

Medieval French Conduct Books: Archival Work

Gina Greco

Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures

Christine Rose

Department of English

Abstract:

We seek funding for essential collaborative archival work on manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and the National Library of Luxembourg for two co-authored projects currently underway. We are unable to complete our work without visiting those repositories and examining several medieval manuscripts. Our previous successful collaboration in research and publication (see *vitae*) was due in part to the archival work we were able to accomplish. Greco requests PSU support for air travel to Cassis, France (the Camargo Foundation). While there, 5 months of living expenses for Greco will be covered by an external grant. A PSU Faculty Enhancement grant would supplement this external funding for which Greco has applied. Rose and Greco both request travel expenses to facilitate a two week trip to consult manuscripts in France and Luxembourg. Our research will result in a draft of a co-authored translation with critical introduction (working title: *Jehan de Saintré: Masculinity Restored*) and the completion of a co-authored paper and article for a scholarly journal ("A Newly Discovered Manuscript of *Le Ménagier de Paris*"). Both publications will contribute significantly to current critical discussions in our field of medieval studies.

Project Background:

The research for which we seek funding explores the materiality of medieval textuality—the constant theme of our recent scholarly research. That is, we are interested in medieval—and for this project, Old French—texts not only as literary manifestations, but also as cultural and linguistic artifacts of a pre-print culture. Greco's scholarship includes electronic projects and print publications, manuscript work and translations, all centered on exploring and interpreting Old French textuality. She just edited *Dame Philology's Charrette: Approaching Medieval Textuality through Chrétien's Lancelot* (accepted by general editor, pursuant to final editorial board approval; Medieval and Renaissance Textual Studies of Arizona State University Press). Rose has published on medieval women, conduct books, Chaucer, and medieval manuscripts. She is currently at work on a monograph *Conduct Literature for Women in the Middle Ages*, focusing on both Middle English and Old French works which proscribe and prescribe female conduct. Three chapters are complete. Some of her research in that project concerns manuscripts compiled in English households for the moral education of women. Rose plans to apply to the NEH and the Radcliffe Institute for external funding to complete this book. Most recently, our efforts have focused on our new book: *The Good Wife's Guide: Le Ménagier de Paris, A Medieval Household Book* (Cornell University Press, January 2009).

The Good Wife's Guide, co-authored, provides a lengthy scholarly introduction and the first complete English translation of a lively and interesting conduct-manual for a teenaged medieval wife, the 14th-century French *Le Ménagier de Paris*, purportedly written by her aged