

Spring 2021 ♦ COMP 480/580, ENGL 451/551,
WMST 379/579

Th 4:00-6:30 ♦ In DSH 327 + via Zoom

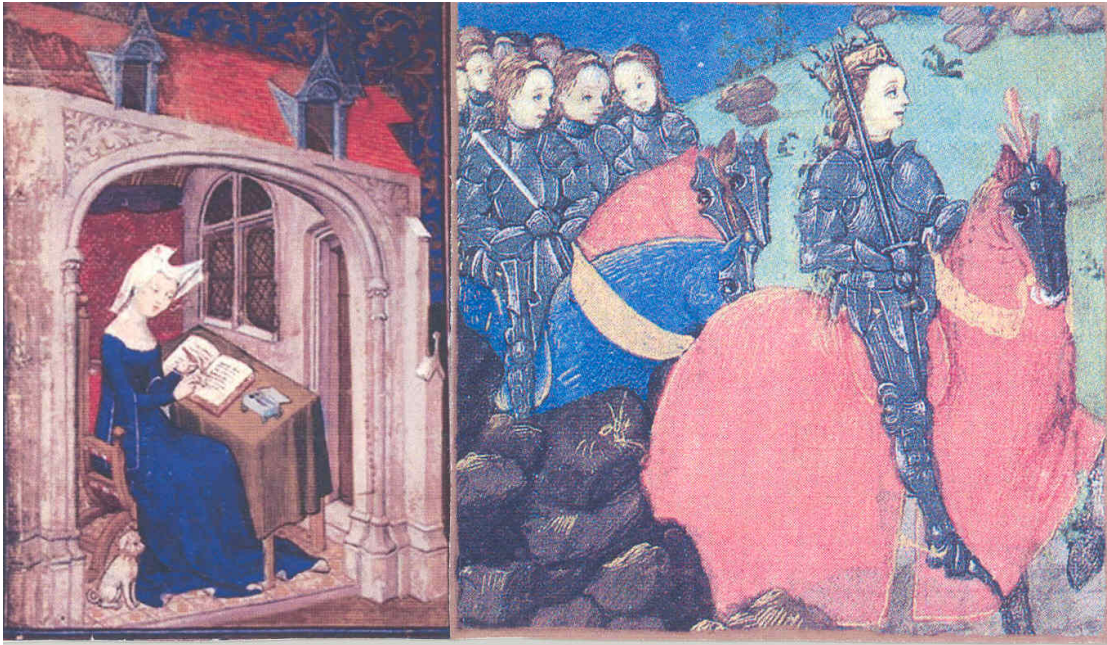
Dr. Obermeier

Uppity Medieval Women

Office Hours: by Appointment via Phone or Zoom

Email: aobermei@unm.edu

Website: <http://www.anitaobermeier.com>



Required Texts

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

Obermeier, Anita, and Gregory Castle. *Guide to Style*. 2020. On class webpage.

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

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

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

All other readings will be available in the weekly resources on the website:

<http://www.anitaobermeier.com/uppity-medieval-women>

Course Requirements

Undergraduates:

Oral Group Presentation	worth 15%
Responses	worth 15%
Midterm	worth 10%
8-10-page Paper	worth 25%
Final	worth 20%
Class Participation	worth 15%

For grading rubrics and scale: TBA at <http://www.anitaobermeier.com>

Graduates:

Oral Group Presentation	worth 10%
Article Presentation	worth 10%
Literature Review for Research Paper	worth 15%
15-18-page Research Paper	worth 30%
In-class Final	worth 20%
Class Participation	worth 15%

Tentative Syllabus

1. Texts are to be read for the day indicated. Any texts that are not books in the list above can be found on the course webpage by clicking on the Week 1, Week 2 tabs, etc.
2. Graduates should read at least one of the articles under Graduate Reading per session.
3. Undergraduates are encouraged to read the Graduate Reading material, but are not required to do so.

Week 1

TH 1.21 Introduction to the Course

Video Presentations: *Medieval Lives: Marriage; Inside the Medieval Mind: Sex. Prudence Allen, Concept of Woman*, “Hippocratic, Platonic, and Aristotelian Gender Theories.”

Jane Chance, “Introduction” to *Gender and Text in the Later Middle Ages*.

Week 2

TH 1.28 Ancient Women Defamed and Defended

Sappho: “Poems” (<https://www.uh.edu/~cldue/texts/sappho.html>).

Sulpicia: “Eleven Elegies.”

Juvenal: “Satire VI.”

Ovid: *Heroides*, read **at least 3** of these:

- “Dido to Aeneas”
- “Helen to Paris”
- “Hypermnestra to Lynceus”
- “Medea to Jason”
- “Paris to Helen”
- “Penelope to Ulysses”
- “Sappho to Phaon”

Graduate Reading:

Laurel Fulkerson, “Caveat lector: Thoughts on Gender and Power.”

Sara H. Lindheim: “Setting Her Straight: Ovid Re-presents Sappho.”

Undergraduate Response 1 due.

F 1.29 Last day to add, change sections, credit hours, and change grade mode in Loboweb without a fee.

Week 3

TH 2.4 Biblical and Early Christian Women Defamed and Defended

Proba: “The Creation of Adam and Eve.”

Jerome: “Against Jovinian.”

Aquinas (and Anselm): “Summa Theologiae.”

Guido delle Colonne: “History of the Destruction of Troy.”

Hrotsvit of Gandersheim:

- “Letter”
- Prefaces
- “Dulcitius”

Graduate Reading:

Hélène Cixous, “The Laugh of Medusa.”

Jessie: Sherry Ortner, “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?”

Group Presentation Options: Dhuoda; Queen Clothild; Pope Joan; St. Radegund; Baudonivia.
Group Presentation: Asa and Isabel G. on Queen Clothild.
Optional Undergraduate Response.
F 2.5 **Last day to drop without a grade and a full refund.**

Week 4

TH 2.11 **The Genius**

Hildegard of Bingen: Selections from *Letters*, *Songs*, and *Scivias*.

Graduate Reading:

Grace: Albrecht Classen, "Crossing Gender . . . Hildegard of Bingen."

Julia Kristeva, "Women's Time."

Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, "Women, Gender, and Church History."

Group Presentation Options: Adela of Blois; Jutta of Sponheim; Matilda of Canossa.

Group Presentation: Carly, Ivanna, and Margaret on Pope Joan.

Undergraduate Response 2 due.

Week 5

TH 2.18 **The Star-Crossed Lovers**

Abelard and Heloise: The *Historia Calamitatum*, 10-21, 43-46; and pick **at least 2** from

- "Letter 1"
- "Letter 2"
- "Letter 3"
- "Letter 4"

Graduate Reading:

Johnbosco: Judith Bennett, "Medieval Ideologies of Gender."

Theresa Tinkle, "Women on Top in Medieval Exegesis."

Group Presentation Options: Anna Comnena; Christina of Markyate; Trotula of Salerno.

Group Presentation: Averie and Grace on Trotula of Salerno.

Undergraduate Response 3 due.

Movie Clips: *Vision* (on Hildegard) and *Stealing Heaven* (on Abelard and Heloise).

Week 6

TH 2.25 **Inventors of Medieval Love**

Troubadour and Trobairitz Poetry.

Andreas Capellanus: *De Amore*.

Graduate Reading:

Matilda Brucker, "Debatable Fictions."

Brooke Findley, "Reading Sincerity at the Intersection of Troubadour/Trobairitz Poetry."

Group Presentation Options: Blanche of Castille; Eleanor of Aquitaine; Marie de Champagne.

Group Presentation: Aspyr, Emma, and Erin on Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Optional Undergraduate Response.

Week 7

TH 3.4 **The Empire Strikes Back**

Marie de France: *Lais*.

Graduate Reading:

Toril Moi, "Desire in Language: Andreas Capellanus and the Controversy of Courtly Love."

Jennifer Willging, "The Power of Feminine Anger."

Group Presentation Options: Clemence of Barking; Kasmunah; Marguerite of Provence.

Undergraduate Response 4 due.

Week 8

TH 3.11 **The Gender Bender**

Heldris de Cornuaille: *Silence: A Thirteen-Century Romance*.

Graduate Reading:

Carly: Susan Bordo, "From Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body."

Aspyn: Elizabeth Waters, "The Third Path: Alternative Sex, Alternative Gender in *The Roman de Silence*."

Presentation Options: Alessandra Galioni; Clarice of Rouen; Isabella of France.

Undergraduate Response 5 due.

Undergraduate Midterm Exam Prep.

TH 3.18 Spring Break

Week 9

TH 3.25 **Midterm Exam for Undergraduates: 4:00-5:15.**

Discussion of Literature Review and Paper for Graduate Students: 4:00-5:15.

Anchoresses and Beguines

Julian of Norwich: *Shewings*.

Graduate Reading:

Emma: Ann Matter, "Gender and the Image of God in Medieval Theology."

Group Presentation Options: Beatrix Galindo; Gertrud the Great; St. Bridget of Sweden.

Group Presentation: Annesha, Katherine, Sloane on Bridget of Sweden.

Week 10

TH 4.1 **Anchoresses and Beguines cont.:**

Mechthild of Magdeburg: Selections from *The Flowing Light of God*.

Margery Kempe: Selections from *The Book of Margery Kempe*.

Marguerite de Porete: *Mirror of Simple Souls*.

Graduate Reading:

Simone Kügeler-Race, "Carnal Manifestations of Divine Love in the Mystical Writings of Elsbeth of Oye, Mechthild of Magdeburg and Margery Kempe."

Lukas: Liz McAvoy, "Virgin, Mother, Whore: The Sexual Spirituality of Margery Kempe."

Presentation Options: Gertrud of Hackeborn; Marguerite d'Oingt; Jeanne de Montfort.

Group Presentation: Isabel S. and Yuri on KiKimora.

Undergraduate Response 6 due.

Week 11

TH 4.8

Celtic Women, Celtic Goddesses

From the *Mabinogion*: “Pwyll Lord of Dyved.”

Morgan from the *Vulgate Lancelot*.

Beroul: *The Romance of Tristan*.

Graduate Reading:

Erin: Albrecht Classen, “The Role of the Irish Queen Isolde in Gottfried von Strassburg’s *Tristan*.”

Averie: Victoria Sharpe, “The Goddess Restored.”

Presentation Options: “The Quarrel of the Rose”; Jeanne de Clisson.

Group Presentation: Andrea, Johnbosco, and Patrick on Jeanne de Clisson.

Undergraduate Response 7 due.

Week 12

TH 4.15

Hyperfemininity: The Good, the Sneaky, and the Ugly

Boccaccio: *Decameron*,

- “Third Day: First, Third, and Fourth Story”
- “Introduction to Fourth Day”
- “Sixth Day: Seventh Story”

Jean de Meun: *Romance of the Rose*.

Chaucer: *The Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale*.

Graduate Reading:

Laura diSisto, “Boccaccio, Friend or Foe?: An Examination of the Role of Women in the *Decameron*.”

Anne McTaggart, “What Women Want?”

Presentation Options: Isotta Nogarola; Laura Cereta; Rose of Burford.

Group Presentation: Jessie, Lukus, and Remy on “The Quarrel of the Rose.”

Undergraduate Response 8 due.

F 4.16

Paper Proposals Due via email.

Week 13

TH 4.22

Gynocentric Mythographer

Christine de Pizan: *The Book of the City of Ladies*, 5-65, 78-80, 82-85, 91-92, 101-2, 105-110, 117-18, 122-24, 139-42, 147-52, 169-72, 195-98, 235-40.

“The Tale of Joan of Arc.”

Graduate Reading:

Judith Butler, excerpts from *Gender Trouble*.

Judith Kellogg, “Confronting Ovid: Christine de Pizan’s Re-Representation of Women.”

Presentation Options: Isabella of Bavaria; Margery Baxter; Margery Paston.

Undergraduate Response 9 due.

Week 14

M 4.26

Graduate Literature Review due via email in MS Word format.

TH 4.29

Savior of the Realm or Heretic?

Joan of Arc: *The Condemnation Trial of Joan of Arc*, especially 220-222, 47-77, 90-93, 118-28, 130-54, 164-67, 182-95.

Graduate Reading:

Luce Irigaray, "This Sex Which Is Not One."
Cordelia Beattie, *Medieval Single Women*: "Classification in Cultural Context."
Presentation Options: Isabella of Castile; Margaret of Anjou; Sarah of Würzburg.
Group Presentation: Bo on Gwerful Mechain.
Undergraduate Response 10 due.

Week 15

TH 5.6 **Woman as Witch**

Kramer and Sprenger: Selections from the *Malleus Maleficarum*, Part 1 and Part 2.

Graduate Reading:

Kristin: David Harley, "Historians as Demonologists: The Myth of the Midwife-witch."

Shulamith Shahar, "Witches and the Heretical Movements."

Presentation Options: Alice Kyteler; Gwerful Mechain; Lady Killigrew.

Group Presentation: Ian, Jillian, and Kristin on Alice Kyteler.

Review and Final Exam Prep.

Optional Undergraduate Response.

Week 16

TH 5.13 **Final Exam** 4:00-6:00.

SU 5.16 Final Paper Due at midnight. Email submission in MS Word format.

Course Objectives

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

Learning Outcomes

At end of the course, students should be able:

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

Course Policies

1. Attendance is mandatory. Since your progress in the course will depend a great deal on what we discuss in class, I expect class attendance and participation (actual contributions to the class discussion). I will take roll each class. Half of your participation grade is based on attendance; the other half on contributions in the course. Due to Covid-19, I will look at attendance more holistically. The course will be recorded as well and made available upon request.

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

3. Undergraduate Written Responses: You are expected to write a 1-page (250-word) response for each session indicated, discussing the readings for that day or since your last response. These responses should be informal, journal-like, pieces, expressing your thoughts and reactions to the text. They help me see where an entire class might be lost, or what you are particularly interested in. In the past, I have really enjoyed reading about your thoughts; I get the feeling that I am sharing your experience. Don't be afraid to express puzzlement and unfamiliarity, or delight and interest. I am interested in your untutored, uncritical reactions to the text. We will leave more structured and analytical writing for the formal papers. I have listed several Optional Responses, which can be done to make up for missed responses or for extra credit. Submit your responses on the blog for our course **before** class on the days indicated on the syllabus: <https://www.anitaobermeier.com/forum/uppity-medieval-women>. I will return the read responses to you.

4. Graduate Article Presentation: Each of you will select **one** essay from the Graduate Readings listed on the syllabus and prepare a 10-minute critical analysis of it to deliver in class, followed by 5 minutes of questions. This means you should present on the content of the essay but also evaluate the effectiveness of the argument and structure. Please also prepare a handout for your audience. Let me know which article by **Friday, 1.29.2021** via email.

5. Oral Group Presentations:

Rationale: Effective speaking in the public arena is a highly-prized skill both in the academic and business world; therefore, I request you do oral group presentations on a medieval uppity woman (real or fictional) or related topic of your choice, providing an overview of primary texts and, for graduates, the scholarship on that woman or topic. I am suggesting certain people on the syllabus but my list is not exhaustive. If there is a figure I missed, don't hesitate to suggest her.

Structure: Presentations should be done by groups of 2-3 students and be no longer than 15 minutes; they may be accompanied by a handout for the class (can also be emailed or posted on the website), including a works cited page. You should be prepared to answer questions from the class as well as ask questions of the class. **Please email your choices to me by Monday, 2.1.2021.**

Note: Remember to research not only on the web in general but also to use scholarly search tools like MLA International Bibliography, the International Medieval Database, and other databases listed on the Tools section of our website.

6. Class Discussion and Participation: One of my teaching philosophies is student ownership of text along with critical thinking. In order to facilitate good class discussion and involvement of all students, I have devised several short individual and small group warm-up exercises trying to cull out the significance of each text. It is not enough to retell “the story,” although sometimes things might be confusing and clarification is necessary. The emphasis is on analysis.

7. Etiquette: When we meet in the classroom, masks need to be worn. No cell phone use or texting in this class. Turn your phones off. When we meet over Zoom, please be courteous and present to the class. It is evident when people are doing something else while on Zoom. We live in trying times; let’s be kind to one another.

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

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

10. Accommodation Statement: Accommodation Statement: In accordance with University Policy 2310 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor’s attention, as I am not legally permitted to inquire. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow. Contact Accessibility Resource Center at 277-3506 or arc.unm.edu for additional information.

If you need an accommodation based on how course requirements interact with the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment, we can discuss the course format and requirements, anticipate the need for adjustments and explore potential accommodations. I rely on the Disability Services Office for assistance in developing strategies and verifying accommodation needs. If you have not previously contacted them I encourage you to do so.

11. Citizenship and/or Immigration Status: All students are welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. Your professor will respect your privacy if you choose to disclose your status. As for all students in the class, family emergency-related absences are normally excused with reasonable notice to the professor, as noted in the attendance guidelines above. UNM as an institution has made a core commitment to the success of all our students, including members of our undocumented community. The Administration’s welcome is found on our website: <http://undocumented.unm.edu/>.

12. Title IX: Title IX prohibitions on sex discrimination include various forms of sexual misconduct, such as sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, and stalking. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted and would like to receive support and academic advocacy, there are numerous confidential routes available to you. For example, you can contact the Women’s Resource Center, the LGBTQ Resource Center, Student

Health and Counseling (SHAC), or LoboRESPECT. LoboRESPECT can be contacted on their 24-hour crisis line, (505) 277-2911 and online at loborespect@unm.edu. You can receive non-confidential support and learn more about Title IX through the Title IX Coordinator at (505) 277-5251 and <http://oeo.unm.edu/title-ix/>. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UNM Police Department at (505) 277-2241.