

Selected item



The mother's mark: representations of maternal influence in Middle English popular romance



Description

Title The mother's mark: representations of maternal influence in Middle English popular romance

Name Florschuetz, Angela L. (author); Chism, Christine (chair); Scanlon, Larry (internal member); Klein, Stacy (internal member); Crane, Susan (outside member); Rutgers University, Graduate School - New Brunswick

Date Created 2007

Other Date 2007 (degree)

Subject Literatures in English, English literature--Middle English, 1100-1500, Romances, English

Extent vi, 260 pages

Description This dissertation investigates fourteenth- and fifteenth-century romances in English as they struggle with the complicated question of maternal influence, collectively constructed by intersecting, yet often contradictory discourses and interests. I argue that for Chaucer and the late medieval poets who wrote Octavian, Sir Gowther, and Melusine, the genre of the family romance proved particularly conducive to exploring the status of maternal influence and contribution in the context of these political, medical and religious contexts in their poems. In this project, I argue that not only is biological maternity and its significance interrogated in these romances, but that romance, especially the so-called "family romances" that gained in popularity in the later Middle Ages, with their narrativization of the vicissitudes of genealogy, offered poets an appropriate vehicle for meditating on the problems mothers posed to patriarchal genealogies--and, in some cases, the solutions they offered. Religious and medical texts often located maternal influence as a source of deviance, even monstrosity. Yet Octavian, Sir Gowther, Chaucer's Man of Law's and Clerk's Tales, and the Middle English Melusine undermine and critique paternal claims of maternal monstrosity or pollution as both untrue and ultimately dangerous to the genealogical project of reproducing the patrilineal dynasty. Modern scholarly discussions of medieval maternity tend to avoid the maternal body itself, identifying motherhood as a series of practices or identifying maternal images and metaphors as they were used by non-reproductive figures to describe their identities in other contexts. This project seeks to shift the register of an emerging conversation about medieval maternity to a more complicated level, one which acknowledges and references the complex and ambivalent social contexts in which maternal bodies and their influence were read and interpreted in the late Middle Ages. From the Octavian-poet, who acknowledges and refutes claims that the maternal body is a source of pollution, to the Melusine-poet's examination of the repercussions of recognizing and acknowledging maternal influence, late medieval poets approached the maternal body with profound ambivalence and an awareness of the social and religious stakes involved in representing that body and its significance to the community.

Note Ph.D.

Note Includes bibliographical references (p. 243-259).

Genre theses, ETD doctoral

Persistent URL <https://doi.org/doi:10.7282/T3SB465X>

Language English

Collection Graduate School - New Brunswick Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Organization Name Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Rights The author owns the copyright to this work.

PDF

▶ PDF-1 (1.29 MB)

[Citation & Export](#)

[View Usage Statistics](#)

[Staff View](#)

About Us

[How does RUcore work?](#)

[Policies](#)

[Services](#)

[Participate in RUcore](#)

[Collections](#)

Infrastructure

[Trusted Repository](#)

[Preservation](#)

[Understanding Metadata](#)

[Technical Glossary](#)

Open Source

[OpenWMS](#)

[OpenETD](#)

[OpenMIC](#)

[OpenWAAND](#)

Developers

[Reference Materials](#)

[Web Services/APIs](#)

[Schemas](#)

[Harvesting](#)

intensively. Weakening of inflections is connected with leveling of unstressed endings. Mothers, Identity, and Contamination. Authors. Angela Florschuetz. Working at the intersection of medical, theological, cultural, and literary studies, this book offers an innovative approach to understanding maternity, genealogy and social identity as they are represented in popular literature in late-medieval England. Keywords. England English literature identity literary studies Middle Ages transmission women. Bibliographic information. English is a Germanic language, with a grammar and a core vocabulary inherited from Proto-Germanic. However, a significant portion of the English vocabulary comes from Romance and Latinate sources. A portion of these borrowings come directly from Latin, or through one of the Romance languages, particularly Anglo-Norman and French, but some also from Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish; or from other languages (such as Gothic, Frankish or Greek) into Latin and then into English. The influence of Latin in 111. Middle English a Period of Great Change. The Middle English period (1150–1500) was marked by momentous changes in the English language, changes more extensive and fundamental than those that have taken place at any time before or since. Some of them were the result of the Norman Conquest and the conditions which followed in the wake of that event. Others were a continuation of tendencies that had begun to manifest themselves in Old English. These would have gone on even without the Conquest, but they took place more rapidly because the Norman invasion removed from English those conservati