**WOMEN AND MEDIEVAL FRENCH LITERATURE, HILARY TERM 2019**

**Description**

Although most medieval texts were seemingly written by men and some of them with a fairly misogynistic bias, women were absolutely central to Medieval French Literature. The focus of this course will be twofold. In the first place, it will examine gender issues and women's status in the work of French medieval women writers (such as Marie de France and Christine de Pizan). In the second place, it will envisage the place of women in male-authored texts, whether as characters, patrons or addressees.

**Organisation**

5 seminars 1h (with some time to discuss previous essays before or after)  
4 essays (2000-3000 words each)

The course offers the opportunity to examine a range of genres and authors from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. Prof Marnette will convene the seminars on earlier material, and Dr Swift on the later topics. In consultation with the tutors, students will determine the topics that most interest them from the options listed below. More detailed bibliographies for each topic are available from the tutors.

The Special Subjects are taught in the first two terms of the course. You will normally meet your Special Subject Tutor four times during the term and will write a number of essays which your Tutor will read, mark, and discuss with you. You will then select what you and your Tutor think are the best essays, and submit clean copies of the final versions as a portfolio for examination. Special Subject submissions may comprise one or two essays to a total maximum word length of between 5,000 and 7,000 words (the word count includes footnotes, but excludes bibliography). You are required to submit the final version of the portfolio according to the instructions set out in the MSt course handbook by noon on Thursday week 10 of the term in which the Special Subject was taken.

**Topics**

- Women and lyric poetry  
- Women and chansons de geste  
- Women and romances  
- Marie de France  
- Fabliaux  
- Late-medieval reception of the *Roman de la rose*  
- Christine de Pizan

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Useful Websites

- Studying medieval French at Oxford, [http://users.ox.ac.uk/~fmml0059/OFOx1.htm](http://users.ox.ac.uk/~fmml0059/OFOx1.htm)
- Feminae: Medieval Women and Gender, [http://inpress.lib.uiowa.edu/Feminae/Default.aspx](http://inpress.lib.uiowa.edu/Feminae/Default.aspx)
- Internet Medieval Sourcebook, [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html)
- The Labyrinth, [http://labyrinth.georgetown.edu](http://labyrinth.georgetown.edu)
- Netserf, [http://www.netserf.org](http://www.netserf.org)
- ORB, [https://the-orb.arlima.net](https://the-orb.arlima.net)
- Les Archives de Littérature du Moyen Âge (ARLIMA), [https://www.arlima.net](https://www.arlima.net)
- Also see Prof Marnette’s & Dr Swift’s resources on WebLearn (undergraduate site, Paper VI)

Preparatory reading


