Song of Songs I*, tr. Kilian J. Walsh and Corneille Halflants (Kalamazoo, MI, 1971).

Richard Rolle, 'A Song of Love to Jesus', in *English Writings of Richard Rolle, Hermit of Hampole*, ed. Hope Emily Allen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963; first publ. 1931), pp. 43–8.

*Pearl*, in *Works of the 'Gawain' Poet*, ed. Ad Putter and Myra Stokes, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin, 2014); see also *Pearl*, ed. E.V. Gordon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953).

Marguerite Porete, *Le Mirouer des simples ames / Speculum simplicium animarum*, ed. Romana Guarnieri and Paul Verdeyen, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio medievalis 69 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986); Margaret Porette, [= Marguerite Porete – note spelling], *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, tr. Edmund Colledge, J.C. Marler, and Judith Grant, with a foreword by Kent Emery, Jr., Notre Dame Texts in Medieval Culture 6 (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999) – focus on the Prologue and chs 1–22.

#### **Secondary material**

Georges Bataille, 'Mysticism and Sensuality', in *Eroticism: Death and Sensuality*, tr. Mary Dalwood (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1982; originally published Paris, 1957), 221–52.

[cf. also the chapters on Bataille in Amy Hollywood, *Sensible Ecstasy: Mysticism, Sexual Difference, and the Demands of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).]

Jean Leclercq, *Monks and Love in Twelfth-century France: Psycho-Historical Essays* (Oxford, 1979), esp. Ch.3, 'A Biblical Master of Love: Solomon', 27–61.

Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), ch. 5, 'La mystique courtoise'

### Further reading

*Les Cantiques Salemon: The Song of Songs in MS Paris BNF fr. 14966*, ed. Tony Hunt (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006)

*Glossa ordinaria. Pars 22, In Canticum canticorum*, ed. and trans. Mary Dove (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997).

Julian of Norwich, *The Revelations of Divine Love*, ed. Barry Windeatt (Oxford, OUP: 2016).

David Aers, 'The Self Mourning: Reflections on *Pearl*', *Speculum*, 68 (1993), 54–73.

Astell, *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990)

*A Companion to the 'Gawain'-Poet*, ed. by Derek Brewer and Jonathan Gibson, (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997).

[A good starting point for any detailed work on the *Gawain*-poet]

Amy Hollywood, 'Song, Experience, and the Book in Benedictine Monasticism', *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge, 2012), 59–79.

Barbara Newman, *Medieval Crossover: Reading the Secular Against the Sacred* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), Ch. 1, 1–54.

Denis Renevey, *Language, Self and Love: Hermeneutics in the Writings of Richard Rolle and the Commentaries on the Song of Songs* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2001)

Caroline Walker Bynum, 'The Body of Christ in the Later Middle Ages: A Reply to Leo Steinberg', in *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone, 1992), 79–118.

Nicholas Watson, *Richard Rolle and the Invention of Authority* (Cambridge, 1991)

## 2. Courtly love?

### **Primary material**

Three lyrics (to be circulated in advance):

Bernart de Ventadorn, 'Can vei la lauzeta mover'

'With longyng Y am lad' (MS Harley 2253);

John Gower, 'De fin amour c'est le droit et nature', *Cinkante Balades*

Chrétien de Troyes, *Les Romans de Chrétien de Troyes: Le Chevalier de la charrette*, ed. Mario Roques, *Classiques français du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Champion, 1958); 'The Knight of the Cart', in *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*, tr. David Staines (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 170–256.

Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Félix Lecoy, 3 vols, *Classiques français du Moyen Âge*, 92, 95, 98 (Paris: Champion, 1965–1975); *The Romance of the Rose*, tr. Frances Horgan, *Oxford World's Classics* (Oxford: OUP, 2008; first publ. 1994) [lines 1–4058 only]

### **Secondary material**

Jacques Lacan, 'Courtly Love as Anamorphosis', in Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis 1959–1960*, ed. Jacques Alain-Miller, tr. Dennis Porter (New York and London: Norton, 1992; first publ. as *Le Séminaire, Livre VII*, 1986).

Slavoj Žižek, 'Courtly Love, or Woman as Thing', in *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Women and Causality* (London: Verso, 1994).

David Aers, *Community, Gender, and Individual Identity, English Writing 1360–1430* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), **TROILUS CHAPTER**

Sarah Kay, 'Desire and Subjectivity' in Sarah Kay and Simon Gaunt (eds), *The Troubadours: An Introduction* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999).

## Further reading

Thomas of Britain, *Tristan*, ed. and tr. Stewart Gregory, Garland Library of Medieval Literature Series A, 78 (New York and London: Garland, 1991)

Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Book of the Duchess* in *The Riverside Chaucer*, gen. ed. Larry D. Benson (3<sup>rd</sup> edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; first pub. 1987)

Giorgio Agamben, *Stanzas: Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*, tr. Ronald R. Martinez, *Theory and History of Literature*, 69 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

E.T. Donaldson, 'The Myth of Courtly Love', in Donaldson, *Speaking of Chaucer* (London: Athlone Press, 1970), 154-63.

Peter Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of The European Love-Lyric*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965).

Simon Gaunt, *Love and Death in Medieval French and Occitan Courtly Literature: Martyrs to Love* (Oxford: OUP, 2006).

C.S. Lewis, *Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: OUP, 1936), esp. 1-137.

Bernard O'Donoghue, 'The Reality of Courtly Love', in *Writings on Love in the English Middle Ages*, ed. Helen Cooney, *Studies in Arthurian and Courtly Cultures* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 7-24

D.W. Robertson, 'The Concept of Courtly Love as an Impediment to the Understanding of Medieval Texts', in *The Meaning of Courtly Love*, ed. F.X. Newman (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1968), 1-18.

James A. Schultz, *Courtly Love, Love of Courtliness, and the History of Sexuality* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Stephen C. Yeager, *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

### 3. Seduction, misogyny, violence

(Some of the materials we will address in this session include scenes of sexual violence; at the beginning of the seminar course we will discuss and decide how or whether to discuss this in the seminar)

#### **Primary material**

Ovid, *Ars amatoria* in Ovid, *The Art of Love, and Other Poems*, ed. and tr. J.H. Mozley, Loeb Classical Library, 232 (2nd edn, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979; first pub. 1939).

Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Lecoy: the discourse of Ami; the discourse of La Vieille

Chaucer, Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale, in *Riverside Chaucer*.

Christine de Pizan, 'Epistre a Jean de Montreuil', in Christine de Pizan et al., *Le Débat sur le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Erick Hicks (Paris: Champion, 1977); *Debate of the 'Romance of the Rose'*, ed. and tr. David Hult (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010)

#### **Secondary material**

Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[compare the discussion that emerged in the wake of Bloch's publication of a version of this piece in *Medieval Feminist Newsletter* 6 (1988), 2-15]

Marilynn Desmond, *Ovid's Art and the Wife of Bath: The Ethics of Erotic Violence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), ch. 1.

Helen Solterer, *The Master and Minerva: Disputing Women in French Medieval Culture* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 151-75.

#### **Further reading**

*Pamphilus*, in *Seven Medieval Latin Comedies*, tr. Alison Goddard Elliott, Garland Library of Medieval Literature, Series B 20 (New York: Garland, 1984).

Andreas Capellanus, *On Love [=De Amore]*, ed. and trans. P.G. Walsh (London: Duckworth, 1982) [esp pp.198–223, 302–325].

*Woman Defamed and Woman Defended*, ed. Alcuin Blamires, with Karen Pratt and C.W. Marx (Oxford: OUP, 1992)

David Aers, 'Masculine Identity in the Courtly Community: The Self Loving in *Troilus and Criseyde*', in Aers, *Community, Gender, and Individual Identity: English Writing, 1360–1430* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 117–52.

Peter L. Allen, 'Ars amandi, ars legendi: Love Poetry and Literary Theory in Ovid, Andreas Capellanus, and Jean de Meun', *Exemplaria* 1 (1989).

Alcuin Blamires, *Chaucer, Ethics, and Gender* (Oxford: OUP, 2006)

Christopher Cannon, 'Chaucer and Rape: Uncertainty's Certainties' in *Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature*, ed. Elizabeth Robertson and Christine M. Rose (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 255–79.

Carolyn Dinshaw, *Chaucer's Sexual Poetics* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

Jill Mann, *Feminizing Chaucer*, *Chaucer Studies* 30 (Cambridge: Brewer, 2003; originally published as *Geoffrey Chaucer*, 1991).

Marjorie Curry Woods, 'Rape and the Pedagogical Rhetoric of Sexual Violence', in Rita Copeland and Nicolette Zeeman (eds), *Criticism and Dissent in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 56–86.

#### 4. Ordering the Body

##### **Primary**



David Lorenzo Boyd and Ruth Mazo Karras, 'The Interrogation of a Male Transvestite Prostitute in Fourteenth-Century London', *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1 (1995), 459–65.

*Cleanness*, in *Works of the 'Gawain'-Poet*, ed. Ad Putter and Myra Stokes, Penguin Classics (London: Penguin, 2014)

*Silence: A Thirteenth-Century French Romance*, ed. and tr. Sarah Roche-Mahdi (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2007), lines 1–2656

The Pardoner's Prologue from *The Canterbury Tales*, in *The Riverside Chaucer*, gen. ed. Larry D. Benson, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; first pub. 1987)

## Secondary

Caroline Walker Bynum, 'Why All the Fuss about the Body? A Medievalist's Perspective', *Critical Inquiry* 22 (1995), 1–33.

Heather Love, *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), Introduction.

Joan Cadden, *The Meaning of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages: Medicine, Science, and Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 1995), 167–227.

Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Post-Modern* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), ch. 2.

Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 122–134

A.V.C. Schmidt, 'Kynde Craft and the Play of Paramorez: Natural and Unnatural Love in Purity', in Boitani and Torti (eds), *Genres, Themes, and Images in English Literature from the Fourteenth to the Fifteenth Century: The J.A.W Bennett Memorial Lectures* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1986), 105–125.

## Further reading

Alain de Lille, *Complaint of Nature*, in Alain de Lille, *Literary Works*, *Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library*, 22 ed. and trans. Winthrop Wetherbee (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2013), chs 8–11.

Jean de Meun, *Roman de la rose*, Nature's complaint, ll. 16699–19375, in Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Roman de la rose*, ed. Lecoy; *Romance of the Rose*, tr. Horgan, pp. 259–99.

David Lorenzo Boyd and Ruth Mazo Karras, 'The Interrogation of a Male Transvestite Prostitute in Fourteenth-Century London', *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1 (1995), 459–65.

Jordan, Mark, *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

Elizabeth B. Keiser, *Courtly Desire and Medieval Homophobia: The Legitimation of Sexual Pleasure in 'Cleanness' and Its Contexts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997).

Allen J. Frantzen, 'The Disclosure of Sodomy in *Cleanness*', *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 111 (1996), 451–64.

Jonathan Morton, 'Queer Metaphors and Queerer Reproduction in the *De planctu Naturae* and the *Roman de la rose*', in Manuele Gragnolati, Tristan Kay, Elena Lombardi, and Francesca Southerden (eds) *Dante and Desire in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Legenda, 2012), 208–226.

Robert Mills, *Seeing Sodomy in the Middle Ages* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

Larry Scanlon, 'Unspeakable Pleasures: Alain de Lille, Sexual Regulation and the Priesthood of Genius', *Romanic Review* 86 (1995), 213–42

A.V.C. Schmidt, 'Kynde Craft and the *Play of Paramorez*: Natural and Unnatural Love in *Purity*', in Boitani and Torti (eds), *Genres, Themes, and Images in English Literature from the Fourteenth to the Fifteenth Century: The J.A.W Bennett Memorial Lectures* (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1986), 105–125.

James A. Schultz, *Courtly Love, Love of Courtliness, and the History of Sexuality* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Winthrop Wetherbee, *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

Hugh White, *Nature, Sex, and Goodness in a Medieval Literary Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Ziolkowski, Jan, *Alan of Lille's Grammar of Sex: The Meaning of Grammar to a Twelfth-Century Intellectual*, *Speculum Anniversary Monographs*, 10 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1985).

