**Lara Farina** Home Address:

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**Education**

Ph.D. in English, Fordham University, 1999

M.A. in English, Fordham University, 1992

B.A. in Humanities, University of California, Berkeley, 1989, awarded with highest honors

**Employment History**

2008 - Associate Professor, West Virginia University

Teaching undergraduate and graduate English courses, including Medieval Literature, Chaucer, Non-Western World Literature, and graduate seminars on: textual communities, piety and dissent, visionary literature, and sensory studies.

2002-08 Assistant Professor, West Virginia University

* 1. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow and Lecturer, Grinnell College

1998-00 Visiting Assistant Professor, Fordham University

1995-97 Adjunct Professor and Student Advisor, Gallatin School, New York University

1993-94 Teaching Fellow, Fordham University

**Teaching and Research Interests**

Medieval literature and material culture; history of sexuality and the body; history of reading; sensory studies, particularly on tactility/haptics; affect and aesthetics; disability studies.

**Publications**

Book: *Erotic Discourse and Early English Religious Writing*. NY: Palgrave, 2006.

Looking at devotional and advisory literature from the 10th to 13th centuries, this study examines how pleasure and desire factored into the act of reading for people whose profession depended on constant interaction with written material: monks, nuns, anchorites, friars, and vowed laypeople. Arguing for an understanding of reading as movement of the body, it emphasizes the somatically directive power of affective, eroticized rhetoric and traces an evolving articulation of sexual fantasy as spatially private.

Edited Collection: *The Intimate Senses: Taste, Touch, and Smell*. *postmedieval* 3.4, 2012.

This special issue of *postmedieval* pushes the history of the pre-modern sensing body beyond the current emphasis on visual culture by focusing on the proximate and intimate relationships between taste, touch, and smell in a variety of medieval and early modern contexts, including dramatic performance, urban geography, inter-ethnic relations, pilgrimage, architecture, comic literature, and medicine.

Articles:

“Sticking Together.” in *Burn After Reading/The Future We Want*. Ed. Eileen Joy. Brooklyn, NY: Punctum, 2014.

“Wondrous Skins and Tactile Affection: The Blemmyae’s Touch.” in *Reading Skin in Medieval Literature and Culture*, ed. Katie Walter. New York and London: Palgrave, March 2013.

“Intimate Senses/Sensing Intimacy.” Co-authored with Holly Dugan. *postmedieval* 3.4 (December 2012).

“Once More with Feeling: Tactility and Cognitive Alterity, Medieval and Modern.” *postmedieval* 3.3 (September 2012).

“Women and Reading.” in *History of British Women’s Writing, Vol. 1 (1350-1500)*. Ed. Liz Herbert McAvoy and Diane Watt. New York and London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.

“Queer History and Erotic Reading.” in *The Lesbian Premodern*, ed. Noreen Giffney, Michelle Sauer, and Dianne Watt. New York and London: Palgrave, 2011.

“Money, Books, and Prayers: Anchoresses and Exchange in Thirteenth-Century England.” in *Women, Wealth, and Power in Medieval Europe*, ed. Theresa Earenfight. New York and London: Palgrave, 2010.

“Before Affection: *Christ I* and the Social Erotic.” *Exemplaria* 13.2 (Fall 2001).

Forthcoming:

“Practicing Uncanny Tactility with *Handlyng Synne*.” In *Feeling Objects*. Ed. Stephanie Downes and Sarah Randles. (under consideration at Oxford UP)

“Missing Something? Queer Desire.” in *Clinical Encounters: Psychoanalytic Practice and Queer Theory*, ed. Noreen Giffney and Eve Watson. (Routledge).

Work In Progress:

Article: “Vines, Petals, Nerves: Feeling Floral Skins.”

Book: on the sense of touch and medieval culture.

Edited collection: *Synaesthetics*. (with Holly Dugan)

Recent Reviews:

*Reading Medieval Anchoritism*. By Mari Hughes-Edwards. *Speculum* (Fall 2013).

*The Milieu and Context of the Wooing Group.* Ed. Susannah Mary Chewning. *Speculum* (Fall 2011).

*Man-made Marvels.* By Scott Lightsey. *Medieval Feminist Forum* (Spring 2010)*.*

**Recent Presentations**

“Enjoy Your *Handlyng*!” New Chaucer Society. Reykjavik, IS. (July 2014)

“Vines, Petals, Nerves: Feeling Floral Skins.” International Congress of Medieval Studies. Kalamazoo, MI. (May 2014)

“Practicing Uncanny Tactility with *Handlyng Synne*.” The Senses and Religion. University of York, York, UK. (July 2013)

“The Manual of/in/and Devotion.” Invited talk at College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA. (February, 2013).

“The Disaggregate Body.” Invited talk at George Washington University, Washington DC. (October 2012)

“Squeezebox: Getting a Feel for the *House of Fame*.” New Chaucer Society, Portland, OR. (July 2012)

“Sticking Together.” International Congress of Medieval Studies. Kalamazoo, MI. (May 2012)

“The Intimate Senses: A Postmedieval Approach.” Invited talk for “Shakespeare and the Senses” conference. Globe Theater, London. (November 2011)

“Feelers: Touch, Cognition, and Identity.” New Chaucer Society. Siena, Italy. (July 2010)

“Feminist Ethics.” International Medieval Congress. Leeds, UK. (July 2010).

“Headless and Loving It: Blemmyae and the Knowing Touch.” SEMA. Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. (October 2009).

“Touch, Reading, History.” Invited talk at Hollins College, VA. (March 2009).

“Reading, Touching, Knowing, Wanting,” SEMA. St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO. (October 2008).

“Touching Landscapes.” The International Medieval Congress. University of Leeds, UK. (July 2008).

**Courses Taught**

Graduate:

Sensory Studies and Literature

Medieval British Literature

Visions and Wonders

Textual Communities: Reading, Gender, and Patronage in Medieval England

Blasphemy and Other Sins of the Tongue

Romance, Dream Vision, Allegory

Chaucer

Undergraduate:

Love, Sex, and Gender Before Modernity

Literature of the Middle Ages

Chaucer

The Celtic World

Anglo-Saxon England

British Literature to 1800

English Major’s “Capstone”

Sexual Diversity in Literature and Film

History of the English Language

Non-Western World Literature

The Ancient Greek World

Short Story and Novel

Foundations of Literary Analysis

English Composition

**Selected Department Service (since 2005)**

2011-12 English Department Faculty Evaluation Committee

Hiring Committee (for three British Literature positions)

Faculty Advisor for EGO (graduate student organization)

2010-11 PhD. Admissions Committee

Proseminar Committee

Faculty Advisor for EGO

2008-09 English Department Faculty Evaluation Committee

MA Admissions Committee

2006-07 Graduate Program Committee

Undergraduate Program Committee

2005-06 Faculty Advisor for BiGLM Student Group