

MELISSA B. REYNOLDS

Curriculum Vitae
m.reynolds1@tcu.edu

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2024– Assistant Professor, Early Modern European History, Texas Christian University
- 2023–2024 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Humanities, Wolf Humanities Center; Lecturer, History and Sociology of Science Department, University of Pennsylvania
- 2022–2023 David Bartholomae Postdoctoral Lecturer, Rutgers University—New Brunswick
- 2019–2022 Perkins-Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow, Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts; Lecturer, History Department and Program in Humanistic Studies, Princeton University

EDUCATION

- 2019 PhD, History, Rutgers University—New Brunswick
Major field: Early Modern Europe; Minor field: Women’s and Gender History
Dissertation Committee: Alastair Bellany (advisor), James Masschaele, Leah DeVun, Rudy Bell, Ann Blair (Harvard)
- 2011 MA, History, The University of Alabama
- 2005 BA, English, with Honors, *summa cum laude*, The University of Alabama

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

Reading Practice: The Pursuit of Natural Knowledge from Manuscript to Print (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2024)

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

“Of Plants and Providence: Assessing Drugs, Difference, and Divine Will in Timothy Bright’s *The sufficiencie of English medicines* (1580),” forthcoming in *Renaissance Quarterly*

“The *Sururgia* of Nicholas Neesbett: Writing Medical Authority in Later Medieval England,” *Social History of Medicine* 35, no. 1 (February 2022): 144–169.

* Winner, 2023 J. Worth Estes Prize, American Association for the History of Medicine

“‘Here is a good boke to lerne’: Practical books, the coming of the press, and the search for knowledge, ca. 1400–1560,” *Journal of British Studies* 58, no. 2 (April 2019): 259–288.

* Honorable Mention, 2020 Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography Essay Prize

Guest Editing

Co-editor (with Hannah Frydman) of a special forum of articles, “Reproductive Rights Beyond *Roe*,” *Gender & History* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2024): 289–333. (Contributors: Bibia Pavard, Brooke Lansing Mai, Hannah Stamler)

Invited Essays

Co-author (with Hannah Frydman), “Introduction: Histories of Abortion Beyond *Roe*,” *Gender & History* 36, no. 2 (Summer 2024): 289–294.

“How to Cure a Horse, or, the Difference Between the Knowledge of Experience and the Experience of Knowledge,” *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 52, no. 4 (2022): 546–552.

Editions and Translations

Four-year member of transcription and translation team for Pamela Smith et al., eds., *Secrets of Craft and Nature in Renaissance France: A Digital Critical Edition and English Translation of Bibliothèque nationale de France MS Fr. 640*, <https://edition640.makingandknowing.org>.

* Winner, 2021 Eugene S. Ferguson Prize, Society for the History of Technology

Book Reviews

Heidi Hausse, *The Malleable Body: Surgeons, Artisans, and Amputees in Early Modern Germany*, *Social Histories of Medicine* (Manchester, 2023), *Renaissance Quarterly* 77, no. 4 (Winter 2025).

James D. Fisher, *The Enclosure of Knowledge: Books, Power, and Agrarian Capitalism in Britain, 1660–1800* (Cambridge, 2022), *The American Historical Review* 129, no. 3 (September 2024): 300–301.

Jennifer Borland, *Visualizing Household Health: Medieval Women, Art, and Knowledge in the Régime du corps* (University Park, 2022), *Renaissance Quarterly* 76, no. 4 (Winter 2023): 1503–1505.

Ruth J. Salter, *Saints, Cure-Seekers, and Miraculous Healing in Twelfth-Century England* (York, 2021), *The Medieval Review* (October 2022).

Sara Ritchey and Sharon Strocchia, eds., *Gender, Health, and Healing, 1250–1550* (Amsterdam, 2020), *Renaissance Quarterly* 75, no. 1 (Spring 2022): 239–241.

Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *All Hail to the Archpriest: Confessional Conflict, Toleration, and the Politics of Publicity in Post-Reformation England* (Oxford, 2019), *The English Historical Review* 136, no. 577 (February 2021): 191–93.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

“Old Books, New Attitudes,” an initiative to publish digital critical editions of later medieval medical manuscripts owned and annotated by early modern readers; in collaboration with Pamela Smith (Columbia University) as a component of the project “Crafting an Open Source Digital Publication Tool for the History of Science,” funded by the National Science Foundation

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, & GRANTS

External

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| 2024 | Paul Oskar Kristeller Fellowship, Renaissance Society of America |
| 2023 | J. Worth Estes Prize, American Association for the History of Medicine |
| 2022 | National Science Foundation Grant #2218218 (as co-collaborator; grant proposal submitted by Pamela H. Smith, Columbia University) |
| 2020 | Honorable Mention, Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography Annual Essay Prize, Rare Book School, University of Virginia |
| 2018 | Dissertation Completion Fellowship, American Council of Learned Societies and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation |
| 2018 | Grant-in-aid, Folger Shakespeare Library, Faculty Weekend Seminar |
| 2017 | Schallek Award, The Medieval Academy of America and the Richard III Society |
| 2016 | Grant-in-aid, Folger Shakespeare Library, Researching the Archive Seminar |
| 2015 | Director’s Scholarship, Rare Book School, The University of Virginia |

Internal

- 2024 Clark-McClintock-Gershenson Subvention Award, History Department, Rutgers University
- 2020 David A. Gardner '69 Magic Grant, Princeton University
- 2020 University Committee on Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences Grant, Princeton University
- 2018 Mellon Dissertation Completion Fellowship, School of Arts & Sciences, Rutgers University (Declined)
- 2017 Special Study Award for Digital Humanities, Graduate School, Rutgers University
- 2016 Mellon Summer Dissertation Research Grant, School of Arts & Sciences, Rutgers University
- 2016 Teaching Assistant Professional Development Fund Research Grants, Rutgers University
- 2012 Albert Burton Moore Memorial Award for Outstanding Graduate Work in History, University of Alabama
- 2005 Phi Beta Kappa, University of Alabama

PUBLIC-FACING SCHOLARSHIP

Op-Eds

[“Communication failures in a pandemic can be catastrophic,”](#) *The Washington Post*, March 18, 2020

[“The key to lowering America’s high rates of maternal mortality,”](#) *The Washington Post*, May 9, 2019

Digital Publications

Advising editor, [“Images as/and Recipes,”](#) Autumn 2024 issue of *The Recipes Project*

[“Reading Remedy Books: Manuscripts and the Making of a National Medical Tradition,”](#) for the National Library of Medicine’s *Circulating Now* blog, October 26, 2023

[A Digital Companion to Reading Practice,](#) a website built from scratch on GitHub pages to share the data collected for the book in an open-access format

Editor, [“Recipes for Rebirth,”](#) Spring 2023 issue of *The Recipes Project*

Podcasts

[“Reading Practice: The Pursuit of Natural Knowledge from Manuscript to Print,”](#) an interview with Sarah Jessi Bramao-Ramos of New Books Network, January 17, 2025

[“Medicine, Magic, and Literacy in Early Modern England,”](#) recorded for *Chasing Leviathan*, September 8, 2024

[“A Late Medieval ‘How To’ Book,”](#) recorded for *90Second Narratives*, March 15, 2021

[“Lessons from a Fifteenth-Century Pandemic,”](#) recorded for *Policy Punchline*, April 21, 2020

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, & INVITED TALKS

Invited Research Talks and Presentations

- 2025 “Medicalizing Difference,” an invited presentation at the conference “Medicine, Slavery, and Race in the Atlantic World,” King’s College London
- 2024 “‘Englishing’ Natural Knowledge: Antiquarianism, Exceptionalism, and Elizabethan Science,” an invited talk for the University of Minnesota’s History of Science, Technology, and Medicine Colloquium
- 2023 “Reading Remedy Books: Medical Manuscripts and the Making of a National Medical Tradition,” an invited presentation for the National Library of Medicine’s History Talks series (online)
- 2023 “Plants and Providence: Pharmacology as an Expression of Divine Order and Ethnic Difference,” an invited presentation at the conference *The Anatomy of Vegetation II: Plants, Experiments and Experience in the Early Modern Period*, Vasile Goldiș Western University (online)
- 2022 “Learning to Look: Imagery Beyond Alchemy in English Manuscripts,” an invited talk for Through a Glass Darkly, an international conference celebrating the opening of an exhibition of the Ripley Scrolls at Princeton University
- 2022 “Reading *Practica*: A Material History of Ideas,” an invited talk for the Seminar in the History of Medicine, McGill University (online)
- 2021 “The Past and Future in Print,” an invited talk for the Working Group on Early Modern History of Science at the Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine (online)
- 2020 “Prognostications Past and Present: Leonard Digges, Print for Profit, and the Passage of Time in Early Modern England,” an invited presentation for New Work in Early Modern Intellectual History: A Virtual Workshop, Faculty of Theology and Religion at the University of Oxford (online)

Campus or Departmental Talks

- 2024 “Of Plants and Providence,” Wolf Humanities Seminar on “Revolutions,” University of Pennsylvania
- 2021 “Picturing the Natural World,” Early Modern History Workshop, Princeton University
- 2020 “The *Sururgia* of Nicholas Neesbett,” History of Science Program Seminar, Princeton University
- 2020 “Mimicry in Manuscript: Learning to Write as a Model of Authority in Later Medieval and Early Modern England,” Committee on the Study of Books and Media, Princeton University
- 2020 “From Devotion to Instruction: Reading the book of ‘paynture’ in late medieval England,” Textuality, Materiality, and Reading Practices Working Group, Princeton University

Pedagogy-Related Talks

- 2025 “Teaching with EditionCrafter,” an invited presentation (with Pamela Smith [Columbia University] and Nick Laiacona [Performant Software Solutions]) for the Medieval Academy of America’s Digital Humanities Showcase Series (online)
- 2022 Invited Panelist/Presenter, Best Teaching Practices, a discussion for Graduate Fellows at the Center for Human Values, Princeton University
- 2021 Invited Presenter/Panelist, Best Teaching Practices, a discussion for Postdoctoral Fellows at the Center for Human Values, Princeton University

Conference Sessions Organized

- 2022 Organizer, “Beyond the ‘Stigma of Print’: Cultivating Women’s Scientific and Medical Expertise in Manuscript; Sponsored by the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender”; Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association (postponed to online format, February 2022)
- 2021 Co-organizer, “The State of the Margins: Thirty Years After ‘Gabriel Harvey and His Livy,’” Annual Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America [Originally scheduled for RSA 2020 but rolled over to virtual RSA 2021 due to Covid-19]
- 2016 Co-organizer and Chair, “Vernacular Knowledge and Learned Tradition in Early Modern England: Movement, Practice, Reception, History of Science Society,” History of Science Society Annual Meeting

Conference Presentations

- 2025 Roundtable participant, “In and Out of Context: The Varieties of Contextual Reading in Early Modern Europe,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting
- 2025 “A Protestant Philosophy? Medicine, the Body, and the Environment in Sixteenth-Century English and German Thought,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting
- 2024 Roundtable participant, “Collaborative Futures: Tools for Collaboration from the Making and Knowing Project,” History of Science Society Annual Meeting
- 2024 “Henry Dyngley’s Digital Library: How a New Open-Access Platform is Enabling the Digital Reconstruction of a Sixteenth-Century Manuscript Collection,” International Congress on Medieval Studies
- 2024 Roundtable participant, “Resource Landscapes,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting
- 2024 “Print and the ‘Englising’ of Medical Knowledge,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting
- 2023 “New World *Materia medica* and the Observation of Bodily Difference,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting
- 2022 “How to Reconstruct a Network of How-To Knowledge,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting
- 2022 “The Secrets of Women? Reproductive Medicine in Manuscript and Print,” American Historical Association Annual Meeting

- 2020 “Defining the Present: Constructing the ‘Medieval’ in Popular Print,” Renaissance Society of America [Cancelled due to Covid-19]
- 2019 “*Probatum est*: Reader marks and the development of scribal practice,” International Congress on Medieval Studies
- 2019 “Making, Writing, Healing: Craft techniques and cures in Renaissance recipe books,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting
- 2017 “Consuming the Word: Late Medieval Medical Charms and the Curative Power of Writing,” Bibliography Among the Disciplines Conference, Rare Book School
- 2017 “From Script to Print: Receipt Books and Proprietary Expertise in Early Modern England,” Revisions, the Annual Harvard-Yale Book History Conference
- 2016 “Threads of Time and Strands of Silk: Popular Magic, Astrological Expertise, and Women’s Textile Work in Early Modern England,” History of Science Society
- 2015 “Icons and Almanacs: Visual Practice and Non-Elite Book Culture in Late Medieval and Early Modern England,” Mid-Atlantic Conference on British Studies

External Seminars

- 2018 Translation and Encoding Workshop, *Making and Knowing Project*, Université de Toulouse II—Jean Jaurès
- 2018 “Image and Knowledge in Early Modern Books,” Faculty Weekend Seminar taught by Daniela Bleichmar (USC); Folger Shakespeare Library
- 2017 Translation and Markup Workshop, *Making and Knowing Project*, Université de Toulouse II—Jean Jaurès
- 2016–17 “Researching the Archive,” year-long dissertation research and writing seminar, taught by Keith Wrightson (Yale) and James Siemon (Boston University); Folger Shakespeare Library
- 2015 “Book Production and Social Practice in Early Modern Europe and America,” Rare Book School, taught by Ann Blair and David Hall (Harvard); Harvard University
- 2015 Middle French Paleography Workshop, *Making and Knowing Project*, taught by Marc Smith (École Nationale des Chartes), Columbia University
- 2012 Minnesota Manuscript Research Laboratory, University of Minnesota Center for Medieval Studies and the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library; taught by Ruth Mazo Karras (Trinity College, Dublin), St. John’s University

COURSES TAUGHT

Texas Christian University

The World Expanded: Europe, 1348–1789
 History of Science: Scientific Revolutions
 Technologies of History from Cuneiform to Coding

University of Pennsylvania

Fertile Bodies: Reproduction from Antiquity to the Enlightenment

Princeton University

Fertile Bodies: Reproduction from Antiquity to the Enlightenment

A History of Words: Technologies of Communication from Cuneiform to Coding

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Western Culture I

SERVICE

To the field

Comment or Chair: “English Prints and Printing” (RSA 2025)

Liaison to the American Historical Association for the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender (2021–present)

Manuscript referee for *British Journal for the History of Science* (2024); *Social History of Medicine* (2024); *Ambix: The Journal of the Society of the History of Alchemy and Chemistry* (2023); *Centaurus: The Journal of the European Society for the History of Science* (2022)

Co-editor, *The Recipes Project: Food, Magic, Art, Science, and Medicine* (<https://recipes.hypotheses.org>)

Editorial Assistant, *Speculum: The Journal of the Mediaeval Academy of America* (2015–16)

Campus or departmental

Member, Graduate Committee, TCU (2024–25)

Organizer, Wolf Center Symposium on “Revolution,” University of Pennsylvania (2023–24)

Chair and organizer, Graduate Writing Program Research Symposia, Rutgers University (2022–23)

Invited Faculty Opinion Columnist to *The Daily Princetonian*, Princeton University (2021–22)

Faculty Fellow, First College, Princeton University (2019–22)

LANGUAGES

Latin, French, Middle French, Anglo-Norman, Middle English, German (with dictionary), Spanish (with dictionary)

Medieval and Early Modern Latin, French, and English paleography

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Renaissance Society of America

Society for the Study of Early Modern Women and Gender

American Association for the History of Medicine

History of Science Society

American Historical Association