

**ENGL 260 Medieval Literature—Multimodal Manuscripts: Techniques and Theories**  
**Fridays 10:10-1, HMNSS 2212**

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office hours by appointment

This seminar will be an introduction to contemporary medieval manuscript studies. Its structure will be both technical and theoretical: on the one hand, the course will establish the key skillset necessary for advanced study of premodern, hand-written English manuscripts, comprised of book-making (codicology, bindings, pricking, ruling, parchment-making and ink-making), scribal activities (paleography, or how to read scribal handwriting), and illumination (the artistic decoration of the manuscript page).



At the same time, the course will also examine the medieval manuscript as a multimodal phenomenon that brings together multiple overlapping material, visual, and literary modes of meaning: for example, how does one explore the hapticity of the manuscript object—a reader’s physical and sensory experience of it—when it is simultaneously a literary text, an ornamentalized art object, and a refined piece of animal skin? How do a manuscript’s intertwined texts, images, marginalia, grotesques, and blank spaces work together to create meaning? How do scribal practices and circumstances correct, erase, or enhance authorial meaning? The course actively engages with the manuscript holdings at the Huntington Library, using a digital archive of high-res manuscripts from the collection that showcases the rise of the English poetry anthology from 1350 and 1500, with a focus on English poets such as Chaucer, Hoccleve, and Lydgate. Because object-oriented digital reproduction is the hallmark of new manuscript study, this course will also address the relationships between material and digital objects and will use online manuscript curation platforms such as Mirador and Omeka.

Required Texts:

Johanna Drucker, *Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production*

Kerby-Fulton et alia, *Opening Up Middle English Manuscripts*

All other readings will be posted to iLearn under “Course Materials,” listed according to the week due

Other scholarly books we will read at some length:

Arthur Barr, *Fragments and Assemblages: Forming Compilations of Medieval London*

Julia Boffey, *Manuscript and Print in London c 1475-1530*

Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art*

Siân Echard, *Printing the Middle Ages*

Alexandra Gillespie and Daniel Wakelin, *The Production of Books in England 1350-1500*

Christopher de Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators (Medieval Craftsmen)*

*Huntington Library Guide to Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts*, 2 vols.

Katherine Hayles & Jessica Pressman, *Comparative Textual Media*

Linne Mooney and Estelle Stubbs, *Scribes and the City: London Guildhall Clerks and the Dissemination of Middle English Literature 1375-1425*

Petti, *English Literary Hands from Chaucer to Dryden*

Daniel Wakelin, *Scribal Correction and Literary Craft: English Manuscripts 1375-1510*

Jonathon Wilcox, *Scraped, Stroked, and Bound: Materially Engaged readings of Medieval Manuscripts*

DIGITAL TOOLS we will likely use at some point: Dropbox, Omeka, Google Docs, Mirador, Powerpoint, Twitter, Medieval Handwriting App.

### **Requirements:**

As a graduate seminar, this course is rooted in class discussion and individual research. In order for the class to be successful, students must come prepared and ready to discuss the weekly reading assignments. While we will be covering a large body of material, students are encouraged to bring their own interests to the seminar in addition to their class presentations. In addition to attendance and course readings, the main requirements are:

- one 20-minute in-class presentation of course materials
- a brief (10 minute) report on a manuscript at Rivera Library
- an individual research project organized for online exhibition via Omeka or similar application. Students must discuss their final topic with me before beginning their project.

### **Grading:**

Presentations, in-class participation, and short written assignments: 50%

Final Project: 50%

### **Schedule:**

#### Week 0: Sept 29 Introduction

*Comparative Textual Media*, Intro and CH 9, Jessica Brantley, "Medieval Remediations"

Kerby-Fulton et alia, *Opening Up Middle English Manuscripts*, CH 1, 39-94 (also for next week)

**\*Discussion Board posting\***

#### Week 1: Oct 6 Codicology and Paleography

Kerby-Fulton et alia, *Opening Up Middle English Manuscripts*, xxiii-38; CH 1, 39-94 (re-read)

de Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators*

Parkes & Petti (for learning English book hands)

Videos & websites:

Medieval manuscript production: <https://www.youtube.com/user/BygoneArts/videos?view=0>

Getty Museum, Making of a Medieval Book: <http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/making/>

Late Medieval English Scribes online: <http://www.medievalescribes.com>

Sexy Codicology: <http://sexycodicology.net>

#### Week 2: Oct 13 Codicology and Paleography

Gillespie & Wakelin, *The Production of Books in England*, Intro, CH 1 & CH 2

Case study #1—Adam Pinkhurst and Chaucer:

Kerby-Fulton et alia, *Opening Up Middle English Manuscripts*, CH 5, 245-290

Pick two essays to read in the following scholarly debate:

Mooney and Stubbs, "Adam Pinkhurst, Scrivener and Clerk of the Guildhall, c. 1378-1410"

Alexandra Gillespie, "Reading Chaucer's Words to Adam"

Simon Horobin, "Adam Pinkhurst, Geoffrey Chaucer, and the Hengwrt Manuscript of the Canterbury Tales"

Lawrence Warner, "Scribes, Misattributed: Hoccleve and Pinkhurst"

Websites:

Ellesmere Chaucer online: <http://hdl.huntington.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15150coll7/id/2838>

Hengwrt Chaucer online:

<http://digidol.llgc.org.uk/METS/HCH00001/physical?div=15&subdiv=0&locale=en&mode=reference>

Week 3: Oct 20 Visual Forms of Knowledge Production I

Johanna Drucker, *Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production*

Kerby-Fulton et alia, *Opening Up Middle English Manuscripts*, CH 3, 153-206

Case Study #2—John Lydgate:

Lydgate, *Dance of Death and Fall of Princes* [iLearn]

EL26A13 and HM 268 [Dropbox]

Week 4: Oct 27 Visual Forms of Knowledge Production II

**\*Trip to Rivera Special Collections, room 403, 9am\***

Michael Camille, "Making Margins"

Sarah Kay Intro and CH 3, "Orifices and the Library"

Kathryn M. Rudy, "Kissing Images, Unfurling Rolls, Measuring Wounds, Sewing Badges and Carrying Talismans: Considering Some Harley Manuscripts through the Physical Rituals they Reveal"

Jennifer Borland, "Unruly Reading: The Consuming Role of Touch in the Experience of a Medieval Manuscript"

Week 5: Nov 3 Bodies and Books

**\*Short project/presentation DUE**

Elaine Treharne, "Fleshing out the Text: The Transcendent Manuscript in the Digital Age"

Michael Camille, "Sensations of the Page: Imaging Technologies and Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts"

Bridget Whearty, "The Leper on the Road to Canterbury: The Summoner, Digital Manuscripts, and Possible Futures"

Week 6: Nov 10 Veteran's Day (no class—class will be rescheduled) The Single Author Collection

**\*Trip to Huntington Library this week, date TBA\***

Case Study #3—Thomas Hoccleve

Hoccleve's works [iLearn]

HM 111 and 744 [Dropbox]

David Watt, "'I this book shal make': San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 744 and the Structure of the *Series*"

Sonja Drimmer, "The Manuscript as an Ambigraphic Medium: Hoccleve's Scribes, Illuminators, and Their Problems"

Week 7: Nov 17 The Idea of the Anthology

Seth Lerer, "Medieval English Literature and the Idea of the Anthology"

Arthur Barr, *Fragments and Assemblages*, "Compilation, Assemblage, Fragment"

Case Study #4: HM 140, HM 144 [Dropbox]

Julia Boffey, CH 1, "London Books, in Manuscript and Print, c.1500"

Alexandra Gillespie, "Are the *Canterbury Tales* a Book?"

Discuss final project ideas

Week 8: Nov 24 Thanksgiving – No class

Week 9: Dec 1 Medieval Remediations: Manuscript and Print

Boffey, CH 2, "Manuscript and Print in Combination"

Siân Echard, "Introduction: Plowmen and Pastiche: Representing the Medieval Book"

Wakelin, "Caxton's Exemplar for the Chronicles of England?"

Week 10: Dec 8 Final Projects

**Final projects & presentations DUE**