

Professor Wendy Scase BA MPhil DPhil FEA

Geoffrey Shepherd Professor of Medieval English Literature

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About

I am a specialist in medieval English language and literature with strong manuscripts, archival, and interdisciplinary experience. My work addresses questions that trouble the conventional boundaries between literary and other discourses, and is informed by the belief that medieval textual research can contribute to cultural history and enrich theory and practice in English studies.

Qualifications

- BA in English and American Literature (Kent)
- MPhil in English Medieval Studies 1100 - 1500 (Oxon)
- DPhil (Oxon)

Biography

I did graduate work in medieval English studies at the University of Oxford, where I completed a doctorate and held a British Academy Post-doctoral Fellowship. I moved to the University of Hull to a Lectureship in English, and there founded the Hull Centre for Medieval Studies. I took up the Geoffrey Shepherd chair in Medieval English Literature at Birmingham in 1999.

Teaching

I teach medieval subjects on the [English undergraduate programme \(/schools/edacs/departments/english/undergraduate/index.aspx\)](/schools/edacs/departments/english/undergraduate/index.aspx), and modules for the [MRes in Medieval Studies \(/postgraduate/courses/combined/english/medieval-studies.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/combined/english/medieval-studies.aspx) and the [MA in Medieval Studies \(/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/medieval-studies.aspx\)](/postgraduate/courses/taught/history/medieval-studies.aspx) (Literature Pathway) (which I also convene).

Postgraduate supervision

Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback. [Get the latest Flash Player](#) [Get the latest version of QuickTime](#)

- [video transcript \(/accessibility/transcripts/artsandlaw/english/wendy-scase-postgraduate-supervision.aspx\)](/accessibility/transcripts/artsandlaw/english/wendy-scase-postgraduate-supervision.aspx)

Research

I have research interests and extensive publications in medieval manuscript production and use; textual cultures of the medieval period; early printed broadsides and pamphlets; radical, polemical, and satirical writing, c.1100 - c.1550; relations between medieval literature and law, politics, and religion; Langland; Lollardy. Currently one of my main interests is developing new methodologies to advance scholarly and public understanding of medieval manuscripts.

Research groups

I am director of the [Vernon Manuscript Project \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/vernonmanuscript\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/vernonmanuscript) (a collaboration with the Bodleian Library, Oxford, which aims to create an electronic facsimile edition of the largest and most important surviving manuscript of Middle English literature), and the [Electronic Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books of the Medieval West Midlands project \(http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/mwm/\)](http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/mwm/).

I am a member of the Medieval English Research Cluster in the Department of English, and the Medieval Manuscripts Research Consortium (an inter-university network that supports those with funded research projects and sponsors the PhD training programme Quadrivium), and a partner in the [Manuscripts Online](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIEIS7VfFaA) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIEIS7VfFaA>) project.

Research funding

I acknowledge the generous support of the following research funders: Arts and Humanities Research Council (Resource Enhancement Scheme (two awards); Research Leave Scheme; and Collaborative National-Scale PhD Training Programme); British Academy (Postdoctoral Fellowships); European Science Foundation (Exploratory Workshops Programme); JISC (e-Content Capital Programme); and the Leverhulme Trust (Research Fellowships Scheme).

- [Audio interview on Medieval Manuscripts \(Jan 2011\)](http://www.ideaslab.bham.ac.uk/MP3s/Prof_Wendy_Scace_podcast.mp3) (http://www.ideaslab.bham.ac.uk/MP3s/Prof_Wendy_Scace_podcast.mp3)

Other activities

Conferences

Conferences that I have organised include 'Manuscripts of the West Midlands' held at University of Birmingham, 2003, the 3rd International *Piers Plowman* conference, held at Birmingham, 2003, and a European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop on 'Applying Semantic Web Technologies to Medieval Manuscript Research' held at Birmingham in 2009. I have served on the programme committee for the New Chaucer Society Congress.

Editorial work

I am founding co-editor of [New Medieval Literatures](http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/%7Enml/) (<http://www.artsci.wustl.edu/%7Enml/>), an annual of work on medieval textual cultures, with Professor Rita Copeland (University of Pennsylvania) and Professor David Lawton (Washington University St Louis). I am General Editor of [Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe](http://www.brepols.net/) (<http://www.brepols.net/>), an interdisciplinary book series published by Brepols on comparative studies of northern European medieval literature, history and society and their significance in the modern world.

I am a member of the Editorial Board of the international medieval studies journal *Speculum*.

Publications

Books

- Ed. *The Making of the Vernon Manuscript: The Production and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet.a.1*, Early Book Society series Texts and Transitions: Studies in the History of Manuscripts and Early Printed Books 6 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).
- *Literature and Complaint in England, 1272 - 1553*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, xii + 215pp.
- Ed. *Essays in Manuscript Geography: Vernacular Manuscripts of the English West Midlands from the Conquest to the Sixteenth Century*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2007, xii + 294pp.
- *Piers Plowman and the New Anticlericalism*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 4. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989 (repr. in paperback 2007; now available in electronic edition), xv + 249pp.
- Ed. (with R. Copeland and D. Lawton). *New Medieval Literatures*, vols 1 - 7, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997- 2005; vols 8-14, Turnhout: Brepols, 2006 -13.
- *Reginald Pecock*. Authors of the Middle Ages, no. 8. Aldershot: Variorum, 1996, vi + 72pp.

Major electronic publications

- Ed., *Manuscripts of the West Midlands: A Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books of the English West Midlands c. 1300 - c. 1475* (2006). <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/mwm/> (<http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/mwm/>)
- Ed., *The Vernon Manuscript: A Facsimile Edition of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet.a.1*, Oxford, Bodleian Digital Texts 3 (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2012). A facsimile edition of the largest and most important Middle English MS with parallel transcription and description, introductory essays, list of contents (370 items), and glossary, all hyperlinked.

Recent articles, essays and chapters

- Wendy Scace, 'Latin Composition Lessons, *Piers Plowman*, and the *Piers Plowman* Tradition', in *Answerable Style: The Idea of the Literary in Medieval England*, ed. by Frank Grady and Andrew Galloway (Columbus: Ohio State, 2013), pp. 34-53.
- Wendy Scace, 'Medieval manuscript heritage: digital research challenges and opportunities', [The Safeguard of Cultural Heritage : A Challenge From the Past for the Europe of Tomorrow : COST strategic workshop, July 11th 13th, 2011 Florence, Italy](http://www.cost.eu/download/safeguard_cultural_report/) (http://www.cost.eu/download/safeguard_cultural_report/) / edited by Marco Fioravanti, Saverio Mecca. – Firenze : Firenze University Press, 2011. pp. 97-99 (Proceedings e report ; 80) <http://digital.casalini.it/9788866550624> (ISBN 978-88-6655-058-7 (print) ISBN 978-88-6655-062-4 (online)
- 'Afterword: The Book in Culture', in *The Production of Books in England 1350-1500*, ed. A. Gillespie and D. Wakelin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 292-8.
- 'Late Fourteenth-Century English Poetry (Chaucer, Gower, Langland and their Legacy)', in *The Cambridge History of English Poetry*, ed. M.S.C. O'Neill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 43-62.
- 'Reading Communities', in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Literature in English*, ed. E. Treharne and G. Walker. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 557-73.
- 'Antifraternal Traditions in Reformation Pamphlets', in *The Friars in Medieval Britain*, Proceedings of the Harlaxton Symposium 2007, ed. Nicholas Rogers. Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2010, pp. 238-64.
- 'Reinventing the Vernacular: Middle English Language and its Literature', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Literature, 1100 - 1500*, ed. Larry Scanlon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 11-23.
- *Applying Semantic Web Technologies to Medieval Manuscript Research*, European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop Report. Strasbourg: European Science Foundation, 2009. <http://www.esf.org/activities/exploratory-workshops/workshops-list.html?year=2009&domain> (<http://www.esf.org/activities/exploratory-workshops/workshops-list.html?year=2009&domain>) =
- "Let him be kept in most strait prison": Lollards and the *Epistola Luciferi*', in *Freedom of Movement in the Middle Ages*, ed. Peregrine Horden. Harlaxton Medieval Studies, vol. 15. Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2007, pp. 52-72.
- '*Dauy Dicars Dreame* and Robert Crowley's Prints of *Piers Plowman*', *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 21 (2007), 171-98.
- 'Introduction: Essays in Manuscript Geography', in *Essays in Manuscript Geography: Vernacular Manuscripts of the English West Midlands from the Conquest to the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Wendy Scace. Turnhout: Brepols, 2007, pp. 1-10.
- 'The Medievalist's Tale', in *New Medieval Literatures*, vol. 7, ed. Wendy Scace, Rita Copeland, and David Lawton. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 1-7.
- 'Imagining Alternatives to the Book: The Transmission of Political Poetry in Late Medieval England', in *Imagining the Pre-Modern Book*, ed. John Thompson and Stephen Kelly. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005, pp. 239-51.

- 'Satire on the Retinues of the Great: Unpaid Bills and the Politics of Purveyance', in *The Key of all Good Remembrance: Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Texts in honour of John Scattergood*, ed. Alan Fletcher and Anne-Marie D'Arcy. Dublin, Four Courts, 2005, pp. 305-20.
- 'The Audience and Framers of the *Twelve Conclusions of the Lollards*', in *Text and Controversy in Late Medieval Religious Literature*, ed. Helen Barr and Ann Hutchison. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005, pp. 283-301.
- 'Lollardy', in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, ed. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 15-21, 257-8.
- 'Pecock, Reginald (b. c.1392, d. in or after 1459)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- 'Literature: The English Background', in *Chaucer: An Oxford Guide*, ed. S. Ellis. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 272-91.
- "'Heu! quanta desolatio Angliae praestatur": A Wycliffite Libel and the Naming of Heretics, Oxford 1382', in *Lollards and their Influence in Late Medieval England*, ed. Derrick Pitard, Jill Havens, and Fiona Somerset. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2003, pp. 19-36.

Expertise

English language and literature c.700 - c.1550; medieval manuscripts; medieval literature; medieval English (Old English and Middle English); reading and writing in medieval times; parliament, law, and the Church in medieval literature; Chaucer, 'Piers Plowman', John Wyclif; medieval heresy; digitising medieval manuscripts

Alternative contact number available for this expert: [contact the press office \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/contacts/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/contacts/index.aspx)

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