

## Abstracts

- 327 **Joshua Calhoun**, *The Word Made Flax: Cheap Bibles, Textual Corruption, and the Poetics of Paper*  
 Made of recycled clothes, slaughtered animals, and felled trees, Bibles in Renaissance England were filled with visible traces of ecological matter, remainders that remind one that words on a page are thought fused with—and inflected by—matter. This essay places Henry Vaughan’s poem “The Book” in a broader conversation about the poetics of paper: the rhetorical effects of the varied colors and qualities of paper used in the production of the vernacular Bibles that transformed reading practices in Renaissance England. Historical writers and readers, who were directly involved in a flax-to-rags-to-paper economy, recognized and commented on the natural resources from which cheap, widely distributed Bibles and other texts were made. Further, this essay models a reading strategy that attends to the natural history of books, to both the function and the form of the organic matter used to mediate human ideas. (JC)
- 345 **Andrew Loman**, “More Than a Parchment Three-Pence”: Crises of Value in Hawthorne’s “My Kinsman, Major Molineux”  
 In “My Kinsman, Major Molineux,” Robin enters Boston after negotiating the cost of a ferry ride across the Charles River, a negotiation complicated by the precipitous depreciation of the provincial bill he carries. His night in Boston therefore unfolds under the volatile sign of paper money. The story is one of several Hawthorne works to join the paper-gold debate of the nineteenth century, and it historicizes that debate with persistent allusions to related eighteenth-century currency disputes. The story’s famous ambivalence springs in part from Hawthorne’s cognizance of a historical irony: in the nineteenth century, Jacksonian Democrats attacked paper money as the instrument of a neoaristocratic moneyed power; in the eighteenth century, royalists stigmatized it as the instrument of the “Popular or *Democratick* Part of the Constitution.” The story is informed by the discomfiting fact that the eighteenth-century Tory and the nineteenth-century Democrat equally privileged gold over paper. (AL)
- 363 **Kathy Lavezzo**, *The Minster and the Privy: Rereading The Prioress’s Tale*  
 Introduced at the start of *The Prioress’s Tale* but then dropped as an overt topic, usury nevertheless informs that anti-Semitic text. This essay situates Chaucer’s narrative in the complex and contradictory history of medieval lending as a theory and a practice. I stress the architectural ironies of usury in the tale and in medieval English history. The tale demonizes Jewish usurers by associating them with the most abject of built environments, the latrine, and celebrates Christians through their links to the exalted space of the church. But, in a move that reflects the flow of capital throughout Christian society, the tale ultimately undermines the opposition of church and pit. Analyzed not as fixed entities but as contingent, fluid spaces joined through the usurious

infrastructure of the tale, the minster and the privy suggest a materialist critique of efforts to conceive of a purely religious space. (KL)

383 **Rachel Cole**, Rethinking the Value of Lyric Closure: Giorgio Agamben, Wallace Stevens, and the Ethics of Satisfaction

Lyric poetry's investment in structural delimitation has been read as a commitment to the exclusion of otherness and more specifically of other people. But delimitation need not be synonymous with exclusivity. Giorgio Agamben suggests that lyric closure and the satisfaction it affords may be a model for achieving peace with the other—a model of how we might find, in or with another, not merely alterity but contentment. Wallace Stevens offers examples of how such contentment might be realized between text and reader, as an effect of the bounded aural intensity of lyric language. Agamben's poetics and Stevens's poems complicate our assumptions about the sociality of lyric structure. In addition, they offer a provocative alternative to the Levinasian models that influence much of our current thinking about ethics. (RC)

398 **Jakob Norberg**, Adorno's Advice: *Minima Moralia* and the Critique of Liberalism

Adorno's *Minima Moralia* was part of a publishing boom in the genre of advice literature in postwar West Germany. The combination of economic resurgence and attempted cultural restoration resulted in a widespread wish to master forming models of social intercourse; this craving for guidance accounts for the volume's commercial success. But while Adorno participates in the culture of counseling, he couples practical suggestions with repeated announcements of the demise of the self-determining subject, the projected recipient of advice. He addresses problems that appear in the individual's frame of attention but consistently disputes that this is a meaningful scene of action in the age of total administration. *Minima Moralia* both inhabits and violates the conventions of advice literature in order to dramatize the experience of the discrepancy between societal logic and the individual's resources. (JN)