Dear Members and Friends of the Rocky Mountain Medieval & Renaissance Association,

This July 4th holiday finds us in the midst of a two-fold crisis in the United States and the world, both of which demonstrate how relevant and needful it is to have a clear understanding of the past to ensure that our present and future are healthy and hopeful. The COVID-19 pandemic remains an ongoing threat to public health in its daily infecting and taking of lives, but I want to use the start of this summer newsletter to address the parallel crisis engulfing the U.S. and the world: the protests and cries for social justice and equality that erupted in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25th. Mr. Floyd, who was Black, was killed by a white police officer who knelt on his neck for over eight minutes — the resulting worldwide protests have brought issues of racism and police brutality to the forefront of our national consciousness.

The RMMRA joins a host of other organizations in condemning the systemic and institutional racism that has wreaked havoc and misery on Black people of the U.S. for centuries as we look at the historical record of this nation’s past. With regard to national headlines, Mr. Floyd’s death was preceded by the murder of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old Black man gunned down by two white men while jogging near his home in Brunswick, Georgia, and also Breonna Taylor, a Black woman in Kentucky who was shot and slain by police entering her home in March. Here in Colorado, revelations about the killing of Elijah McClain last August continue to haunt and enrage our community and I’m daily hopeful that justice will be gained for his surviving family members and friends, both in honor of his memory and also to ensure this type of institutional racism is forever ended.

These killings are unacceptable and a moral outrage that do not reflect the principles underlying the Constitutional right for equality under the law, and the RMMRA urges its members and colleagues to do everything possible to support a true end to racism and biases against Blacks and all people of color, as well as make a call for reform of law enforcement practices that have contributed to so many horrific and tragic deaths across the nation. The RMMRA also encourages all its members to demonstrate support for colleagues, friends, and neighbors of color during this time when surely the injustice they feel within our society must feel overwhelming and distressing.

For our part, as an organization there is an initiative being led by Kristin Bezio (Secretary) “to provide resources for scholars, teachers, and students which help to diversify and decolonize our classrooms and our research,” with the result that the RMMRA will be creating two databases as resources for our members: a “Database of Scholars of Color,” and a “Database of Period Authors & Artists of Color.” You’ll find all the details on Page Two of this newsletter, and I urge all of our members to review and submit citations.

As a medieval historian — and one privileged to be teaching World History courses in all periods at MSU Denver — I believe that I’m able to assess the current world with some degree of perspective; that reality makes me outraged that in 2020 our society is still faced with fundamental challenges we know from the past. The RMMRA urges us to continue striving to be part of an academic world that strives to enact change in accordance with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s caveat in his last sermon, delivered days before his assassination:

“[In regard to the dissemination of myths about racism, there is] ... the myth of time. It is the notion that only time can solve the problem of racial injustice. And there are those who often sincerely say to the Negro and his allies in the white community, ‘Why don’t you slow up? Stop pushing things so fast. Only time can solve the problem. And if you will just be nice and patient and continue to pray, in a hundred or two hundred years the problem will work itself out.’

‘There is an answer to that myth. It is that time is neutral. It can be used either constructively or destructively. And I am sorry to say this morning that I am absolutely convinced that the forces of ill will in our nation, the extreme rightists of our nation—the people on the wrong side—have used time much more effectively than the forces of goodwill. And it may well be that we will have to repent in this generation. Not merely for the vitriolic words and the violent actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence and indifference of the good people who sit around and say, ‘Wait on time.’ Somewhere we must come to see that human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals who are willing to be co-workers with God. And without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the primitive forces of social stagnation. So we must help time and realize that the time is always ripe to do right.”

Martin Luther King, Jr., “Remaining Awake through a Great Revolution,”
Delivered at National Cathedral Washington, D.C., 31 March 1968
weblink: King Institute, Stanford University

I wish all of you the healthiest and happiest of summers, and have high hopes that many of us will be seeing each other soon (albeit virtually) in the upcoming RMMRA “Works in Progress Workshops” coming up in October (see details on Page Two). — Todd P. Upton, Ph.D., President, RMMRA
RMMRA Works in Progress Workshop October 8th-11th, 2020

Now more than ever, academic organizations such as the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association are vital for maintaining a sense of scholarly solidarity and support. With these goals in mind, RMMRA hopes to provide a platform for constructive feedback and conversation in lieu of our annual conference.

Please join us for a “Works in Progress Workshop” digital conference to be held between October 8-11, 2020. This forum is designed to enable RMMRA members to share and gain productive feedback on any work in progress. Participants will be divided into small working groups and encouraged to exchange substantive and constructive feedback, culminating in a video chat discussion of the works shared, hosted by an RMMRA Board Member. You may submit a Medieval- or Renaissance-focused work-in-progress at any level, up to approximately 7500 words in length. We welcome pedagogy work as well as other scholarly approaches.

Please submit an abstract (200 words max), along with 3-5 descriptive keywords, by 7/20/2020. We also welcome respondents to join without submitting a paper. The final draft of your paper will be due 9/17/2020. We encourage you to include a few questions framing the stage of the project and its eventual goals so that your group-mates can target their feedback productively.

Participants must be members in good standing. Dues may be paid through Member Planet.

The RMMRA is dedicated to creating an inclusive scholarly community. We encourage participation from scholars regardless of race, national origin, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, religion, political views, military status, (dis)ability, and career paths. Our organization is committed to providing a safe, accessible, harassment-free, and collegial conference experience for all attendees. The RMMRA recognizes and supports the inclusion of diverse scholars from across the academy. We support the lives and work of Black scholars.

RMMRA Decolonizing Research and Teaching Resources

The RMMRA is looking to provide resources for scholars, teachers, and students which help to diversify and decolonize our classrooms and our research. In light of this desire, we are moving forward with a plan to create two databases of resources for our members.

Database of Scholars of Color: We would like to create a list of articles, books, and reviews authored by scholars of color.

Database of Period Authors & Artists of Color: We would like to compile a list of primary works—literary, chronicle, sermons, accounts, etc.—by authors of color from the medieval and early modern periods around the globe.

We are seeking citations from members to be submitted to our growing lists for inclusion in a more formal future database.

To contribute, please visit one of the two Google Doc links (Scholars of Color) and (Authors/Artists of Color) and submit a citation (with a link, if there is an online version available).

You may also submit citations to rmmraconf@gmail.com. We will be collecting these lists throughout the year and will be working on creating a set of more formal databases in 2021.
NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON BRITISH STUDIES M.A. ESSAY
CONTEST 2020

DEADLINE: July 15, 2020

The NACBS awards a prize of $500 annually for the best piece of original research produced by a student in a “stand-alone” M.A. program at a university or college in the U.S. or Canada.

Essays may be from any department—History, English, Cultural Studies, Gender Studies, etc.—but must relate to a topic in British Studies. Essays nominated for this prize may deal with subjects related to the British Isles or with some aspect of the British Imperial/Post-Colonial experience, broadly construed. Entries must not exceed fifty pages in length, inclusive of notes and/or illustrations.

The following conditions apply:

* Nominees must be students (or recent graduates) of a “stand-alone” M.A. program. “Stand alone” refers here to an M.A. degree earned at an institution that offers a master’s degree that is separate from a Ph.D. program and not simply a degree earned, as a matter of course, along the way to ABD status. This means that potential nominees might come from either a program with just an M.A. or programs where the M.A. and Ph.D. are awarded as separate degrees and candidates are admitted through separate application processes.

* Nominees may be currently enrolled in an M.A. program, recent graduates of an M.A. program (within one year of degree completion), or Ph.D. students (again within one year of having completed a degree in a terminal, “stand-alone” M.A. program).

* Submitted papers should be no more than 50 pages in length (inclusive of notes and/or illustrations). A longer (more than 50-page) M.A. thesis may be edited down to fit the word limit. Alternatively, stand-alone chapters from a longer thesis will also be considered.

* The prize will be decided by a committee of three faculty members from institutions with “stand-alone” M.A. programs. Whenever possible, there will be broad disciplinary representation on this committee.

Procedures for Nomination

Nominating faculty must be current members of the NACBS. Submissions must be accompanied by a nominating letter from the professor, who should have taught the course for which the essay was written or supervised M.A. thesis work. Submissions should include the permanent mailing address and email contact information for the student nominated.

An electronic copy of the essay and the letter of nomination (sent as two separate documents—either WORD or PDF) should be sent to EACH of the following three members of the prize committee by 11:59 p.m. on June 30, 2020, via email. The essay file should be named (NOMINEE’S NAME_Essay). The letter of nomination file should be named (NOMINEE’S NAME_Letter). Contact details, including email addresses, for each committee member appear below:

Chair: Jennifer McNabb
Head of History
University of Northern Iowa
1227 W 27th Street
319 Seerley Hall
Cedar Falls, IA 50614
jennifer.mcnabb@uni.edu

Peter Larson
Department of History
University of Central Florida
12796 Aquarius Agora Dr.
Orlando, FL 32816-1350
Peter.Larson@ucf.edu

Jeff Schauer
Department of History
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Box 455020
4505 S. Maryland Pkwy
Las Vegas, NV 89154-5020
jeff.schauer@unlv.edu
Quidditas

Quidditas is a Latin legal term that originally meant “the essential nature of a thing.” In fourteenth-century French the word became “quiddite.” In the early modern period, the English adaptation, “quiddity,” meant “logical subtleties” or “a captious nicety in argument” (OED), and is so used in Hamlet (“Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks?” (Act V.i 95–97). Thus, the original Latin meaning, together with the later implied notions of intense scrutiny, systematic reasoning, and witty wordplay, is well suited as the title of the journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association.

Quidditas is the annual, on-line journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association. The journal’s content is eclectic, publishing articles focused on medieval and early modern topics from all disciplines. The journal also accepts “Notes” for short articles pertaining to factual research, bibliographical and/or archival matters, corrections and suggestions, pedagogy and other matters pertaining to research and teaching. The journal welcomes contributions to “Texts and Teaching,” a section that seeks reviews of literature, articles on teaching approaches and other aspects of pedagogy, and short reviews of individual textbooks and other published materials that instructors have found especially useful in teaching courses in medieval and early modern disciplines. These features furnish readers and contributors venues not available in other scholarly journals.


Treasurer Reminder of Dues!

Dear Members of the RMMRA:

I sincerely hope that you and your family are, if not thriving, at least surviving in these trying times. On behalf of the RMMRA Board, I hope that if your circumstances permit, you will remember to renew your RMMRA membership and perhaps donate to one or more of our support funds for early career or untenured scholars (RMMRA, Walton, and Rosenberg funds).

Thankfully, we had not yet committed fiscally to this year’s cancelled joint conference with the Wooden O, but your contributions allow the organization to maintain functional continuity and look confidently toward the future. Your dues will also allow you to participate in this year’s conference replacement, a series of remote workshopping sessions.

The RMMRA prides itself on its commitment to collegiality and mentorship; your continuing contribution will help support these goals now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Samantha Dressel,
Treasurer
### Membership Form / Annual Dues

#### Name:

#### Position/Affiliation (if applicable):

#### Email:

#### Mailing Address:

#### Research Interests:

### Dues Category

- [$25.00 Individual Member](#)
- [$30.00 Dual Membership for Civilly Acknowledged Couples](#)

#### Partner’s Name:

#### Research Interests:

---

**Remit this form with your check made out to “RMMRA” to:**

**Samantha Dressel, Ph.D.**  
Treasurer, RMMRA  
Wilkinson College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences  
Department of English, Smith Hall 8F  
Chapman University  
One University Drive  
Orange, CA 92866
The Rocky Mountain Medieval & Renaissance Association is a nonprofit academic society dedicated to the advancement of learning in Medieval and Renaissance studies. The Association especially promotes the interchange of ideas among various fields of specialization, such as literature, history, philosophy, religion, art, music, architecture, sociology, anthropology. The Association advances these purposes by sponsoring an annual conference, publishing a peer-reviewed journal, and cooperating with other relevant academic organizations.

Membership in the RMMRA is open to anyone interested in these endeavors by the payment of annual dues. Though focused in the Inter-Mountain region of western North America, the Association has members from many areas of the US, Canada, and other parts of the world. We welcome the world to join us in our beautiful region to explore our common interests in the cultures of the Medieval & Renaissance periods.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD:**
**RMMRA OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT:**
Todd Upton,
2019-2022

**SECRETARY:**
Kristin Bezio,
2014-2020

**TREASURER:**
Samantha Dressel,
2019-2022

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS**
Eileen Mah, 2017-2020
Jonathan Davis-Secord, 2017-2020
Jeff Moser, 2017-2020
Alaina Bupp, 2018-2021
Kenna Olsen, 2018-2021
Ruth Frost, 2018-2021
Sarah Davis-Secord, 2018-2021
Abby Lagemann, 2019-2022
Kim Klimk, 2019-2022
Vince Patarino, 2019-2022
Alani Hicks-Bartlett, 2019-2022
Jessica Brown, 2019-2022

**EX-OFFICIO PRESIDENTS**
Tom Klein
Jennifer McNabb
Charles Smith
Ginger Smoak
Jane Woodruff

**REGISTERED AGENT (COLORADO)**
Charles Smith

**PAST PRESIDENTS**
Allen D. Breck 1968
Delno C. West
Boyd H. Hill
Jeanie R. Brink
Glenn Olsen
Francis X. Hartigan 1985-1986
Charles Odahl 1986-1987
Thomas R. Eckenrode 1987-1989
Carol Neel 1990-1992
Paul A. Dietrich 1992-1993
James B. Fitzmaurice 1993-1994
Sara Jayne Steen 1994-1996
Susan Frye 1996-1999
Nancy Guitierrez 1999-2001
Charles Smith 2001-2003
Paul Thomas 2003-2005
Jane Woodruff 2005-2007
Darin Merrill 2007-2009
Kimberly Johnson 2009-2011
Jeffrey Taylor 2011-2013
Tom Klein 2013-2015
Jennifer McNabb 2015-2017
Ginger Smoak 2017-2019

**CONTACT:**
Email us at rmmraconf@gmail.com
(This address is checked year-round.)