

Female Saints and Women in Sin: Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe

Start date 11 November 2022 **End date** 13 November 2022

Venue Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge
CB23 8AQ

Tutor Dr Scott Annett **Course code** 2223NRX010

Director of ISP and LL Sarah Ormrod

For further information contact inteng@ice.cam.ac.uk

Tutor biography

Dr Scott Annett is an experienced teacher of medieval literature, having taught courses in both the Faculty of English and the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages at the University of Cambridge. He has experience working on authors as diverse as Chaucer, Marie de France, Dante and the Gawain Poet. Indeed, the relationship between medieval English and medieval Italian literature is one of his primary research interests. Dr Annett enjoys working on texts written in various languages (Latin, English, Italian and Anglo-Norman), as well as attending to the complex theological, philosophical and literary questions posed by authors of this time.

Dr Annett's teaching style consists primarily of group discussion, organised around questions articulated by the class. He particularly enjoys working with adult students and drawing together their diverse perspectives and experiences.

Course programme

Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the Terrace Bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00 Dinner

20:30 – 22:00 An Introduction to Religion and the Lives of Women in Medieval England (Margery Kempe & Julian of Norwich)

22:00 Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

Saturday

07:30 Breakfast (for residents only)

09:00 – 10:30 I Am What I Wear? Constructing (Female) Identity in the Middle Ages (Margery Kempe)

10:30 Coffee

11:00 – 12:30 Pilgrimage and Foreign Travel (Margery Kempe)

13:00 Lunch

14:00 – 16:00 Free time

16:00 Tea

16:30 – 18:00 Sex and Salvation (Margery Kempe)

18:00 – 18:30 Free time

18:30 Dinner

20:00 – 21:30 Female Saints and the Authority of the Church (Margery Kempe & Julian of Norwich)

21:30 Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

Sunday

07:30 Breakfast (for residents only)

09:00 – 10:30 Christ's Body (Julian of Norwich)

10:30 Coffee

11:00 – 12:30 All Will Be Well? (Julian of Norwich)

12:45 Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch

Course syllabus

Aims:

1. Develop knowledge and understanding of medieval literature and in particular the writing of the Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe within the cultural and historical context;
2. Show awareness of critical and theoretical approaches to literature from the period;
3. Develop keener close reading skills, particularly when engaging with texts in medieval texts;
4. Articulate and discuss the broader concepts of the course and the relationships between the texts.

Content:

Around 1413, a few years before the death of Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe went to visit Julian in her cell in Norwich. Julian was roughly thirty years older than Margery and had lived a life of quiet but intense theological contemplation. In contrast, Margery was notorious for her emotional outbursts and had lived a full life in the local community, as would have been expected of the daughter of a prominent businessman. This course presents an opportunity to explore the complexities and contradictions of the medieval world through the lives of these two remarkable women. The Book of Margery Kempe documents the experiences of a devout medieval woman, exploring the tensions and complexities of her sexuality, encounters with Church authority and responsibilities to family. Julian of Norwich's Divine Revelations are an extraordinary contribution to medieval theology in which many of the established assumptions regarding sin, salvation and the significance of the created world are challenged and reworked. As part of this course, students will reflect upon the questions posed by both women, as well as the diverse (perhaps contradictory) answers suggested in their writing.

Presentation of the course:

This course will take place primarily through group discussions, guided by the lecturer. All students will be encouraged to participate fully in discussion of the texts and the issues surrounding them.

Reading and resources list

Listed below are texts that might be of interest should you wish to supplement your learning on the course. Any essential reading is marked with an asterisk *

Required reading

The Book of Margery Kempe: Annotated Edition, ed. Barry Windeatt (D.S. Brewer: Cambridge, 2004) *

Julian of Norwich: Revelations of Divine Love, trans. Elizabeth Spearing with introduction and notes by A.C. Spearing (Penguin: London, 1998) *

Note you may want to read these texts in other editions and/or to use a published translation as a parallel text throughout our discussions. There are several excellent editions available, but none are particularly recommended. Our discussion will focus primarily on the editions above, which have very helpful notes.

Supplementary reading

Baker, The Showings of Julian of Norwich, ed. Denise N. Baker (A Norton Critical Edition: 2005)

Herbert McAvoy, A Companion to Julian of Norwich, ed. Liz Herbert McAvoy (D.S. Brewer: Cambridge, 2015)

Larrington, *Women and Writing in Medieval Europe* (Routledge: London and New York, 1995)

Millett & Wogan-Brown, *Medieval English Prose for Women* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 2005)

Mills, *Suspended Animation: Pain, Pleasure & Punishment in Medieval Culture* (Reaktion Books, London, 2005)

Turner, *Julian of Norwich: Theologian* (Yale University Press: Yale, 2011)