

# MELISSA E. VISE

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, HISTORY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

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## Education

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2015 Ph.D., Medieval and Early Modern History, Northwestern University

2008 M.T.S., History of Christianity, University of Notre Dame, Comprehensive exams passed with distinction

2006 B.A., Philosophy and Religion, Boston University, *summa cum laude*, *PBK*

## Academic Positions

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Washington and Lee University, History

Assistant Professor of Medieval Mediterranean History, History Department, Fall 2018-Present

Harvard University

Lauro De Bosis Fellow in Italian Civilization, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, Spring 2019

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Solmsen Fellow, Institute for Research in the Humanities, 2017-2018

New York University, Italian Studies

Visiting Assistant Professor of Medieval Studies, 2015-2017

## Publications

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### Journal Articles and Book Chapters

“The Women and the Inquisitor: Peace-making in Bologna, 1299” *Speculum* 93, no. 2. (April, 2018): 357-386.

“To the Podestà or the Inquisitor? Adjudicating Blasphemy in Medieval Bologna, 1250-1450” in *Justice and Violence: Bologna 1250-1700*. ed. Sarah Blanshei (Lexington Press, 2018)

## Manuscripts in Preparation

*The Unruly Tongue: Speech and Violence in Medieval Italy* (book project)

*The Book of Consolation and Counsel* by Albertano da Brescia (translation project)

*Listen to Your Wife: The Life and Afterlife of an Italian Notary* (book project)

“The Matter of *Personae* in Medieval Italy”

“Horizons of Truth in Fiction and Fact: The Decameron and the Notarial Register”

“On Relevance in the Humanities,”

“Jill Moore, *Inquisition and its Organisation in Italy, 1250-1350* (York Medieval Press, 2019)” Review for H-Net Italy.

## Honors and Awards

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March 2017	Olivia Remie Constable Award, Medieval Academy of America
Nov. 2016	New York University GIS Day 2016 Mapping Competition, Second Place for “Medieval Mysticism: Freshman Seminar Interactive Mapping Project”
June 2009	George Romani Prize for Best First Year Research Paper, History Department, Northwestern University: “Witnessing Inquisition: Laywomen in Bologna, 1299”
2006	<i>On graduating from Boston University:</i> College Prize for Excellence in Religion Richard Ellis Katz Memorial Award Matchette Award for Excellence in Philosophy Elected to Phi Beta Kappa Invited speaker at graduation
2005	Humanities Foundation Prize, Boston University
2004, 2005	College of Arts and Sciences Merit Award: Esther Chandler Scholarship
2002–2006	Merit Award: University Grant Merit Award: Dean’s Award

## Fellowships and Grants

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June 2019	Lenfest Summer Research Grant, Washington and Lee University
Jan. 2019	Lauro de Bosis Fellowship in Italian Civilization, Department of Romance Languages and Literature, Harvard University
Sept. 2017	Solmsen Fellowship, Institute for Research in the Humanities, University of Wisconsin-Madison
May 2015	Grant from Cambridge Graduate Conference in Political Thought and Intellectual History to present at their annual conference, Cambridge, UK, May 2015
May 2014	Charlotte Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship, Woodrow Wilson Foundation
May 2013	Fellowship with the Mellon Academy for the Advanced Study of the Renaissance (Oxford, Rome, Procida and Florence)
March 2012	Northwestern University Presidential Fellowship (2012-2014)
Oct. 2011	Medieval Colloquium Travel Award for Dissertation Research
Jan. 2012	Dissertation Research Fellowship, Andrew W. Mellon Distinguished Achievement Award (Edward Muir, Northwestern University)
July 2011	Scholarship to Mellon Summer Institute in Italian Paleography with Prof. Maddalena Signorini at the Newberry Library
May 2011	Graduate School Conference Grant to present at the International Congress of Medieval Studies, 2011 (Kalamazoo, MI).
July 2010	Graduate Research Grant for pre-dissertation work in Italian archives
Sept. 2009	Fellowship for the Art History Summer Seminar Abroad with Jesus Escobar, Northwestern University. Madrid, Spain.
July 2009	Scholarship to <i>Seminario di formazione di storia religiosa e studi francescani (sec. XIII-XIV)</i> run by the Società internazionale studi francescani. Assisi, Italy.
June 2009	Northwestern Summer Language Grant from the Graduate School (Latin Paleography, University of Notre Dame).
2006–2008	Full tuition and stipendary award from Theology Dept., University of Notre Dame for Masters in Theological Studies.
June 2006	Summer Research Fellowship, University of Notre Dame.
July 2006	Scholarship to University of Vienna's Sommerhochschule in German Language and Modern European Studies. Strobl, Austria.

## Conferences and Presentations

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Upcoming: “Bureaucratic Middlemen as Arbiters of Culture: Crimes of Speech in Medieval Italy” Speech as Protest: Being Heard and Taking up Space in the Premodern World, Newberry Library, Chicago, IL. 22-28 October 2020.

Cancelled: “Legal Rhetoric and the Incarnation: Everyday Miracles and Theory of Law in Albertano of Brescia” Medieval Academy of America, UC Berkeley, 26-28 March 2020.

“The Matter of Personae in Medieval Italy” Mediterranean Seminar. University of Toronto, Canada. Oct. 4-5, 2019.

“Legal and Religious Concepts of Medieval *persona*: Blasphemy at the Limits” “Status, Religion and the Law.” Washington and Lee University. Lexington, VA. Nov. 3-5, 2019.

“Gabriele Pedullà and the Machiavellian Tumult.” Video interview conducted with Prof. Gabriele Pedullà. Harvard University. Online (shortly) at *La Voce di New York*, by Harvardiana. April 22, 2019.

“The Matter of Personae in Medieval Italy” Sewanee Medieval Colloquium. Sewanee: University of the South, April 12-13, 2019.

“Verbal Violence in Tales and Acts: The Decameron and the Notarial Register” Lauro De Bosis Lectureship. Harvard University. Cambridge, MA. April 16, 2019.

“In the Courtroom of the Poets: Verbal Violence, Justice, and *The Decameron*” Mason Taylor New Room, Payne Hall, Washington and Lee University. 8 November 2018.

“In the Courtroom of the Poets: Verbal Violence in Decameron I.1” Chicago Seminar on Medieval Culture and Intellect. Chicago, IL. 10 March 2018.

“Social Filth: An Interdisciplinary Roundtable on Medieval Obscenity.” Presider and Co-organizer with Carissa Harris, Assistant Professor, English Department, Temple University. International Congress of Medieval Studies. Kalamazoo, MI, May 2018.

Invited speaker. “Crimes Against Art: Blasphemy in Fourteenth-Century Bologna” *Visual Perspectives* at “Languages of Injury in Late Medieval Italy, International Symposium.” Pembroke College, Cambridge University. April 30-May 1, 2018.

Invited speaker. “Relevance in the Humanities.” Institute for Research in the Humanities, Opening Panel. University of Wisconsin-Madison. 11 September 2017.

Invited speaker. “Violenza contro Dio nei tribunali: blasfemia e la forza del linguaggio nell'età comunale.” « Les registres de la justice pénale (*libri maleficiorum*) et les sociétés de l'Italie communale à la fin du Moyen Âge (XIIIe-XVe siècle) » Ecole Française de Rome, Piazza Navona. 6-8 June 2017.

“Punishing the Blasphemous in the Time of Dante: In Canto and in the Courtroom” International Congress of Medieval Studies. Panel Title: “Persecution, Punishment, and Purgatory I: Historical Explorations” Kalamazoo, MI, May 2017.

Invited speaker. "Medieval Europe: Courtrooms, Language, Violence." 30 January 2017, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX.

Invited speaker. "Medieval Europe: Courtrooms, Language, Violence." 25 January 2017, St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN.

Invited speaker. "Medieval Europe: Courtrooms, Language, Violence." 1 December 2016, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD.

"Speech, Orality, and Communication in Early Modern Europe." Invited panelist. Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting, April 2016. Boston, MA.

Invited speaker. "The Prick of the Tongue: The Ethics of Speech and Violence in Medieval Italy," SUNY Geneseo, 29 January 2016, Geneseo, New York.

"Whence the Rise of The Secular? Towards a New Reading of Renaissance Republicanism and Moral Order." Presented at the Cambridge Graduate Conference in Political Thought and Intellectual History, May 2015, Cambridge, UK.

"Free Speech, the Law, and Republican Ethics: The Medieval Case." Presented at the Chabraja Center for Historical Studies conference, "Law in Action." April 18, 2014. Northwestern University.

"Blasphemy in Bologna: Creating an Ethics of Speech in Late Medieval Italy." Presented at winter quarter Presidential Fellows dinner. January 30, 2014. Northwestern University.

"Blasphemy in the Commune: Linguistic Violence and a Republican Ethics of Speech." Invited paper, presented at the Notre Dame Medieval Studies Interdisciplinary Working Group. January 16, 2014. University of Notre Dame.

"From Meretrix to Putana: Translating Speech Crimes in the Medieval Italian Court." Presented at the Mellon Symposium on Translation at Northwestern University, July 15, 2013.

"Peace-making with the Inquisitor: Bologna, 1299." Presented at the International Congress of Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, MI on May 16, 2011 as part of a panel entitled "Inquisition."

"Peace-making with the Inquisitor: Bologna, 1299." Presented at the Medieval Intellectual History Seminar, Newberry Library in Chicago, IL on December 4, 2010.

## Teaching Experience

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### Washington and Lee University

Lexington, VA

*Assistant Professor, Medieval Mediterranean History* (Fall 2018-present)

- Undergraduate courses: "European Civilization, 325-1492"  
"Plague: A Medieval Pandemic"

“Crime and Punishment in Medieval and Early Modern Europe”  
 “Speech and Censorship in the Middle Ages”  
 “Pillage, Peddling, and Piety: Medieval Travel”  
 “Senior Capstone: Medieval and Renaissance Studies”

### **New York University**

New York, NY

*Visiting Assistant Professor, Italian Studies* (Academic Years 2015-2017)

- Undergraduate courses: “Medieval Italy”
  - “Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Italy”
  - “Seeing and Hearing Things: Medieval Mystics”
  - “Crime and Punishment in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: A Digital Approach”
- Graduate courses: “Italian Notary: Poets, Politicians, and Paper-pushers”
  - “Medieval Italy Survey”
  - “Italian Studies Research Seminar”
  - “Obscenity: Between Literature and Law” (with Rebecca Falkoff)
- Organize Medieval Latin Reading group

### **Northwestern University**

Evanston, IL

*Research Assistant to Edward Muir* (Academic Year 2011–12)

*History Writing Center Tutor* (Winter 2011)

*Teaching Assistant to Yohannen Petrovsky-Shtern* (Fall 2010)

- Course: European Civilization, I: 1096-1750

*Teaching Assistant to Peter Hayes* (Spring 2010)

- Course: History of the Holocaust

*Teaching Assistant to Kenneth Alder* (Fall 2009)

- Course: History of Modern Western Science and Medicine

### **University of Notre Dame**

Notre Dame, IN

*Teaching Assistant to Ann Astell* (Spring 2008)

- Course: Intro to Theology, “The Drama of Scripture”

*Teaching Assistant for Richard McBrien, Theology Department* (Fall 2007)

- Course: “Catholicism”

## **Professional and Community Service**

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### **Washington and Lee University**

**Digital Humanities Committee, 2019-present**

**Phi Beta Kappa Committee, 2018-present**

**Rockbridge Teacher Education Advisory Council, 2018-present**

**Italian Studies Cohort, 2018-present, Head from May 2019-present** developing a minor in Italian Studies and Study Abroad Program in Bologna, Italy.

**Medieval and Renaissance Studies Cohort, 2019-present**

**Mudd Center for Ethics, Faculty Fellow, 2018-19** “Ethics of Identity”

**Race, Gender, and Class Cohort, 2018-present**, organizing academic events to support race, gender, and class studies on campus

**LGBTQ+ on Campus**, Faculty working group to improve student experience

### **University of Wisconsin-Madison**

**Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Postdoctoral Association**, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2017-2018

**Reader, Ph.D. Dissertation**, Taylor Zaneri “Rural Production, Peasant Participation, and State Power: The Reshaping of Medieval Italy” New York University, Department of Anthropology

### **New York University**

**Reader, MA Thesis**, Katherine Travers “Gendered Readerships and the Lyric Exchanges of Dante Alighieri and his Contemporaries” September 15, 2016, New York University, Department of Italian Studies

**Invited speaker, Medieval and Renaissance Graduates in New York (MARGiN)**, *The Medieval Ovid*, 4 October 2016, New York University

**Medieval Latin Reading group**, leader 2015-2017, New York University

### **Northwestern University**

**Graduate Recruiter, Multicultural Student Affairs**, 2013-2015, Northwestern University

**Tutor, Chicago HOPES**, after-school homework help, 2013-present, Lena Washington Homeless Shelter

**Community Chair, Presidential Fellows**, 2012-2014, Northwestern University

**Medieval Colloquium Graduate Student Coordinator**, 2010-2011, Northwestern University

**History Graduate Student Organization**, Academic Affairs Liaison 2010-2011, Northwestern University

**History Graduate Student Organization**, Representative 2009-2010 Northwestern University

**First Year Mentor, Multicultural Student Affairs**, 2009-2012, Northwestern University

### **Professional Affiliations**

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Medieval Academy of America

Renaissance Society of America

American Historical Association

### **Foreign Languages**

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**Latin** (Toronto Level One)

**Italian** (speaking and reading)

**French** (reading)

**German** (reading)

**Spanish** (reading)