

spirituelles, etc. Les communications peuvent être en français ou en anglais. Envoyer résumé de communication ou proposition de session à: Colette H. Winn, Washington University, Romance Languages and Literatures, Campus Box 1077, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis MO 63130-4899. Date limite: 1er décembre 1994.

## CONFERENCE REPORT



The Gender and Medieval Studies Group held their annual conference on January 4 and 5 at the University of Leeds. The topic of the conference was "Sexualities in the Middle Ages," and papers presented ranged the entire spectrum from "The Holiest Vessel: Maternal Aspects of the Grail" to "Eneas' Outing."

The conference began with a round table discussion of *Feminist Approaches to the Body in Medieval Literature* (Linda Lomperis and Sarah Stanbury, eds., Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), and of an article by Joan Cadden, "Medieval Scientific and Medical Views of Sexuality: Questions of Propriety" (*Medievalia et Humanistica*, New Series 14 (1986)). Opinions, of course, varied widely as to the relative merit of the various articles, and became quite impassioned when the discussion shifted to a comparison of the theoretical approaches of British and American medievalists.

There were nine papers presented over the two days, and two reports on work in progress. It is difficult to single out any particular papers for comment, but I found "Eneas' Outing," by Mark Chinca (Trinity College, Cambridge) both informative and entertaining. He argued for a queer reading of Heinrich von Veldeke's *Eneasroman* based on the fact that the text grounds all sex/gender systems in homosocial desire. Jane Gilbert (New Hall, Cambridge) gave a paper titled "Boys will be . . . What?" which explored the development of childish sexuality into normative adult heterosexuality in *Floire et Blancheflor*, *Aucassin et Nicolette*, and *Floris et Liriope*. In this paper the focus on the construction of the sexuality of children in medieval literature was particularly provocative. Anne Kettle (St. Andrew's) gave a vivid and amusing presentation on the fallen women—and men—of Lichfield as immortalized in decanal visitation records of the mid-fifteenth century.

This was that best of conferences, small, informal and lively. What it lacked in quantity it more than made up for in the quality of both papers and discussion of the papers. The friendly atmosphere fostered wide-ranging explorations of ideas and ideologies. What better way to start the New Year?

This year's conference was organized by Lesley Johnson and Ros Brown-Grant of the University of Leeds. It was agreed that next year the conference would be hosted by the University of Wales at Aberystwyth and organized by Diane Watt. The topic will be "Gender and Community."

Rosalynn Voaden, University of York

