

WILLIAM RHODES

University of Pittsburgh
Department of English
628J Cathedral of Learning
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

6208 Jackson St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
wmr9@pitt.edu
843-906-5716

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Pittsburgh, 2018-2019.

Postdoctoral Fellow, Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, Humanities Center, University of Pittsburgh, 2016-2018.

Lecturer, Department of English, University of Virginia, 2015-2016.

EDUCATION

Ph.D., English, University of Virginia, May 2015.

Dissertation: "The Ecology of Reform: Land and Labor from *Piers Plowman* to Edmund Spenser," winner of the Medieval Academy of America's Schallek Fellowship; Committee: Elizabeth Fowler (director), Bruce Holsinger, and John Parker.

B.A., Literature, Sarah Lawrence College, 2007.

AWARDS AND GRANTS

Schallek Fellowship, Medieval Academy of America, 2014-2015

Bradley Fellowship, University of Virginia, 2013

John J. Huskey Research Travel Award, 2012

Summer Research Grant, University of Virginia English Department, 2010

PUBLICATIONS

Book in Progress (manuscript complete)

Land, Labor, and Power: Medieval Agrarianism in Early Modern Colonial Writing. This book manuscript reveals how the writing of agricultural labor in the Middle Ages addresses the material constraints on the lives of commoners and princes alike. *Piers Plowman* and the tradition of socially critical poetry it inspires provoke writers in the sixteenth century to question an economic and ecological order that prevented people from pursuing spiritual perfection because of material shortages. I argue that this tradition, despite its seemingly egalitarian tendencies, places a heavy emphasis on enforced labor as a solution to all problems of church and state. As a result, agrarian satire and social critique engenders a discourse and an ideology of work that would form the basis of early modern colonial writing in Tudor Ireland and beyond.

Articles and Book Chapters

- “Masks and Money: Personification and Economic Agency in *Piers Plowman*,” forthcoming in *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 34, 2020.
- “Chaucer in Ireland: Spenser’s Archaisms and the Question of Development,” in *Reading and Re-reading Chaucer and Spenser*. Ed. Tamsin Badcoe, Gareth Griffith, and Rachel Stenner. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019.
- “Why Colin Clout Came Back: English Reformation Literature and Edmund Spenser’s Late Work,” *ELH* 84.3 (2017), 503-527.
- “Wages, Work, Wealth, and Economic Inequality: ‘The Reeve’s Tale,’” in *The Open Access Companion to The Canterbury Tales*. <https://opencanterburytales.dsl.lsu.edu/rvt1/>.
- “Personification, Power, and the Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern English Poetry,” in *Personification: Embodying Meaning and Emotion*. Ed. B.A.M. Ramakers and Walter S. Melion. (Leiden: Brill, 2016). 95-120.
- “Critical Pastoral: Nostalgia and Technology in the Classroom,” *Hybrid Pedagogy: A Digital Journal of Learning, Teaching, and Technology*, September 2015.
<http://www.digitalpedagogylab.com/hybridped/critical-nostalgia-pastoral-and-technology-in-the-classroom/>
- “Medieval Political Ecology: Labor and Agency on the Half Acre,” *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 28 (2014), 105-131.

Book Reviews

- Karma Lochrie, *Nowhere in the Middle Ages* in *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 31 (2017).
- Sukanta Chaudhuri, ed., *Pastoral Poetry of the English Renaissance: An Anthology*, in *Spenser Review* 47.2.27 (Spring-Summer 2017).
- Spenser Studies XXIX* in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 48.1 (Spring 2017).
- King Lear: A Critical Guide* in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 44.1 (Spring 2013).
- Ken Hiltner, *What Else is Pastoral?: Renaissance Literature and the Environment* in *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and the Environment* 19.2 (Spring 2012).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Panels Organized

- “Posthuman Piers.” International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2017.

“The Domains of English Lyric Before Spenser.” Renaissance Society of America, Boston, March 2016.

“Peasants and Texts.” International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2015.

“English Vernacular Poetics Before Sidney.” Renaissance Society of America, New York, New York, March 2014.

Papers Presented

“Eating Yourself to Death: Feasting and the Apocalyptic Aesthetics of the List.” Invited presentation at the symposium *Forms of Catastrophe: Ecological Change in Early English Literature*, University of Indiana-Bloomington, November 2018.

“Telling Other Stories: Diversifying the Medieval-Renaissance Survey Syllabus.” New Chaucer Society Congress, Toronto, July 2018.

“Periodizing the Capitalocene: Medieval-Modern Transitions and Vernacular Agrarian Critique.” American Comparative Literature Association, Utrecht, Netherlands, July 2017.

“Feeling, Writing, and Working in Elizabethan Poetry.” Renaissance Society of America, Chicago, March 2017.

“Economy and Ecology in the Pre-Modern Web of Life.” International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2016.

“‘Bifore the coming yn of these rauinous wolues’: Ancient Britain in Reformation Historiography.” Renaissance Society of America, Boston, March 2016.

“‘Toylesome Teme’: The Knights’ Affective Labor in *The Faerie Queene*.” Sixteenth Century Society Conference, Vancouver, BC, October 2015.

“*Piers Plowman* and the Unintended Reformation.” International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2015.

“Careful Work: Affect and Labor in Book IV of *The Faerie Queene*.” Renaissance Society of America, Berlin, March 2015.

“Leveling.” Biennial Meeting of the Babel Working Group, University of California, Santa Barbara, October 2014.

“Chaucer in Ireland: Spenser’s Archaisms and the Question of Development.” Reading and Re-reading Chaucer and Spenser, University of Bristol, UK, July 2014.

“English Reformation Literature and Spenser’s Late Work.” International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2014.

“Translating Rusticity: The Humanist Eclogue, Vernacular Satire, and Elizabethan Poetics.” Renaissance Society of America, New York, New York, March 2014.

“Speculative Allegories: Ecologies and Objects in Langland and Spenser.” International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2013.

“Allegory, Ecology, and Moral Agency in *Piers Plowman*.” Congress of the New Chaucer Society, Portland, Oregon, July 2012.

“Secularizing the Field.” International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 2012.

TEACHING AND RESEARCH INTERESTS

Renaissance Literature; Medieval Literature; Literature and the Environment; Poetry and Poetics; Literary Theory.

COURSES TAUGHT

University of Pittsburgh, Department of English

Introduction to Shakespeare (open literature seminar that surveys a selection of Shakespeare’s works through the theme and nature and science), Fall 2018

Apocalypse (open literature seminar that considers literary apocalypses from biblical prophecy to the science fiction of Margaret Atwood and Octavia Butler), Spring 2018.

Medieval Imaginations (advanced undergraduate seminar on storytelling and cultural change in medieval British literature), Fall 2017

Masterpieces of Renaissance Literature (standard survey of early modern English literature, reworked to include works by Mary Wroth and Aimé Césaire), Spring 2017.

Reading Poetry (mid-level literature seminar on the history and form of lyric poetry in English), Fall 2016.

University of Virginia, Department of English

Shakespeare’s Poetry and Plays (introductory literature seminar on the non-dramatic works and their relation to selected plays), Fall 2015.

Humans and Nature (composition course in “critical inquiry” for first-year students), Fall 2015, Spring 2016.

Inventing Nature: Pastoral and Nature Poetry from Theocritus to Mary Oliver (literature seminar for prospective English majors), Spring 2014.

Renaissance Drama: Shakespeare and His Contemporaries (literature seminar for prospective English majors), Fall 2012.

History of English Literature I (Beowulf to Milton, major level survey course): discussion section leader for Professor John Parker (Fall 2009) and Professor Bruce Holsinger (Fall 2011).

Advanced Academic Argument, "Addiction and Society" (themed composition course): Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Spring 2012, Spring 2013, Fall 2013.

Advanced Academic and Professional Writing (studio leader for an advanced writing workshop for upper level undergraduates), Spring 2010.

ARCHIVAL EXPERIENCE

Summer Research at the British Library with funds from the Humanities Center at the University of Pittsburgh, July 2017.

"The Culture and Handwriting of Early Modern English Manuscripts." Course at the University of Virginia's Rare Book School, with Heather Wolfe, Curator of Manuscripts, Folger Shakespeare Library, July 2015.

Archival work with rare manuscript and print sources under the auspices of the Schallek and Bradley fellowships, Bodleian Library, Oxford; British Library, London, Summer 2014.

Manuscript transcription and photography for the *Oxford Collected Works of Edmund Spenser* project, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Summer 2014.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Pedagogy Committee, University of Pittsburgh English Department, 2018-2019.

Director of the Interdisciplinary Graduate Medieval Colloquium, University of Virginia, 2011- 2012.

Renaissance Area Representative, University of Virginia English Department, 2009- 2010, 2011-2012.

Research Assistant for Professor Jennifer Wicke, Fall 2008.

Research Assistant for Professor Gordon Braden, Spring 2009.

LANGUAGES

French (excellent reading and speaking).

Latin (reading proficiency).

Spanish (reading and speaking proficiency).

MEMBERSHIPS

Medieval Academy of America

Renaissance Society of America

New Chaucer Society

International Piers Plowman Society

International Spenser Society

Sixteenth Century Society

Modern Language Association

Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment