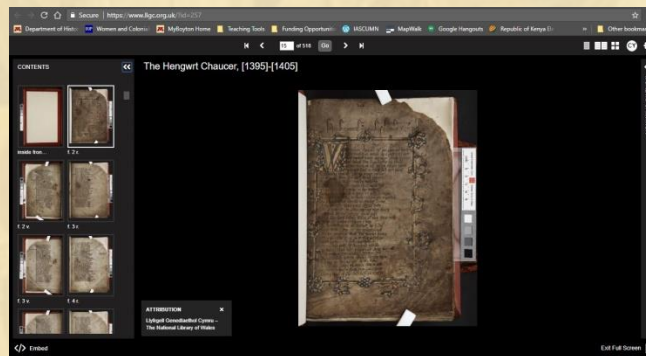


~Center for Medieval Studies Presents~
Annual Aris Lecture

“Out of olde bokes . . . al this newe science’:
Facts, Data, and Manuscript Studies”



Alexandra Gillespie
English and Medieval Studies
University of Toronto

Thursday, March 29th ~ 7:00 pm ~ Andersen 120

Abstract: This lecture asks questions about the relationship between paleography, codicology, and other bookish approaches to the medieval past; and the history of empiricism, within which these pursuits - arguably - belong. What sorts of facts are yielded by book historical inquiries? How has the shift to digitally-enhanced research changed the science of, and ideas about, the book? The answers I offer are framed by a reading of some of the poet Geoffrey Chaucer’s work. I argue that, in the space of his literary texts, Chaucer explores ideas about experiential versus abstract knowledge that are familiar to him from medieval philosophy, that lie behind modern approaches to facticity, and that shape medieval and modern attitudes to books themselves.

Biography: Alexandra Gillespie is Professor of English and Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto, where she is also founder and director of the Old Books New Science Lab; director of UofT's Digital Humanities Network; and chair of the Department of English and Drama at UofT's Mississauga campus. She is currently winding up three major projects - *Digital Tools for Manuscript Studies*, a software development project supported by the Mellon Foundation; *John Stow's Books*, a digital handlist, exhibit, and study of the Tudor antiquary's medieval book collection; and *Chaucer's Books*, a monograph from which her Aris Lecture will be drawn.

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