

Chaucer Valuing: The Axiological Logic of the Chaucerian Text

IU South Bend Faculty Research Grant Report upon Completion

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In my research grant proposal for this project, I wrote, “The most immediate objective of this project (i.e., that which I will complete during the summer) is an article-length study of Chaucer’s *House of Fame*, his second major poetic effort.... By the end of the summer, I will have submitted the *House of Fame* article and will be in good position to begin the research for the next phase of the project, on the *Canterbury Tales*.”

I completed this article-length study in mid-August, which amounts to 37 pages in typescript. Although I had planned to submit the study for publication as a journal article, by August I had in hand two requests for contributions of book chapters to collections of essays on medieval literature: the first was for a volume developing out of a May conference in Berlin, sponsored by the Freie Universität Berlin Institut für Englische Philologie, at which I presented some of material that went into my study; the second was for a festschrift volume in honor of my dissertation director at Yale, Lee Patterson. Because of the high regard Patterson holds in the field, and therefore the likelihood of this festschrift garnering a significant readership, I have chosen to place my study there. This venue is also an especially fitting one for this particular study, because my choice of topic and approach clearly show Patterson’s influence, and it was in my first seminar with Patterson that I initially read Chaucer’s *House of Fame*.

Although the festschrift volume will, as is typical of such collections, take some time to come out, my submission of the study to the volume’s editors marks the completion of the work for which I requested funding through an IU South Bend Faculty Research Grant. It also marks the first stage of the larger project on the topic (covering other writing by Chaucer), to which I referred in my grant proposal. In this regard, I had a conversation with the editor at Boydell and Brewer (an esteemed publisher of monographs on medieval topics, with a series devoted to Chaucer studies) at this past July’s New Chaucer Society conference. I explained to her my work on the *House of Fame* and my plans for the larger project, and she was quite encouraging in regard to the latter. I fully expect, therefore, that this first stage of the project will not be its last.