

# Skepsi



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

Volume 3 (1)

Summer 2010



## BAD BEHAVIOUR IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

### **The Role of Ecclesiastical Stairs, Galleries and Upper Spaces in Medieval ‘Bad Behaviour’**

Toby J. Huitson: University of Kent, Canterbury

### **‘I do mistake my person all this while’: Blindness and Illusion in *Richard III***

Krista Bonello Rutter Giappone: University of Kent, Canterbury

### **Robbing Churches and Pulling Beards: The Rebellious Sons of Henry II**

Elizabeth J. Anderson: University of Huddersfield

### **Between Menace and Utility: Handguns in Early Sixteenth-Century Bohemia**

Christopher Nicholson: University College London

### **The Bad Behaviour of Friars and Women in Medieval Catalan *fabliaux* and Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales***

Jerónimo Méndez: University of Valencia



### **The *Skepsi* team**

Fabien Arribert-Narce  
Krista Bonello Rutter Giappone  
Harriet Clements  
Wissia Fiorucci  
Melanie Foehn  
Maureen Kincaid Speller  
Kamilla Pawlikowska  
Alvise Sforza Tarabochia

*Skepsi* is an online research journal based in the School of European Culture and Languages at the University of Kent (SECL) and is entirely run by research students.

The aim of *Skepsi*'s editorial board is twofold: to honour the spirit of SECL by striving to take advantage of its unique position as a crossroads in academic studies in Europe and to become a forum for European postgraduate researchers and postdoctoral scholars by developing collective thinking processes in the context of academic research.

Our title, *Skepsi* — which comes from the Ancient Greek 'σκεψις [*skepsis*]' or 'enquiry' and the Modern Greek 'σκέψις [*sképsis*]' or 'thought' — symbolises our will to explore new areas and new methods in the traditional fields of academic research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Originality and creativity in the approach of thought and of texts are crucial for us: to enhance and to promote these aspects will be our contribution to the tremendous range of existing academic publications.



The interdisciplinary online journal of European thought and theory in humanities and social sciences

Biannual publication, VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1, SUMMER 2010

ISSN 1758-2679

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/secl/journals/skepsi/>

<http://blogs.kent.ac.uk/skepsi>

[skepsi@kent.ac.uk](mailto:skepsi@kent.ac.uk)

*Skepsi*

School of European Culture and Languages  
Cornwallis Building (North West)  
University of Kent  
Canterbury, Kent, CT2 7NF, UK

*Acknowledgements*

The conference organisers from the Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies and the School of Arts would like to thank the many people and bodies who contributed to the success of the Colloquium *Bad Behaviour in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* which took place at the University of Kent on 3rd December, 2009: the keynote speaker, Doctor Malcolm Jones, who has also provided the Foreword for this issue; the Arts and Humanities Research Council for financial support, and its representative, Professor Evelyn Welch, for her practical support; Doctor Mark Bateson of the Canterbury Cathedral Archives for arranging an interesting archive exhibition, as well as Canon Christopher Irvine and the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral for granting their permission for an evening visit; Doctor Nick Hiley of the Cartoon Archive, University of Kent, for the exhibition which ran concurrently with the Colloquium all speakers, delegates and their supervisors; the Editorial Board of *Skepsi* for dedicating this Issue to the proceedings of the Colloquium; and, last but not least, Emma Rose Barber, whose idea originally inspired the theme of the Colloquium, Krista Bonello Rutter Giappone, who helped in the organisation, Diane Heath, who masterminded its organisation, and all who assisted in any capacity.

The *Skepsi* Editorial Board would like to thank Peter Heath for his generous assistance with printing this issue and to express its sincere gratitude to John Harris, to whom is owed the *Skepsi* website and all the solutions to the technical issues that inevitably arise during the publication of a journal. Thanks are also due to our dedicated, volunteer peer reviewers, copy editors and proof readers.

## Contents

<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	iv
Toby J. Huitson: <i>University of Kent, Canterbury</i>	
<b>The Role of Ecclesiastical Stairs, Galleries and Upper Spaces in Medieval ‘Bad Behaviour’</b> .....	1
Krista Bonello Rutter Giappone: <i>University of Kent, Canterbury</i>	
<b>‘I do mistake my person all this while’: Blindness and Illusion in <i>Richard III</i></b> .....	15
Elizabeth J. Anderson: <i>University of Huddersfield</i>	
<b>Robbing Churches and Pulling Beards: The Rebellious Sons of Henry II</b> .....	31
Christopher Nicholson: <i>University College London</i>	
<b>Between Menace and Utility: Handguns in Early Sixteenth-Century Bohemia</b> .....	40
Jerónimo Méndez: <i>University of Valencia</i>	
<b>The Bad Behaviour of Friars and Women in Medieval Catalan <i>fabliaux</i> and Chaucer’s <i>Canterbury Tales</i></b> .....	52

## FOREWORD

I am very pleased to have been invited to introduce this selection of lectures given at the recent *Bad Behaviour in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* post-graduate colloquium organised by the University of Kent's Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies.

My first duty is to congratulate the organisers on their choice of title — what inspired vagueness! It enabled contributors to address 'a multitude of sins', as, indeed, the present representative sample of papers delivered at the colloquium amply demonstrates.

And the thirteen speakers were equally cosmopolitan — Kent students were well represented, of course, but so were students from other British universities, as well as international researchers from Spain and Italy. We ranged widely chronologically too, from Anglo-Saxon times (Malte Ringer's discussion of anti-social behaviour in three of Wulfstan's homilies), via the consideration of works by such 'mainstream' writers of the European Renaissance as Shakespeare (James Smith) and Tasso (Marianna Orsi), to Joel Swann's fascinating paper on the frequently scurrilous verse libels of the English seventeenth century — by way of early sixteenth-century Bohemian gun-culture (Christopher Nicholson — *within*).

As befits such a multifarious theme, methodological approaches were just as varied, ranging from the old-fashioned comparativists — exemplified in my own art-historical keynote address — to post-structuralists, in Krista Bonello's reading of *Richard III*, both on the page and in performance (*within*).

More than one contributor reminded us that — then as now — bad behaviour was by no means the prerogative of the laity. While Eduardo Santamaria regaled us with examples of late medieval religious misbehaviour in the choir-stalls of Spanish cathedrals, Toby Huitson entertained us with the equally reprehensible misdeeds contemporaneously taking place in the 'upper spaces' of English cathedrals (sleeping it off in the gallery! — *within*). Of course — as medievalists won't need telling — it was above all the lubricious escapades of the 'wandering' friars that inspired many a medieval satire throughout Europe: Jerónimo Méndez's valuable contribution introduced us to some little-known yet compelling parallels in Catalan *fabliaux* with Chaucer's treatment of the mendicants (*within*).

Lastly — but far from leastly — Elizabeth Anderson, in considering the youthful misbehaviour of the rebellious sons of Henry II, reminds us of the importance of symbolic gesture (a subject dear to my own heart) in her *Robbing churches and pulling beards* (*within*).

As the Oldest Contributor (and one of exemplary moral rectitude), it was a truly invigorating experience for me to observe with what vitality the (mostly) younger scholars who animated this colloquium delivered their papers — there is hope yet for historical cultural studies! (And the only bad behaviour I observed at first hand during the colloquium was a cartoon drawn of myself on the lunchtime table-cloth — which I intend to frame and hang on the wall of my retirement home as a fitting memento of a truly inspiring occasion).

ISSN 1758-2679

# Skepsi

Volume 3 (1)

Summer 2010



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council

BAD BEHAVIOUR IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

[skepsi@kent.ac.uk](mailto:skepsi@kent.ac.uk)  
<http://blogs.kent.ac.uk/skepsi>

University of  
**Kent**

