



‘Paper, Pen and Ink: Manuscript Cultures in Early Modern England’

Organised by The Open University’s Book History Research Group and the Institute of English Studies, University of London

Venue: Room 234, Senate House, Malet St, London, WC1E 7HU. Tel: 0207 8628675

Time: Mondays, 5.30-7.00pm (dates below)

About the series: This seminar series explores the rich variety of writing in manuscript that took place in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. Each paper opens a window onto a different kind of manuscript activity - from the writing of poetry to the compilation of parish registers, from amateur and professional musicians’ use of lute-books to the note-taking strategies of university students - and assesses both its material processes and its broader cultural roles. As well as looking at the details of individual manuscripts (including previously unstudied material) and excavating the norms of a wide variety of different manuscript genres, speakers will provide new perspectives on topics such as the the history of manuscript studies, assumptions about the nature of ‘manuscript culture’ and ‘print culture’, the relationship between manuscripts and the ‘material turn’ in early modern studies and the challenges of editing early modern manuscripts.

Monday 4 November 2013: Tom Lockwood (University of Birmingham)

“With wordes of my profession I replie’: New Manuscripts of Sir John Davies (1569-1626) and the Development of Manuscript Studies”

This paper will use the evidence of newly described manuscripts of Sir John Davies’ poems to explore the later-twentieth century development of manuscript studies leading up to, and following, Robert Krueger’s edition of *The Poems of Sir John Davies* (1975). Davies, styled a ‘lawyer and poet’ by the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* is a kind of writer whose multiple engagements in poetry, patronage, politics and prose have often proved difficult to gauge and to place. This paper will situate case studies of manuscripts containing texts by Davies within the shape of his career and by tracing a larger account of developments in assumptions about, and understandings of, manuscript and print habits in the early modern period. Exploring the earlier history of Davies scholarship, it will suggest some ways in which, in the future, scholars working on Davies might respond to new developments in the field.

Dr Tom Lockwood is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Birmingham. He has recently edited, together with his colleagues Hugh Adlington and Gillian Wright, *Chaplains in Early Modern England: Patronage, Literature and Religion* (Manchester, 2013), and has published research on manuscript texts from the early modern to the Romantic periods. He gave the British Academy Chatterton Lecture on Poetry, ‘Donne, by Hand’, in 2009.

Monday 13 January 2014, Helen Smith (University of York)

‘Paper: Beyond Words’

‘Evidently, it is not enough to regard the surface as a taken-for-granted backdrop for the lines that are inscribed upon it’ (Tim Ingold).

In this ‘paper’, I will follow the lead offered by influential studies of manuscript letters (Gibson, Daybell) to investigate how men and women attended to the materiality and make-up of the paper on which they wrote. Drawing on a range of sources, I will draw the physical presence of writing paper into conversation with the very

wide array of early modern paper uses and technologies, in order to suggest the kinds of social and cultural presence possessed by paper, and the varied relationships between paper and its users. By inquiring into natural philosophical uses of and investigations into paper, I will suggest that we can discover the multiple valences of paper as a substance for thinking on and thinking with. At the same time, by investigating the relationship between paper as both an object for, and a subject of, writing, I will suggest how paper works in both material and metaphorical ways to transact not simply social but emotional relationships. My paper thus aims to suggest the importance of bringing together material, critical, and historical studies of manuscript writing, and to explore the relevance of manuscript sources and study to the current critical obsession with objects and their meanings.

Dr Helen Smith is Reader in Renaissance Literature at the University of York. Her publications include *Grossly Material Things: Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press, 2012) and *Renaissance Paratexts*, co-edited with Louise Wilson. Helen was Co-Investigator on the AHRC-funded project, 'Conversion Narratives in Early Modern Europe', and is Principal Investigator for the AHRC Research Network, 'Imagining Jerusalem, c. 1099 to the Present Day'. She is currently in the early stages of a new project, on ideas about materiality and their material expression in early modern Europe.

Monday 3 February , Sebastiaan Verweij (University of Oxford)

'Reading Records: The Commonplace Books of Francis Russell at Woburn Abbey'

This paper will present and discuss the manuscript library of Francis Russell, fourth earl of Bedford. The purposes of the paper are two-fold. Firstly, it will draw attention to this important and under-studied collection of manuscripts and discuss both its bibliographical nature and the extent of its engagement with early-seventeenth century intellectual and political culture. Secondly, the paper will ask how such a varied and extensive collection of 'reading records' (notebooks, commonplace books, annotated manuscripts, and more) can contribute to the ways in which literary scholars and historians make sense of this period.

Dr Sebastiaan Verweij works at Oxford, where he is the Research Associate for the Oxford edition of the Sermons of John Donne. He has published on Scottish literary culture and manuscript studies, and works more generally on English and Scottish early modern literature and book history.

Monday 3 March 2014, Christopher Burlinson (Jesus College, Cambridge)

'Manuscripts in the Early Modern Universities'

Studies of early modern manuscripts (by Hobbs, Marotti, Woudhuysen, et al.), in particular of the poetic miscellanies of the early seventeenth century, have shown beyond doubt that the universities (in particular Oxford, with a special concentration at Christ Church) were important centres of manuscript transmission. A study of this 'socioliterary environment' (Marotti) has begun to influence scholarly work on some of the poets whose texts are particularly well-represented in these manuscripts (Corbett, Strode, Randolph, etc.). But work still remains to be done in a number of areas, and this seminar will address two of them. Firstly, how did pedagogical or administrative life at the universities affect the kinds of manuscript transmission that might have taken place there? What place did manuscripts have in learning or in the daily life of a college? Were universities, in other words, a special kind of socioliterary (and manuscript-based) environment, and why should this matter to the poetry that was written and transmitted there? And secondly, what can scholars of the universities themselves learn from this work on literary manuscript transmission? How might editorial and textual work on poetic miscellanies contribute to a broader social and cultural history of education, reading, and writing at the universities?

Dr Christopher Burlinson is Fellow and Senior College Lecturer at Jesus College Cambridge. He has published widely on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature, textual studies, and the practice of textual editing. Recent publications include Edmund Spenser's *Letters and Other Papers* (Oxford University Press, 2009), Ralph Knevet's *Supplement of the Faery Queen* (Manchester University Press, forthcoming) - both with Andrew Zurcher - and, with Ruth Connolly, a special edition of *Studies in English Literature* (Winter 2012), entitled *Editing Stuart Poetry*.

Monday 17 March 2014, Carlo Bajetta (Università della Valle d'Aosta)

'Making Sense of Chaos: Analysing Early Modern Manuscripts'

This talk will reconsider analytical and editorial methodology in early modern manuscript studies. After a look at the age-old, but still crucial, problem of how best to deal with the patent mistakes many early modern manuscript

texts present (or seem to present), it will suggest a variety of ways in which a modern researcher can get the best out of the analysis of handwritten texts. By means of an examination of specific cases, including some of Elizabeth I's Italian letters, I will illustrate the advantages of a case-to-case, evidence-based, approach to both editorial emendation and to the analysis of the material features of manuscript volumes.

Professor Carlo M. Bajetta is Professor of English at Università della Valle d'Aosta, Italy. His books include *Sir Walter Raleigh* (1998), *Whole Volumes in Folio* (2000), *Some Notes on Printing and Publishing in Renaissance Venice* (2000), and, with Luisa Camaiora, *Shakespearean Readings: Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley* (2004). He has edited R.B. McKerrow's 1928 Sandars Lectures on authors' manuscripts (*Studies in Bibliography*, 2000), Wordsworth's, Shelley's and Reynold's 1819 *Peter Bell* poems (2005) and, in a bilingual edition, Thomas More's *English Poems*. He has also published research on the fiction, literary criticism and letters of C.S. Lewis and is currently engaged on an edition of the Italian letters of Elizabeth I.

Monday 14 April 2014, Heather Wolfe (Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC)
'Rethinking the Price, Quality, and Social Significance of Writing Paper in Early Modern England'

This talk argues that regular-grade writing paper was relatively cheap and plentiful in early modern England, and that while most of it was imported from France, the domestic output should not be overlooked. I will focus in particular on the writing paper of John Spilman, which was highly regarded as early as 1590 when John Danett writes from Dublin: "paper is heere verye dere & verye Scante & very badd, neere Ivie bridge dwellinge one Spilman a jueller & maker of paper where it maye be bought for vs vjd the Realme verye large & verye good..." I will also provide some preliminary guidelines for recognizing when an early modern writer is making an unusual or meaningful paper selection, and discuss early modern terminology for various grades and types of writing paper.

Dr Heather Wolfe is Curator of Manuscripts at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC. She has written on a wide range of topics in early modern manuscript culture and is the editor of the life and letters of Elizabeth Cary.

Monday 28 April 2014, Andrew Gordon (University of Aberdeen)
'The Parish Clerk and the Parish Record in Early Modern London'

This paper will investigate the construction of the London parish register in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, examining the evidence of how it was kept and used, and exploring the changing status of the Parish Clerk in the period as part of a reconsideration of the status of the register as record.

Dr Andrew Gordon is Senior Lecturer in English and Co-Director of the Centre for Early Modern Studies at the University of Aberdeen. He is the author of *Writing Early Modern London: Memory, Text and Community* (Palgrave 2013) and co-editor of the collections *Arts of Remembrance in Early Modern England: Memorial Cultures of the Post-Reformation* (2013) and *Literature, Mapping and the Politics of Space in Early Modern Britain* (2001).

Monday 19 May 2014, William Poole (New College, Oxford)
'Printed Books v. Manuscripts: Economies of Production and Economies of Reception'

Dr. William Poole is John Galsworthy Fellow and Tutor in English, and Fellow Librarian, New College, Oxford. He writes on early-modern intellectual history and bibliography and is co-editor of *The Library*.

Monday 26 May 2014, Julia Craig-McFeely (University of Oxford)
'Lute Manuscripts and their Uses'

This paper will examine the corpus of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century lute manuscripts, looking at the reasons behind their compilation and the scribes responsible as well as, more broadly, at what these manuscripts reveal about the way in which musical instruments were taught in early modern England, who was playing them, and the purpose this skill served in social change and advancement.

Dr. Julia Craig-McFeely is Research Fellow at the Music Faculty, Oxford University. She is currently a Director of the Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music and is an internationally renowned expert in digital manuscript imaging. In 2008 she was one of the team of specialists who undertook the pilot project to digitise the Dead Sea

Scrolls in Jerusalem. Her doctorate on early modern lute manuscripts (1994), currently available online in an extended version, is a major contribution to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscript study and changed our understanding of the repertory that survives in these books.

Organiser: Dr Jonathan Gibson, Lecturer, Department of English, The Open University
<http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/english/gibson.shtml>

Book History at the Open University: <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/english/book-history/index.shtml>

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