

FEELING (FOR) THE PREMODERN



DATE: 2-3 September 2016

LOCATION: St Catherine's College,
The University of Western Australia

'Feeling (for) the Premodern' is a symposium that aims to consider emotional and affective factors in scholarly, popular, imaginative and re-creative involvements with the period 1100–1800, both during and after those dates. What is the emotional history of responses to the premodern past? What shapes and has shaped retrospective desires for this past, and fears of it? How do contemporary cultures feel the premodern, and feel for it? 'Feeling (for) the Premodern' assembles a wide range of researchers in literary, historical and cultural studies to share ideas on these and related questions.

FRIDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2016

TIME	DESCRIPTION
08.30–09.00	Registration and coffee
09.00–09.15	Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome (Andrew Lynch)
SESSION 1. CHAIR: STEPHANIE TARBIN	
09.15–10.00	Mike Rodman Jones, 'The Uses of Medievalism in the 1590s: Recovery, Temporality and the "Passionating" of the Past'
10.00–10.45	Susan Broomhall, 'Falling for Lettered Women: Emotions in Biographies and Histories of Catherine de Medici'
10.45 – 11.15	MORNING TEA
KEYNOTE PAPER. CHAIR: STEPHANIE TRIGG	
11.15–12.30	David Matthews, 'In Search of Lost Feeling: The Emotional History of Medievalism'
12.30 – 13.30	LUNCH
SESSION 2. CHAIR: JENNA MEAD	
13.30–14.15	Andrew Lynch, 'Protecting the Past/Projecting the Present: Charlotte M. Yonge, Walter Scott and Chivalry'
14.15–15.00	Duc Dau, 'Having Feelings: Augusta Drane and St John of the Cross'
15.00 – 15.30	AFTERNOON TEA
PANEL AND DISCUSSION. CHAIR: LOUISE D'ARCENS	
15.30–17.00	Stephanie Downes, 'Reading Medieval Faces in the Modern Digital Environment' Clare Davidson, '"For feere almost she gan to falle": On the Apprehension of Love in <i>Troilus and Criseyde</i> ' Robin Macdonald, 'Feeling and Shaping Quebec's Seventeenth-Century Past: A Birch Bark Letter Written by Twentieth-Century <i>Hospitalières</i> '
17.00–18.00	DRINKS AT THE UNIVERSITY CLUB
	DINNER

SATURDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2016

TIME	DESCRIPTION
SESSION 3. CHAIR: HELEN YOUNG	
09.30–10.15	Helen Dell, 'Feeling for the Premodern Pagan'
10.15–11.00	Stephanie Trigg, 'Public Medievalists: Hoccleve and Me in the City'
11.00 – 11.30	MORNING TEA

SESSION 4. CHAIR: JOANNE MCEWAN

11.30–12.15	Louise D'Arcens, 'Eat, Pray, Buy: Feeling (for) " <i>la France profonde</i> " in the Novels of Michel Houellebecq'
12.15–13.00	Anke Bernau, 'Curiosity, Craft, Nostalgia'

13.00 – 14.00 LUNCH**PANEL AND DISCUSSION. CHAIR: BRID PHILLIPS**

14.00–15.30	Michael Ovens, 'Feeling Emotional in the Martial Arts of Medieval and Renaissance Europe' Paul Megna, 'Intimacy, Alterity and Compassion in Denys Arcand's <i>Jésus de Montréal</i> and Mel Gibson's <i>The Passion of the Christ</i> ' Helen Young, 'White Pride and the Middle Ages: Tainted Love'
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CONCLUDING DISCUSSION, WITH AFTERNOON TEA. CHAIR: DAVID MATTHEWS

15.30–16.30	Commentators: Jacqueline Van Gent, Miranda Stanyon, Matthew Champion
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16.30 THANKS AND CLOSE

ABSTRACTS

Anke Bernau

(The University of Manchester)

CURIOSITY, CRAFT, NOSTALGIA

Desire for the past is commonly referred to (often pejoratively) as 'nostalgia', as many scholars of medievalism have noted. I am currently working on a project on curiosity, a term which is, in contemporary discourses, almost exclusively yoked to a very different temporality – that of futurity. In the medieval texts I examine, it is the products of 'craft' that are most commonly referred to as 'curious' – another loaded term for medievalists, and one that has a long history of being aligned with nostalgia. In this paper, I will begin to unravel some of the temporalities, emotions and values that meet in this trinity of terms – curiosity, craft and nostalgia – especially in relation to educational aims and agendas. My central case study here will be the French construction project of Guédelon, advertised on its website as the 'twenty-first century medieval adventure'.

This will of necessity also be a self-reflective exercise, since I have to consider the ways in which my research into medieval craft is motivated by both nostalgia and curiosity, and the feelings that each evokes. To conclude I will say a bit about a current project I am developing with a mental health charity, in which we will use images of medieval 'curious' objects to open up conversations with participants suffering from severe depression about what 'curiosity' meant when the object was created, and what it means to them in their lives now. These conversations will lead to participants developing their own 'curious craft' projects.

Anke Bernau is Senior Lecturer at The University of Manchester. She has worked on female virginity (medieval to modern), medieval origin myths, medieval poetics and medievalism. She is the author of *Virgins: A Cultural History* (Granta, 2007), and is currently working on a new book project, tentatively titled 'Curious: The Arts of Craft'. She is co-editor of the journal *Exemplaria: Medieval/Early Modern/Theory* and of Manchester University Press's 'Medieval Literature and Culture' series.

Susan Broomhall

(The University of Western Australia)

FALLING FOR LETTERED WOMEN: EMOTIONS IN BIOGRAPHIES AND HISTORIES OF CATHERINE DE MEDICI

This paper explores the distinctive emotional patterns embedded in biographical and historical interpretations of the sixteenth-century French queen and regent, Catherine de Medici, over the past 300 years. It will draw upon a range of sources, from contemporary eyewitness accounts by courtiers, ambassadors and propagandists, to nineteenth- and twentieth-century biographers and historians. It considers how forms of perceived proximity and intimacy – physical, epistolary and emotional – to this powerful woman have profoundly shaped historiographical assessment of her character.

In particular, I focus upon the role played by Catherine's epistolary practice in the production of judgements about her as a political, literary and cultural protagonist and emotional subject. Few pre-modern source types appear to offer so much to the history of emotions as letters. These documents, composed by a wide range of men and women at varied social levels, have often been interpreted as ego-documents offering seemingly open access to feelings in the past. Beguiling in its affective accessibility, the epistle is, however, also acknowledged by scholars, particularly within elite and diplomatic exchanges, as a highly rhetorical, structured genre. Less openly acknowledged perhaps is the role that letters play in shaping scholars' own feelings about their subjects. In this paper I explore how Catherine's letters, viewed as elite epistolary productions, have been key to the varied interpretations of her as a subject of history and biography through the potential insights they offer into her own emotional (and other) life experiences, and how her letters have influenced the feelings of narrators of the past.

Susan Broomhall is an historian of early modern Europe whose research explores gender, emotions, material culture, cultural contact and the heritage of early modern Europe. She was a Foundation Chief Investigator for the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. In 2014, she became an Honorary Chief Investigator, having taken up an Australian Research Council Future Fellowship within the Centre, to complete a research project studying emotions, power and the correspondence of Catherine de Medici.

Louise D'Arcens

(Macquarie University)

EAT, PRAY, BUY: FEELING (FOR) 'LA FRANCE PROFONDE' IN THE NOVELS OF MICHEL HOUELLEBECCQ

The reputation of provocative French novelist Michel Houellebecq rests on his nihilistic satires of the West's crises in the face of technological progress, social revolution and global flows of money and people. Given the predictive orientation of his novels, many of which are set at least partly in the future, it is striking that his two most recent efforts, *La Carte et le Territoire* (Flammarion, 2010) and *Soumission* (Flammarion, 2015), call attention to the powerful affective pull of the premodern past within late capitalist and multicultural France. *La Carte et le Territoire* explores the survival, and revival, of traditional arts and crafts in a cultural scene where 'la France profonde' has been commodified through the lifestyle industries of heritage tourism, boutique gastronomy and historical TV. It teases out the recuperation of medievalist nostalgia into a neoliberal economy that deftly harnesses the yearning for authenticity and the desire to consume. *Soumission* controversially explores the significance of the premodern for a near-future France characterised by the return of religious impulses that have been only superficially suppressed by the Enlightenment and secular republicanism. Here contemporary France's contact with 'la France profonde', whether through religious tourism or patriotic poetry, is inseparable from an emotional engagement with its deep Catholic traditions — traditions embodied not just in its chapels and monasteries but in its sites of Christian-Muslim conflict. Through the novel's evocation of the medieval, Houellebecq traces France's long, contradictory love affair with religion, patriarchy and the nation. This paper will examine the author's conflicted feeling for the premodern in these two novels, situating them in the broader context of a French cultural and political scene where nationalist and neo-reactionary ideologies have become increasingly prevalent.

Louise D'Arcens is Professor in the Department of English at Macquarie University, and holds an Australian Research Council Future Fellowship. Her publications include *Old Songs in the Timeless Land: Medievalism in Australian Literature, 1840-1910* (Brepols, 2011); *Comic Medievalism: Laughing at the Middle Ages* (D. S. Brewer, 2014); and the edited volumes *International Medievalism and Popular Culture* (Cambria Press, 2014); *Maistresse of My Wit: Medieval Women, Modern Scholars* (Brepols, 2004); and *The Cambridge Companion to Medievalism* (Cambridge University Press, 2016). She has also published numerous chapters on medievalism, as well as articles in journals such as *Representations*, *Screening the Past*, *Parergon*, *Studies in Medievalism* and *Postmedieval*.

Duc Dau

(The University of Western Australia)

HAVING FEELINGS: AUGUSTA DRANE AND ST JOHN OF THE CROSS

Augusta Drane (1823-1894) was a convert to Roman Catholicism who later became prioress of St Dominic's Convent, Stone. Little critical attention has been paid to Drane, though she was a model of an intellectual, widely read and accomplished Victorian who published many works in her lifetime, ranging from poetry to essays and biographies. This paper includes archival research into Drane's personal papers at St Dominic's Convent, along with interpretations of her literary works, including translations of, or works inspired by, St John of the Cross. The overlapping influence of St John of the Cross and the Song of Songs in her verse and other writings is a focus of

this paper for, as F. Elizabeth Gray notes of the poetry, Drane's use of the feminised subject position offered by the Song of Songs 'begins to suggest for the female speaker an expanded degree of agency and self-determination'. In her unpublished exposition of scripture, Drane uses passages from the Song of Songs to illuminate key stories in fascinating ways. For example, she juxtaposes the return of the Prodigal Son with the imperative for the female lover of the Song of Songs to return so that she may be gazed upon (6:13), thereby complicating and eroticising the nature of the relationship between the converted and God. Like St John of the Cross, Drane writes of being married to Christ. Of special interest is her volume of poetry, *Songs in the Night*, much of which is directly inspired by the verse of the Spanish mystic. In the volume, Drane speaks tenderly of loving Christ in pastoral settings, among the lilies, roses and cedar trees, with the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs allowing for a great deal of sensuous language. The archival research and close readings of Drane's poetry will stimulate further critical interest in this neglected Victorian intellectual.

Duc Dau is a postdoctoral researcher in English and Cultural Studies at The University of Western Australia, whose position is funded by an Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Researcher Award. She is the author of *Touching God: Hopkins and Love* (Anthem Press, 2012) and co-editor of *Queer Victorian Families: Curious Relations in Literature* (Routledge, 2015). Her articles have appeared in such journals as *Victorian Literature and Culture*, *Victorian Poetry*, *Literature and Theology*, *Religion and Literature* and *The Hopkins Quarterly*. She is currently completing a book on the Song of Songs in the Victorian era.

Clare Davidson

(The University of Western Australia)

'FOR FEERE ALMOST SHE GAN TO FALLE': ON THE APPREHENSION OF LOVE IN *TROILUS AND CRISEYDE*

Middle English expressions of love implicate movements within the body, representing a specific physiological understanding prescriptive of the ways in which a person can experience the emotion. In response to the historiographical question of how 'falling' in love in the Middle Ages may have been different to modern understandings of the experience, I examine the somatic resonance of Middle English verbs that describe an affective registry of love and desire for the feeling subject. In this discussion I consider how the idiom of 'falling' in love, which does not appear in medieval texts but is almost unavoidable in modern discussions of them, may alter conceptions of the process of experiencing a change of state in which love is felt. Does 'falling' implicate a different internal feeling to the Middle English 'doing of love' words that appear in *Troilus and Criseyde*, such as 'subgit unto', 'ynome', or 'pierced' by love? *The Middle English Dictionary* shows that in Middle English, 'fallen', when related to an emotion, was to decline or abate, although, as its final of 47 different definitions, it also shows the term can mean 'of the heart: to be inclined, to become desirous'. By adopting a literal reading of embodied metaphorical expressions of love and desire found within *Troilus and Criseyde*, we are able to consider how the poem characterises embodied 'feelings', and so review a basic question regarding the poem: does Criseyde fall in love?

Clare Davidson is a postgraduate student at The University of Western Australia. She is currently in the final stages of writing her PhD dissertation on the relationship between metaphorical expressions of love and the bodily experience of desire in fourteenth-century English literature.

Helen Dell

(The University of Melbourne)

FEELING FOR THE PREMODERN PAGAN

When people express longing for a premodern past it is usually framed in terms of a sense of something lacking in present life. From a psychoanalytic perspective, however, something is always lacking in human life: no object, once gained, can be the object of desire. Jacques Lacan said, in his seminar on Ethics, 'It is in its nature that the object as such is lost' (*Ethics*, 52). From this perspective the crucial point is that the object will be missing from wherever – or whenever – it is supposed to be. Therefore, in one sense, its temporal placement is immaterial. Since the object can never be anything other than an absence, desire can never be other than circular, a 'future-past' as Susan Stewart termed it (*On Longing*, 23).

Affectively, however, nostalgia presents a very different aspect from desire for a future goal. While desire preserves its hopefulness, eagerness and energy, nostalgic longing often attracts passive adjectives like wistful and the oxymoronic 'bittersweet', on the basis that the past is irrecoverable and longing therefore futile. That is its usual character, although nostalgia may become active in the demand for the restoration of a lost past, as Svetlana Boym has pointed out (*Future of Nostalgia*, xviii). On the other hand, if the past is considered irrecoverable that fact may be accepted playfully or ironically or, alternatively, with bitter resentment and a desire to wreak vengeance on the perpetrators deemed responsible for the loss. These responses to felt loss can be seen on every side in contemporary life, for instance in the dreams of restoring past glories evident in the rhetoric surrounding Brexit and the current American election campaign. They also inhabit forms of medievalism, whether scholarly or popular.

My paper examines the emotional aspects of nostalgia in the music, lyrics, publicity, music videos, costumes, etcetera, of popular medieval (or 'neomedieval') music groups, in particular those which identify as pagan, and in the responses of their audiences on YouTube and Amazon.com customer reviews, including their visual expression in videos put together by audience members.

Helen Dell's research is in the fields of music and literature, especially in their combination as song. Her PhD thesis was published as *Desire by Gender and Genre in Trouvère Song* (Boydell and Brewer, 2008). Since then her research on medievalism and nostalgia has led to several publications: 'The Medievalism of Nostalgia', a special issue of *Postmedieval*, 2.2 (2011) edited with Louise D'Arcens and Andrew Lynch; chapters on musical medievalism in *The Cambridge Companion to Medievalism*, edited by Louise D'Arcens (2016), and *Since Lacan: Papers of the Freudian School of Melbourne*, edited by Linda Clifton (Karnac Books, 2016). Helen's most recent research has centred on music and death, contributing 'Haunting Music: Hearing the Voices of the Dead' to *Music and Mourning*, edited by Jane Whitfield Davidson and Sandra Garrido (Taylor and Francis, 2016), and co-convening the CHE symposium, 'Singing Death' with Helen Hickey. The resulting edited volume, *Singing Death: Reflections on Music and Mortality*, is forthcoming with Ashgate, in which she is responsible for the editor's introduction and a chapter titled 'Dying for Love in Trouvère Song'.

Stephanie Downes

(The University of Melbourne)

READING MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPT FACES IN THE MODERN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

If the representation of human and non-human faces by scribes and readers in medieval textual culture has often been neglected in manuscript description and catalogue practices, they have found their home on the internet. There is evidence in the digital environment of the extraordinary affection felt by users towards these faces in online spaces, and the impulses for researchers to share what they

find with each other. But less often are such faces – often considered decorative, ornamental or random acts of scribal work – taken as the subject of serious research. In this paper I consider modern digital responses to manuscript faces alongside a reconsideration of the function of medieval scribal face – what I call a 'textual face' – with the aim of illustrating the ways in which late medieval scribes and readers may have conceived of the face's expressive potential and narrative legibility. How do scribal faces shape affective responses to the text or codex? And how do modern readers' 'feelings' for the premodern face help shape our understanding of the affective resonance of such features of scribal work?

Stephanie Downes is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. Her current work on the emotions in literature and material texts, 'Textual Expressions', explores literary and visual representations of the face in late medieval and early modern manuscript and print cultures. With Andrew Lynch and Katrina O'Loughlin, she is the editor of *Emotions and War: Medieval to Romantic Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and, with Sally Holloway and Sarah Randles, *Feeling Things: Objects and Emotions in History* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

Mike Rodman Jones

(The University of Nottingham)

THE USES OF MEDIEVALISM IN THE 1590S: RECOVERY, TEMPORALITY AND THE 'PASSIONATING' OF THE PAST

My paper focuses on the diversity of ways in which the premodern past was attractive and useful to a broad variety of writers in the later sixteenth century. Taking as its starting point the formative work of scholars like Paulina Kewes (*The Uses of History in Early Modern England* [2006]), the paper argues that the pre-modern world existed in a palpable but curious state of proximity and alienation for writers after (or perhaps during) the English reformations. However, it also argues that the ways in which sixteenth-century writers felt about the premodern world, and the way in which they urged readers to feel for it, were significantly diverse and conditioned by the cultural and formal environments of strikingly different genres which cut across the scholarly and the 'popular', across the boundaries between historiographical, theatrical and literary.

Firstly, it discusses the ways in which the material culture of the past (particularly the pre-Conquest past) could be recovered and mobilised in sharply sectarian ways – a sort of polemical heritage-making which preoccupied scholarly, antiquarian and historiographical discourse in the period. Secondly, however, the paper shifts to look at a very specific moment in the early 1590s when the nascent genre of Elizabethan prose fiction took stock of the equally nascent status of the professional theatre. Here, the medieval past is both vogueishly à la mode and ancient, part of a para-theatrical zeitgeist which is caught between its various claims to cultural novelty and scandalous autobiography, and desires for cultural, social and, sometimes, personal and moral, respectability in narratives of repentance. Finally, the paper turns to the ways in which historical poetry in the same decade shaped a highly affective way of seeing the medieval past, one dominated by a deliberately emotive imaginative world of loss, elegy and tragedy.

Mike Rodman Jones is Lecturer in Medieval and Early Modern Literature at The University of Nottingham. He has published widely on medieval and early modern literature and culture in journals such as *New Medieval Literatures*, *The Review of English Studies* and *The Sixteenth Century Journal*. His first book, on the appropriative tradition surrounding William Langland's *Piers Plowman*, was published by Ashgate in 2011. He is now working on a second book, on forms of Protestant medievalism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Andrew Lynch

(The University of Western Australia)

PROTECTING THE PAST/PROJECTING THE PRESENT: CHARLOTTE M. YONGE, WALTER SCOTT AND CHIVALRY

My paper traces the delineation of chivalry in the work of the popular Victorian writer, Charlotte M. Yonge (1823–1901). Its main focus is on her novel *The Lances of Lynwood* (1855), which is set around 1367, during the intervention of the Black Prince in the Castilian civil war. Though celebrated in Froissart, the campaign had a bad historical reputation in Yonge's time. I argue that she engaged with this unpromising material in order to mount a defence of chivalry that specifically addressed critique of it as a combination of 'the ruling passions of the [middle] age, superstition and jealousy of military honour' (David Hume, *History*). In defence against these charges, the disposition of the hero's 'passions' is therefore of paramount importance: chivalry is defended not for its military utility but as an occasion to display the highest (therefore, to Yonge, Christian) forms of human feeling.

Details of Yonge's novel show the influence of Walter Scott's *Essay on Chivalry* and *Essay on Romance* and she adopts Scott's narrative strategies for making chivalric heroes spectators or moderators, rather than agents, of military violence. Scott repeatedly represents medieval chivalry on a Burkean model of his own times, one previously established in his near-contemporary Scottish novels. Similarly, I suggest, Yonge's strategic protection of chivalry is at heart a passionate projection of her Christian educational program back onto the fourteenth century. In both cases the emotional energy seems to flow from present to past. The question then remains, what feelings required that the Middle Ages should be the narrative medium and retrospectively chosen ancestor of these modern preoccupations?

Andrew Lynch is Professor in English and Cultural Studies at The University of Western Australia and Director of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. His recent publications include: *Emotions and War: Medieval to Romantic Literature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), edited with Stephanie Downes and Katrina O'Loughlin; and *Understanding Emotions in Early Europe* (Brepols, 2015), edited with Michael Champion. He is a contributor to *The Cambridge Companion to Medievalism* (Cambridge, 2016) and *The Middle Ages in the Modern World: Twenty-First-Century Perspectives* (Proceedings of the British Academy, forthcoming 2016).

Robin Macdonald

(The University of Western Australia)

FEELING AND SHAPING QUEBEC'S SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PAST: A BIRCH BARK LETTER WRITTEN BY TWENTIETH-CENTURY HOSPITALIÈRES

On 19 June 1925, the *Hospitalières* (Augustinian nuns from the Quebec City hospital, the Hôtel Dieu) wrote to the city's Jesuit priests, extending their best wishes for the tricentenary of the Jesuits' arrival in Canada. The language they used was highly emotive, evoking the zeal of the first missionaries and their 'love' of the Indigenous peoples that their predecessors had sought to convert. The letter also evoked the visceral role of emotions in the remembrance of the early mission, which – though the nuns conceded that recollections of the past were fickle – could still be 'felt'.

This paper will examine the ways in which the Augustinian authors of this letter used emotional language – as well as the letter's materiality – to evoke their feelings about the past. Written on birch bark, the

letter's material form imitated missives written by early New France missionaries who – for want of paper – sometimes penned their letters on the smoothed and scraped bark of birch trees. The nuns' letter thus recreated an earlier mode of letter writing, evoking the affective connotations of missionary hardship and suffering in the face of privation.

Through the comparison of this letter and the seventeenth-century examples it imitated, this paper will examine the ways in which twentieth-century nuns felt – and stimulated feelings for – the premodern (in this case, through tactile engagement with a birch bark letter). But, I will argue, the letter was not simply an 'imitation' of seventeenth-century letters; it was shaped by and bound-up in feeling – and shaping feeling – in the twentieth-century present.

Robin Macdonald is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the UWA node of the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, where she works on the 'Emotions and Colonial Encounters' project with Jacqueline Van Gent. Her project analyses the multifaceted roles of laughter in seventeenth-century eastern North American colonial encounters. Robin recently completed her PhD at the University of York (UK), with a thesis titled, 'Inhabiting New France: Bodies, Environment and the Sacred, c.1632–c.1700'. She is co-editor of a forthcoming edited essay collection, *Sensing the Sacred: Religion and the Senses in Medieval and Early Modern Culture*.

David Matthews

(The University of Manchester)

IN SEARCH OF LOST FEELING: THE EMOTIONAL HISTORY OF MEDIEVALISM

'Medievalism' (however it is defined), is always bound up, necessarily and intimately, with responses to the premodern past. But how might we recover the *emotional* history of these responses? We cannot easily perform a sociology of past attitudes. Should we carry out an archaeology of emotional responses? Would the currently fashionable mode of the cultural history be more productive? Existing work on medievalism, including my own, tends towards a kind of symptomatology, an analysis of the visible traces of the response to the premodern past. Such work, valuable though much of it has been, tends towards a critique of ideologies, leaving emotions rather secondary.

In this address, I will approach these problems by looking at medievalism and the apprehension of the Middle Ages in three different phases and modes. I will begin with attitudes from the Renaissance to the Romantics; secondly, in the major section of the paper, I will be concerned with what I regard as a period of 'high' medievalism, between the Napoleonic Wars and the mid-nineteenth century. In the third phase, I will take a relatively brief look at the long aftermath of this formative phase of medievalism. It would be easy to see the emotional trajectory in this long history as leading from early modern and Reformation abreaction, to Victorian over-investment in a fantasy object. I want to complicate the notions of nostalgia at work: we need to distinguish, with Svetlana Boym, between restorative and reflective forms of nostalgia and to examine, via Alois Riegl, the tension between 'age value' and 'historical value'. I will argue, through attention to some of the less well studied objects of nineteenth-century medievalism, that there is a good deal more 'reflective' nostalgia than has usually been thought. This has, as I will show, implications for our understanding of emotional responses in the period, which are not the naive over-investment which the modernists, in reaction, often took them to be. Indeed, have some of the rejections of nineteenth-century medievalism in recent modernity been just a little too emotional?

David Matthews is Professor of Medieval and Medievalism Studies in the English Department at The University of Manchester. He is the author of *Medievalism: A Critical History* (D. S. Brewer, 2015) and *Writing to the King: Nation, Kingship, and Literature in England 1250–1350* (Cambridge University Press, 2010). He has written several articles on Middle English and medievalism topics, and was editor of *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, 2007–2013. His current project is a study of Middle English literature in the sixteenth century, provisionally titled 'Marvellous Darkness: The Presence of the Middle Ages in Early Modern England'.

Paul Megna

(The University of Western Australia)

INTIMACY, ALTERITY AND COMPASSION IN DENYS ARCAND'S *JÉSUS DE MONTRÉAL* AND MEL GIBSON'S *THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST*

This paper examines two modern cinematic passion plays: Denys Arcand's *Jésus de Montréal* (1990) and Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (2004). Although both of these plays hearken back to medieval passion plays they do so in radically different ways. *Jésus de Montréal* is an unabashedly postmodern account of a second-rate actor whose life comes to parallel the events of the Gospel after he adopts the role of Christ in a local passion play. Despite its meta-dramatic irony, Arcand's film is neither glib nor bathetic. Instead, like medieval passion plays, it generates deep compassion for its protagonist by recasting the Gospel in a setting intimately recognisable to its contemporary audience. On the other hand, *The Passion of the Christ*, according to Gibson, aims to render Christ's suffering with a maximum of historical accuracy in order to inspire compassion and an awful sense of debt in its audience. Not least through its use of archaic language, Gibson's film insists emphatically on the historical distance of its subject matter. Likewise, Gibson himself insists in interviews on the unimaginable nature of Christ's suffering, which he is only able to undergo because God endows him with a superhuman capacity to endure pain. The tension between Gibson's emphasis on the historical distance and radical alterity of Christ's suffering and Arcand's intimate rendering of Christ's life is already apparent in medieval passion plays such as the York cycle's Crucifixion play, which also highlights both the immediacy and alterity of Christ's life. By analysing these vastly divergent cinematic passion plays alongside their premodern predecessors, this paper explores the many uncanny resonances between medieval and modern attempts to dramatise Christ's life and pain.

Paul Megna is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, based at The University of Western Australia. He is currently developing a project on the emotional tenor of modern descendants of medieval passion plays. He was awarded a PhD in English by the University of California, Santa Barbara, for his dissertation titled 'Emotional Ethics in Middle English Literature'.

Michael Ovens

(The University of Western Australia)

FEELING EMOTION IN THE MARTIAL ARTS OF MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE EUROPE

The last 30 years have witnessed a resurgence of martial medievalisms in which re-enactors and para-academics seek to reproduce the fighting arts of late medieval and renaissance Europe based on textual and artefactual research. These medievalisms have had great success by reaching worldwide popular audiences through international tournaments and a wide network of grass-roots study groups. Yet,

there remains a problem in that the kinds of fighting practised by even the most rigorously historical of groups only sometimes matches up to documented historical practice when they are put to full-speed and/or full-force pressure tests.

I argue that part of the reason for this mismatch is a neglect of the emotional dispositions – fear, courage, caution, love and hate – which medieval and renaissance authors insisted were essential to the safe and effective practice of the martial arts. Furthermore, I argue that it is a mistake to see in these martial arts a set of purely mechanical or physical performances and suggest that the manner in which combatants fought was influenced by frameworks of social identity. Finally, I suggest a method through which virtual-reality games might be used as a form of experiential instruction through which players can explore the emotions and identities associated with medieval and renaissance combat.

Michael Ovens is a PhD candidate at The University of Western Australia, where he works on representations of violence with the support of the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. His dissertation – 'Discourse in Steel: Aspects of Interpersonal Violence, Anxiety, and the Negotiation of Masculine Identity in Western European Literature, 1100–1600' – is less than a month from submission. Michael has been a practitioner of the martial arts from the age of five, with more than seven years experience in the historic European martial arts. He is currently developing a virtual reality game for the HTC Vive, through which he hopes to share the findings of his doctoral thesis with a wider audience. He has published articles in *Parergon*, *Viator*, *Cahiers Élisabéthains* and elsewhere.

Stephanie Trigg

(The University of Melbourne)

PUBLIC MEDIEVALISTS: HOCCLEVE AND ME IN THE CITY

I would not be the first modern reader or scholar to experience a sense of identification with Thomas Hoccleve as he struggles to make a coherent, readable and persuasive narrative out of his illness and anxiety. In 2015, though, I had the opportunity to present a TEDx talk on Hoccleve at the Sydney Opera House that made me focus on this question in a very public, even global context, as the talk was live-streamed and later broadcast on YouTube. The TED speaker is typically charismatic and inspirational, offering hope, encouragement and strategies for better living. With the encouragement of the TEDx producers, I called this talk 'What does normal look like?' and spoke about Hoccleve's struggle to convince his friends and colleagues that he had recovered his mental health. I also drew some familiar parallels between Hoccleve and modern urban subjects, alienated from their own labours as they pound the city streets and wonder how they appear to others. I was encouraged to make the talk as personal as possible, so it became a challenge that is not unfamiliar to those who work on the emotions: talking about emotional material in a way that strikes an appropriate balance between history and emotion, between the scholarly and the personal.

My talk for this seminar will discuss the opportunities and constraints of the TEDx genre for bringing the discussion of medieval literature into the public sphere. I will suggest that Hoccleve's *Complaint* can help us think about the relationship between research and engagement, between our private research into the self, and the way we present our own selves when we as scholars must face the world of the modern city and 'public medievalism'.

Stephanie Trigg is Redmond Barry Distinguished Professor of English Literature at The University of Melbourne. She is the author of: *Gwen Harwood* (Oxford University Press, 1994); *Congenial Souls: Reading Chaucer from Medieval to Postmodern* (Minnesota University Press, 2002); *Shame and*

Honor: A Vulgar History of the Order of the Garter (Pennsylvania University Press, 2012), as well as the editor of *Medievalism and the Gothic in Australian Culture* (Brepols, 1994) and *Wynners and Wastoures* (Early English Text Society, 2000). She is currently a Chief Investigator and Program Leader in the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions.

Helen Young

(The University of Sydney)

WHITE PRIDE AND THE MIDDLE AGES: TAINTED LOVE

Designated as a 'hate group' by the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, and other white supremacy organisations like them, are literally 'communities of emotion': groups that imagine a collective identity on the basis of having a particular feeling. As Sara Ahmed has observed, the hate directed outwards towards Others is simultaneously figured as love for a White Self which is directed inwards within the imagined community. The European Middle Ages loom large in the construction of that White Self because they are understood as the originary crucible of White heritage and as a time when the White race (however it is imagined) existed in a pure form.

This paper explores the ways that the Middle Ages are constructed in white supremacist discourses through an investigation of posts on the website Stormfront.org. It considers in particular the use of emotional language by analysing posts about the Middle Ages using SentiStrength software, which measures affect in short pieces of writing. What emotions are felt? How strongly? And what work do they do? Through this examination the paper aims to engage with methodological issues at the nexus of the digital humanities and the history of emotions, and to illuminate the ways in which the Middle Ages are understood as an object of desire in White (supremacist) selfhood.

Helen Young is an Honorary Research Associate in the Department of English at The University of Sydney. Her areas of interest include speculative fictions, critical whiteness studies and medievalism. Her recent publications include *Race and Popular Fantasy Literature: Habits of Whiteness* (Routledge, 2016) and articles in *Games and Culture* and the *Journal of Tolkien Research*.

Jacqueline Van Gent, Miranda Stanyon and Matthew Champion (Commentators), David Matthews (Chair)

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Matthew Champion is currently the Jeremy Haworth Research Fellow in History at St Catharine's College, Cambridge. In September 2016, he will take up a lectureship in Medieval History at Birkbeck, University of London. His current research centres on European temporalities from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries.

Miranda Stanyon is Lecturer in Comparative Literature at King's College, London. Her research focuses on English and German literature and musical culture in the long eighteenth century.

Jacqueline Van Gent is a Chief Investigator with the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, based at The University of Western Australia. Her projects explore the role emotions play in shaping early modern and late colonial encounters with Indigenous people and cultures. Her work explores (i) emotions, conversions and missions, (ii) affective strategies of early modern Europeans in the acquisition, exchange and display of colonial objects, and (iii) the role of emotions in early ethnographic texts and collections. Her most recent publications include: with Susan Broomhall, *Dynastic Colonialism: Gender, Materiality and the Early Modern House of Orange-Nassau* (Routledge, 2016); and, with Raisa Maria Toivo, 'Gender, Material Culture and Emotions in Scandinavian History', a special issue of *Scandinavian Journal of History* (2016).

EMOTIONS
MAKE
HISTORY