To Our Readers

40.1

Welcome to the double issue marking the move of the Spenser Review to the internet. We hope that this change to an electronic format will facilitate a longer future than we could have supported on paper. As mentioned in a previous issue, we are working on an arrangement with Amazon whereby interested readers will be able to order a print version of a year's run of the Review at a modest cost. We will let you know details when we receive them.

As we move into this new era, we also mark the passing of distinguished Spenserian A. Kent Hieatt. Long an active member of the scholarly world of Spenserians, Kent's presence and contributions will be missed. A founding member of the Spenser Newsletter (now the Spenser Review), Kent devoted much of his prolific scholarly career to the work of Edmund Spenser. As readers of the Spenser/Sidney list read in detail. Kent was particularly gracious to younger scholars, offering guidance and support to numerous colleagues as they entered the professional world of Spenser studies. The Spenserian community is fortunate to have a long history of senior scholars such as Kent who have actively welcomed graduate students, assistant professors, and independent scholars into this academic realm. We hope that this tradition remains strong far into the future.

Book Reviews and Notices

40.2

Zurcher, Andrew. *Spenser's Legal Language: Law and Poetry in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007. xii + 293 pp. ISBN 978-1-84384-133-3. $105 cloth.

Reviewed by Carolyn Sale.

As its main title suggests, this is a book principally about Spenser's language. In chapter one, Zurcher argues that Spenser requires "habits of reading" that we have lost (5), habits that the theoretical approaches of the last thirty years have done little to recover. He takes on Spenser's legal language as a "test case" (12) for demonstrating that Spenser was "a poet who took his diction, and the ability of his readers to assimilate and understand that diction in all its nuance, seriously" (4). In theory, any specialized language within Spenser's corpus might have served as the object of Zurcher's study, but Spenser's legal language serves particularly well, as literature and law pursue the same end, "the promotion and regulation of civility and public order" (12). Thus, while the study is distinctly philological, it is also political, and it aims to establish the "instrumental" (233) Spenser in ways that an older school of philological criticism did not.

One of the most exciting aspects of the book is its theory that as it models for its readers "the relation of the aesthetic (*voluptas*) to the utile (*utilitas*)," the *Faerie Queene* presents itself "as a *lex* to be construed and implemented by its readers" (18). The view here is of the poetic as fundamentally legal, and literature as its own law, and at the outset, Zurcher claims that as the poem teaches its readers how to read the poetic text, it also teaches the reader how to judge. Chapter 2 suggests how a humanist education, which required of students attention to the etymology of words as well as rigorous exercises in translation, would have primed Elizabethan schoolboys to participate in the *FQ's* forms and modes of judgment "word by word" (26). From this perspective, "Spenser's nationalistic project to enrich the English language through renewing of archaic words and locutions" (30) is a project of cultivating a rich "word stock" (31) that (one could argue) makes a deeper, more flexible, and peculiarly *English* legal thought possible. In other words, by recovering, revitalizing, or keeping alive an English legal lexicon that might otherwise be lost, Spenser keeps alive the customary thinking upon which the English common law, a "*jus non scriptum*" (236), depends.

Another of the book's important contentions is that literature serves legal ends precisely because it has a freedom that legal texts and legal readings do not. "The law," Zurcher writes, "faces not only the need for interpretation, but [also] the problem of action upon judgment" (48). Literature is free to step into the breach that legal practice, in its necessary adjudication of the particular (and thus its practice of hermeneutic closure), opens up; and Spenser is particularly adept, Zurcher contends, at exploiting the literary as a domain that furnishes the reader the opportunity and the room "to engage in analogical interpretative play" (41). This play is earnest, and the talents at reading that a text such as the *FQ* cultivates should result not only in better readings of poetry, but also in better judgments at law.

There is a contradiction, however, at the heart of this study, for even as it argues for the "play" of the literary, the book also argues that every text, and the *FQ* in particular, has a "recoverable intention" (49) that the reader must locate as she submits to the *lex* of the text. The Red Cross Knight's encounter with "Error" thus serves as the proof that in the reading of the *FQ* there can be no "ambiguity in hermeneutics" (47). This contention is reiterated throughout, and most emphatically in the coda of his "After Words," in which Zurcher states that "there is a meaning encoded in the text, and that it is our job to discover and retrieve it, and to apply it" (234). In practical terms, this means that what Zurcher finds in the *FQ* are specific appeals to Elizabeth on given legal issues rather than a complex and variegated idea of Elizabethan law that leaves the final judgment on the issues that it raises to the reader.

Chapter 3, "A Survey of Spenser's Legal Diction," pursues the "semantic clues" by which the *FQ* tells us what it means by furnishing lists of dozens of words in bold-italics that represent Spenser's forays into various legal categories. Concerned that the reader may believe that there is nothing extraordinary about the words so marshalled—he grants, for example, that that the "legal diction of dramatists like Shakespeare or Marlowe, too, in many cases parallels and often surpasses Spenser's in its frequency and specificity" (76)—Zurcher offers a comparative list at the end of the chapter which charts occurrences of various legal terms in the *FQ*, Chaucer's *Works*, Sidney's *Arcadia*, Harington's translation of *Orlando furioso*, and Fairfax's *Godfrey of*

Bulloigne to show how Spenser's uses stand apart. The list's value resides, Zurcher contends, not in its "exact numbers" but rather in the "trends" to which it speaks (78). It is difficult, however, to discern what these trends are, or, rather, what to make of the *apparent* trends. We might follow Zurcher's citation of a couple of technical terms used by Spenser and not by the other poets to conclude that "Spenser was unusual in the incorporation of specialized technical vocabulary in his lexicon" (78), especially in relation to Sidney, who "does not demonstrate the same multilevel use of legal diction, nor . . . betray interest in legal process and theory to the same degree as Spenser" (79). Or we might prefer to make something of the fact that Sidney not only uses "conscience" five times as often as Spenser and "consent" twice as often, but also has an interest in the category of "contempt" that is unparalleled in the *FQ* (and that is to limit ourselves to the vocabulary of a single letter of the alphabet). The list then, along with the two that follow it, which provide comparative data on the legal diction of the *FQ* with *A Vewe of the Present State of Ireland* and Spenser's autograph diplomatic letters, leaves the reader wishing that Zurcher had made more discursive matter of its data. As any social scientist would note, numbers do not tell us anything in and of themselves.

With chapters 4 through 6, Zurcher turns to readings of various legal concepts in the *FQ*: property and contract (chapter 4); justice, equity, and mercy (chapter 5); and courtesy and prerogative (chapter 6). Florimel is, for example, "waft," a "piece of lost property at the mercy of the winds and waves" (103), and Zurcher sets her association with *wreccum maris* (or wreck of the sea), prize goods, and the writ of *replevin* (which demands the re-pledging of a former contract) in relation to unlawful seizures of goods from ships off the Irish coasts by English administrators to argue for Spenser's promotion of "the virtue of magnanimity in contract" (114). In such discussions, a turn outwards to the work of other scholars would have provided important context for Zurcher's engagement with the legal issues at stake. Feminist legal history on the crimes of rape and ravishment, for example, might have deepened the discussion of Scudamour's "rape" of Amoret from the Temple of Venus as *ravissement de gard*, or "the illicit abduction of a woman, without right or payment" (120), and chapter 5's highly cogent discussion of equity in relation to the English court of Chancery, which argues for a reading of Artegall as a judge of equity working to reconcile competing systems of law, would have been more powerful if set in relation to the growing body of work on equity and Elizabethan literature. As it is, this chapter's view that the early sixteenth-century legal writer Christopher St. German did not write "widely about justice" (124) is a shame, for St. German's thoughts about justice in his various treatises might have sparked great insights for Book V's most notorious events, Artegall's destruction of the Giant's scales and the Giant's death at Talus's hands for his "error" of wanting to "redistribute [to the poor] property already in the lawful possession of the rich" (143). These events constitute, for Zurcher, an instance of the "fair" being achieved "through personal judgment" (143); for St. German, if he had been alive to read of them, they might very well have constituted literary instances of the kind of legal tyranny that he critiqued so extensively in his treatises on ecclesiastical authority in the 1530s. Elizabeth Fowler's contention, made over ten years ago, that Artegall's position is not only "quiet alien to St. German and to English jurisprudence in general," but constitutes "an impoverishment of the discourse of justice" (64, 65) deserved attention, as did Annabel Patterson's "The Egalitarian Giant."

With chapter 6's discussion of "courtesy," Zurcher offers a powerful example of a mode of behavior that is also an adjudicative principle. "Courtesy improves upon [justice]," he writes, "by reconciling equity with what is considerate, kind, or proper" (164). His contention that "courtesy may have power to suspend and improve the law, but it may also have an unshirkable duty to the law" (176) should in theory result in the subordination of sovereign authority *to* law, despite the fact that the sovereign may make use of "courtesy" in extralegal dispensations. But Zurcher retreats from his thesis that Calidore, as the embodiment of courtesy, must learn lessons that Artegall has not by endorsing Calidore's actions against the "brigants," who belong to a category of persons not comprehended within the "economy of honour" central to courtesy, and are thus an "evil" that Calidore is free to "embase" (180). This facet of Zurcher's argument, perhaps more than any other, would have benefited from a true "play" of the literary, which might here be understood as exposing the limits and dangers of "courtesy" as an organizing principle for the exercise of justice. For "courtesy" is, as the contemporary theorist Giorgio Agamben might argue, a form of exception by which sovereign authority is asserted, and such exceptions, no matter how courteous their form, fundamentally depend on the idea that one individual has the power of life and death over another, and, worse, the power to reduce others to "bare life," and thus exempt them from the rule of law. But the *lex* of Zurcher's *FQ* proves inflexible, and his study concludes, in chapter 7, with a reading of the *Mutability Cantos* as representing Irish customs such as "bolloyinge" (continual movement from tired land to fresh pasture) and "kincogish" (which "promote[d] concentration of power in the hands of one potentially subversive individual" [193]), in order to urge Elizabeth to "[break] the power of the Irish captains and the old English lords" (196). Mutability's contest with Jove over whether the gods ought to do homage to her constitutes a test of the English tenurial system and the rightfulness of its imposition on Ireland that confirms Elizabeth like Jove "in her right to govern Ireland" (202), and there is no possibility of an ironic reading here, despite the fact that this judgment is

imposed by "Nature," or that Mutability's defeat should stand for the necessity of the change in Ireland by which Irish lords should "convert and translate their titles from Irish to English customs" (201).

In the end, Zurcher gives us a familiar Spenser—one who is an apologist for Elizabethan imperialism in general and Elizabethan strong-handling of Ireland in particular—though with an unfamiliar twist, since Zurcher justifies in the *FQ* an ethos that many a Spenserian scholar has found unpalatable. Given that one of the book's central claims is that Elizabeth's "perfect English equity," evidenced in her "imperialist expansion," is the product of "a marriage of personal conscience and rigorous common law justice" (151), one wonders how he would respond to Diane Parkin-Speer's claim that Spenser's "strong preference for personal imperial law and more royal power" is tied to his "*antipathy* to the common law of England" (494, my emphasis), especially as it is very difficult to see how a system of law based on custom can justify the suppression of the customary law of another nation. (On this topic, readers may wish to turn to chapter 3 of Bradin Cormack's *A Power to Do Justice: Jurisdiction, English Literature, and the Rise of Common Law, 1509-1625*, published earlier this year by the University of Chicago, "Inconveniencing the Irish: Custom, Allegory, and the Common Law in Spenser's Ireland.")

With chapter 8, Zurcher shifts terrain to set the *Amoretti* in relation to Donne's erotic poems and Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. Contending that sonnet sequences were catering to a "counter-culture" readership at the Inns of Court, Zurcher focuses on the *Amoretti* as a retelling of the Mirabella episode in which Spenser is emphatic about Elizabeth's need to submit her will to the law. In Cynthia gazing in upon, but excluded from, the newly married couple in their private space in the *Epithalamion*, Zurcher finds a figure for Elizabeth's necessary understanding that marriages are founded upon "a mutual exchange of promises" (217), with the beloved's submissiveness urging the queen to understand the necessity of her subordination to the mixed constitution of the English social contract. This reading might have been linked in a powerful way to the chapter's later reading of the opening sequence to the young man in Shakespeare's sonnets, which Zurcher sets in relation to legal concepts of "use." But a discussion of Donne's erotic poetry intervenes, and the linkages between the three poets' work are kept general, with Zurcher arguing that Spenser furnishes a model for Donne to "give the reader the most intimate access to the private moments of his life" [218] and Shakespeare to "take the Spenserian turn toward biography to an extreme" [219]).

The controversy of reading poetry for biography aside, the chapter would have been far more compelling if it had built not towards the general claim that "attention to the ways in which they all recruit legal language demonstrates how central the moral-political was to this genre, and to the age" (231), but rather to a comparative analysis of the poets' particular legal concerns set in precise relation to one another around notions of contract and/or the mixed constitution of the English social contract. Instead, Shakespeare features as the radical "oppositional" figure that Zurcher's Spenser clearly is not; "showing contempt for the public gag order on royal succession" (226), Shakespeare gets around the suppression of political dialogue on the subject by using the issue of "personal succession" for the young man to argue for the necessity of "magnanimous self-interest in reproduction" (231). The great irony of this book on Spenser, then, is that the poet who gets the last word is Shakespeare.

Works Cited

Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen. Palo Alto: Stanford UP, 1998.

Fowler, Elizabeth. "The Failure of Moral Philosophy in the Work of Edmund Spenser." *Representations* 51 (1995): 47–76.

Parkin-Speer, Diane. "Allegorical Legal Trials in Spenser." *The Sixteenth-Century Journal* 23.2 (1992): 494–505.

Patterson, Annabel. "The Egalitarian Giant." *The Journal of British Studies* 31.2 (1992): 97-132.

Carolyn Sale, Assistant Professor in the Department of English & Film Studies at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada, is currently completing her first book, *Common Properties: The Early Modern Writer and the Law, 1546-1628*.

Articles: Abstracts and Notices

40.3

Evans, Kasey. "How Temperance Becomes 'Blood Guiltie' in *The Faerie Queene*." *SEL* 49.1 (Winter 2009): 35-66.

Abstract printed in SEL, provided by Kasey Evans.

Situates Book II of *FQ* in the context of the protocapitalist mode of production nascent in late-sixteenth-century England and in the colonial New World. The Mammon episode in particular mounts a critique of temperance in its protocapitalist conception—the virtue of patient delay Max Weber would call the "Protestant ethic"—as a whitewashing fiction obscuring the violent truth of colonial mining. Spenser's Guyon hides behind the eponymous virtue to deny his complicity in the hellish suffering of New World labor, revealing the inadequacy of temperance to serve as an ethical foundation in the newly transatlantic world.

40.4

Vaught, Jennifer C.
University of Louisiana at Lafayette

"The Mummers' Play St. George and the Fiery Dragon and Book I of Spenser's Faerie Queene"

Spenser's Faerie Queene emerges out of a rich, English performative context related to carnival and carnivalesque festivities. He exhibits fondness for a number of elite and popular, holiday motifs, including pageant plays centered on St. George and the Dragon. Such pageant plays were traditionally performed during the Christmas season, further suggesting their intertextual connection to Spenser's epic that might have been a holiday gift to Queen Elizabeth for the annual feast celebrating the Twelve Days of Christmas. Spenser's appropriation of the legendary figures of St. George and the Dragon well-known through these pageants, parades, and puppet shows is instrumental to the comedic dimension of Redcrosse's battle with the dragon at the end of Book I of The Faerie Queene. The poet depicts this story-book foe as incongruously cheerful and as bounding like a puppy to greet his opponent. Spenser's dragon inspires both laughter and terror. The vanquished dragon's grotesque size and his hell-mouth, another performative aspect of this figure fit for the stage, help demonstrate victorious Redcrosse's mighty status as the Protestant, English hero of St. George. Spenser thereby appropriates these pageantry figures in a manner that emphasizes his sense of humor; his love for native, spiritually regenerative English soil and defense of folkloric, holiday practices currently under siege by Puritan detractors; as well as his Protestantism.

40.5

Wilson-Okamura, David Scott. "The French Aesthetic of Spenser's Feminine Rhyme." *Modern Language Quarterly* 68 (2007): 345–62.

Abstract provided by David Scott Wilson-Okamura.

Since the Restoration, feminine rhyme has been restricted in English poetry almost exclusively to satire and comedy. This usage was already becoming established in the mid-1590s; Edmund Spenser, though, in the same decade when other English poets were beginning to dismiss feminine rhyme for serious subjects, reverses course and begin using it for epic. Some of the resulting rhymes are comic, but many were not. To account for his non-comic rhymes, this article reviews the history, theory, and practice of complex rhymes in French poetry from the same period, especially *la rime féminine*. Classified as a subset or variant of *la rime riche*, feminine rhyme is used in French verse for a variety of subjects, including love poems, drinking poems, and epic. It does not convey a particular theme; the difficulty, rather, of making such rhymes embellishes whatever theme happens to be in play. Spenser's use of feminine rhyme conforms with the French practice, ranging from satire in *Mother Hubberds Tale*, to epic in his *Faerie Queene* and love in his *Epithalamion*. It demonstrates the importance of European, as well as native, models for basic elements in his English prosody and shows also his independence, while writing in Ireland, from trends at home.

40.6

Wilson-Okamura, David Scott. "Belphoebe and Gloriana." *English Literary Renaissance* 39 (2009): 47–73.

Abstract provided by David Scott Wilson-Okamura.

In *FQ*, Spenser imagines two versions of Elizabeth Tudor: one is a virgin, the other a queen. Why are they distinguished? The image of Queen Elizabeth as a kind of secular Virgin Mary is so well established, in scholarship as well popular culture, as to be almost axiomatic. But according to Helen Hackett, the image is misleading: in practice, Elizabethan writers seem actively to have avoided making the analogy between virgin mother and virgin queen, with rare exceptions that cluster around the queen's death. What other models were available? In the sixteenth century, clerical celibacy was the subject of an ongoing debate that spanned four consecutive reigns. Spenser refers to this controversy in four separate poems; and while Elizabeth never claimed for herself the title of priest, Spenser garbs one of her stand-ins, Belphoebe, in what may be a clerical surplice. Spenser's queen is not above criticism, but he limits his criticism to the queen's private persona. Belphoebe is censured, politely, but never Gloriana. Why not, and what is the difference? Also, why is Gloriana absent from most of the poem? Was Spenser omitting her by design, or saving her for his climax?

Abstracts of Conference Activities

The following papers were given at the 125th annual convention of the Modern Language Association, December 27-30, 2009 in Philadelphia.

40.7

James A. Knapp (Eastern Michigan U.), "Nothing from Something in Spenser"

In the proem to the second book of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser considers the discoveries of the new world and notes how odd it is that many still deny the existence of anything unconfirmed by the eye: "Why then should witlesse man so much misweene / That nothing is, but that which he hath seene?" Spenser's use of "nothing" here is indicative of his poetic mode more generally. This paper explores Spenser's insistence on the visual as the category through which one must pass to reach the more important nothings toward which his poetry strives: virtue, Christian piety, and sovereign authority. Though "witless man" is the target of the poet's criticism in the proem, it is only through the example of misplaced attention to *something* that one might begin to recognize the *no thing* Spenser hopes to make manifest in his poetry. Attention to Spenser's use of visible things as a negative path to an experience with the conceptual or non-material helps explain the seeming contradiction in his iconoclastic imagery.

40.8

Yi-Ping Ong (Harvard U.), "'The shame of all her kind': Spenser, Nietzsche, and the Allegory of Duessa Unveiled"

If allegory is a veil, then it always tends towards its own unveiling. In Spenser's *FQ*, we see this energy of revelation at work in the stripping of Duessa. Each time Duessa is exposed in the poem, it is as if falsehood itself is stripped bare, the truth beneath the outer layer finally revealed. But the innermost nakedness of Duessa is always left undepicted: "[h]er neather parts, the shame of all her kind,/ My chaster Muse for shame doth blush to write" (I.viii.48). The "neather parts" of Duessa become a rift in the text, a strange empty gap in the texture of the allegorical veil. This paper sets the problem raised by Spenser's unwillingness to fully represent the nakedness of Duessa at the center of a nexus of complicated relations within the text: the distinction between falsehood and truth, the distinction between shame and desire, and the relation of allegory to both of these. Duessa is mere appearance, show without true substance; like one of Nietzsche's skeptical "old women," she "consider[s] the superficiality of existence its essence, and all virtue and profundity…merely a veil over this 'truth,' a very welcome veil over a pudendum" (*The Gay Science* 125). The trouble Spenser faces in unveiling Duessa is thus one that bears more generally on his chosen system of representation. Because the essence of Duessa lies in seeming what she is not, any complete image of the naked Duessa would encompass her essence as mere appearance: in encompassing her essence, however, it would no longer serve as an allegorical symbol. The rift in the text that veils Duessa's pudendum stands as an implicit acknowledgement of the way in which the desire for allegory to transcend itself in the revelation of truth inevitably ends in disappointment. Falsity unveiled does not yield the desired truth, but the truth desired.

40.9

International Spenser Society Panel
Panel: "Spenserian Anomalies"
Erin Elizabeth Peterson (Yale U), "'Monster bred of hellish race': The Problem of Intrusion in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*"

True to the tradition of its romance form, Spenser's *FQ* is laden with interrupted storylines, suspended quests, and physical outbursts. The extent to which intrusion permeates the poem, however, is unprecedented in Renaissance literature, and this is nowhere so much the case as in Book VI and its depiction of Calidore's quest to subdue the Blatant Beast. Ostensibly, we are to understand that the Blatant Beast is the antithesis of Calidore's courtesy; yet the Beast is characterized primarily not in terms of its discourteous deeds but in terms of the violent, sudden havoc he wreaks on the landscape of Faeryland, where he functions as a crude, brutish, animal force of

rupture and intrusion. Calidore, however, is no stranger to intrusion himself, and it soon becomes clear that the knight and his nemesis share a similar pastime. In addition to disturbing a slew of trysting lovers, Calidore is also responsible for Book VI's most egregious transgression: the sudden interruption of the dance of the muses in canto x. The failure of the narrator to protect the narrative structure of these dramas of intrusion from becoming infected with the intrusion emanating forth from the dramas themselves is yet another problem. In Book VI, the narrator increasingly calls attention to his inability to dwell adequately on description or plot due to the fact that he must push constantly forward, and he even goes so far as to insert his voice at the very end of Book VI in order to bewail his own maligned career at the hands of the Beast. By the end of the poem, Book VI has been transformed into the first, last, and only book of the poem to consist largely of intrusive moments, which nevertheless manage to coalesce and form a coherent and powerful critique of the phenomenon of literary intrusion.

The following papers were presented at the 44th International Congress on Medieval Studies, May 7-10, 2009. at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, MI.

40.10

Panel: Spenser at Kalamazoo I: The Senses
Sponsor: Spenser at Kalamazoo
Organizer: William A. Oram (Smith College), Beth Quitslund (Ohio U.), and David Scott Wilson-Okamura (East Carolina U.)
Presider: Andrew Wadoski (U. of Rochester)

Sean Henry (U. of Western Ontario), "Corflambo's Pyromania"

This paper explores the significance of Corflambo, a minor character curiously unremarked upon in Spenserian scholarship, who enters *The Faerie Queene* at 4.8.38 in pursuit of his daughter Poena's lover, Placidas, and falls to Arthur's sword seven stanzas later. His particular characteristic is his basilisk gaze, with which he casts "secret flakes of lustfull fire" (4.8.48.8) into the heart of anyone unfortunate enough to catch his eye. Corflambo is far more than an overly-protective father. Whatever the order in which Spenser wrote the books of *FQ*, readers encounter Lechery, Acrasia, and Corflambo in turn, creating a sense of deliberate continuity in Spenser's portraits of lustfulness, all linked by secretive and dangerous gazes; Spenser builds a cumulative portrait of illicit desire rather than a series of separate allegorical figures. Corflambo represents the dangers that Placidas faces in his desire for Poena, and functions less as an independent figure than as the shadow Placidas cannot escape. Corflambo's basilisk gaze, entering the eye and piercing the heart, depends upon Neoplatonic optics of desire; Spenser evokes tropes of contamination and infection through the associations attached to the basilisk. I argue that the usual onomastic glosses on "Corflambo" ignore several punning alternate meanings that Spenser embeds in the name, including ones that link him to Spenser's representations of Care in the poem. These alternate meanings also deepen and extend the similitude between the basilisk and Corflambo, extending his significance to include the pox. By way of conclusion, I place Spenser's Corflambo alongside Henry Chettle's *Kind-harts dreame* (1593) as a way of showing how widespread Corflambo's basilisk or cockatrice fires were and how determined Spenser is to show that the moral dangers they represent are not limited to one sex.

40.11

Rachel E. Hile (Indiana University, Purdue University Fort Wayne), "Identity Politics and the Characterization of *The Faerie Queene*'s Allegorical Figures"

In this paper, I argue against Spenserians' hesitancy to accept gender-, class-, race-, and disability-based readings of the allegorical figures in *The Faerie Queene.* Opposed to Coleridge's claim, often accepted by contemporary theorists, that the "natural" signification process of the poetic symbol stands in contrast to the "arbitrary" assignment of meaning in allegory, I argue that, in Spenser's allegory at least, the process of allegorical meaning-making is neither arbitrary nor natural but *social.* This social signification process relies not just on shared knowledge of a literary and iconographic tradition, as many scholars have explored, but also common responses to types of people in sixteenth-century England and Ireland. Spenser assigns allegorical meaning to many of his less-developed figures by calling on shared schematic understandings of various social groups; that is, he could elicit a predictable response in his sixteenth-century audience by including characterizing details that activated class, gender, racial, and ability-based biases that he and his audience shared. One way of exploring Spenser's use of sixteenth-century social schemata is to examine his departures from established iconographic traditions in creating an allegorical figure. I briefly discuss Spenser's alterations to emblematic depictions of Occasion before moving to a more extensive discussion of contrasts between Malengin's Irish appearance and the emblematic tradition for representing guile and deceit. I

conclude that Spenser characterizes Malengin as Irish for the same reasons he makes Occasion an ugly old woman: using details that remind readers of unprivileged categories of people succinctly signals to the audience the narrator's condemnation of the allegorized concept.

40.12

Panel: Robert Southwell at Kalamazoo
Organizer and Presider: F.W. Brownlow (Mount Holyoke College)

Gary M. Bouchard (Saint Anselm College), "Who Knows Not Southwell's Clout? Assessing the Impact of Robert Southwell's Literary Success upon Edmund Spenser"

The previously "invisible influence" of Robert Southwell upon other poets has become, in recent years, more and more apparent as scholars have examined the traces of his poetry in others' works, as well as the impact of his reformist message upon his age. The startling posthumous literary success of this executed Jesuit priest, which depended in large measure upon a protestant readership, would have been unwelcome for many within Elizabethan circles of power, and, we can imagine, especially disconcerting to some, including England's most successful protestant poet, Edmund Spenser. Noting that nobody has ever considered the idea that Southwell might have influenced Spenser, Alison Shell suggests in her 1999 book *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Imagination* that Southwell's poems and accompanying polemics against the use of poetry for pagan purposes might well have elicited an "agonistic response from Spenser." This paper takes its lead from Shell's provocative suggestion by examining whether any potential response from Spenser is detectable in his poetry, particularly in his *Fowre Hymnes* printed one year after Southwell's public execution. In the preface to these four poems the poet declares that he "resolved at least to amend, and by way of retraction, to reform them, making instead of those two Hymns of earthly (or natural) Love and Beauty, two others of heavenly and celestial." Ultimately, this essay concludes that Spenser was mindful of Southwell's clout; that he did compose the latter two of his four hymns following Southwell's execution and the printing of his poetry. Spenser's poems and accompanying verse preface demonstrate a conscious awareness of Southwell poems as well as the executed priest's admonishment of English poets for fashioning "pagan toys."

International Spenser Society Minutes

40.13

International Spenser Society Executive Committee Minutes
December 28, 2008
12:00-2:00 p.m.
Grand Café, 501 Geary St., San Francisco

Katherine Eggert, President, presiding. Officers and committee members present: Ken Gross (Vice President), Rhonda Lemke Sanford (Secretary-Treasurer), Judith Anderson, Sheila Cavanagh, and Andrew Escobedo. Committee members absent: Joseph Campana, Jeff Dolven, Hannibal Hamlin, Melissa Sanchez, Bart Van Es, and Jessica Wolfe.

The minutes of the December 2007 meeting were approved.

New members of the Executive Committee for 2009 to replace outgoing members Jeff Dolven, Andrew Escobedo, and Bart van Es were approved as: David Lee Miller, Philip Schwyzer, and David Landreth. All have since been contacted and have enthusiastically accepted. Many thanks to our outgoing members for their work for the society.

Rhonda Lemke Sanford, Secretary-Treasurer, reported that we currently have 373 members rostered, 9 of whom are lifetime and 213 of whom are active (having paid dues in the last two years). The Society's bank balance at the beginning of the year was $16,800 and at the end of the year was $17,000. The major source of income is Society dues; the major expense is the *Spenser Review* at $2800. In addition, donations of $370 have been received for the graduate student travel fund.

Review of implementation of graduate-student grants was discussed. One graduate student is receiving the funding we discussed last year: society dues for three years and a ticket to the Spenser Luncheon. The committee decided to grant the same allocation to Irene Middleton, who has served as a graduate student assistant on the *Spenser Review* and is also attending the current MLA. The committee decided to continue its funding at the current level for MLA participants.

Spenser Review Editor Sheila Cavanagh reported that as the *Review* moves to online publication, members will be notified by mail of the web address and will be provided with the opportunity to purchase a composite paper copy volume once a year through *Amazon.com*. Details are forthcoming.

The state and hosting of the Spenser Society's web page was discussed.

Topics for the Society's 2009 MLA Convention sessions were decided as: "Spenser and Character," chaired by Andrew Escobedo, and "*The Mutabilitie Cantos*" (in honor of their 400th birthday), chaired by Ken Gross. Beginning in 2011, at which time the MLA will begin meeting in January (thus obviating a meeting in December 2010), we have just one guaranteed session of our own; we will be co-hosting a session with one of our pre-1800 sister societies. The Marlowe Society has offered a co-hosted session for 2010/11.

Report on Spenser Society activities at RSA (2008 and 2009) and SCSC (2009). The committee chose to continue with the Society's regular presence at RSA and irregular presence at the SCSC.

Report on the 2008 MacCaffrey Awards for the best book on Spenser published in 2005, 2006, or 2007, and the best article published in 2006 or 2007. Jeff Dolven of Princeton was selected for the book award for *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance* (Chicago, 2007); David Landreth of UC Berkeley was selected for the article prize for "At Home with Mammon: Matter, Money, and Memory in Book II of *The Faerie Queene*" (*ELH* 73.1: 245-274). (These awards were presented the next day at the Society Luncheon by Ken Gross.) Plans for the 2009 prize, which will be for a book published in 2008, were discussed. Readers will be Ken Gross, Hannibal Hamlin, and Joe Campana. (The 2010/11 prize will be for an article published in 2008 or 2009.)

Lectures

The Greening of Spenser

Hugh Maclean Lecture, International Spenser Society
29 December 2008

Bruce R. Smith

40.14

Since I first heard of him in 1964 or so, Edmund Spenser and I have been performing a courting dance vis-à-vis each other. If that dance has involved steps of approach and steps of avoidance, let me say at once: it is not my fault. While I was an undergraduate at Tulane from 1964-68 and a graduate student at the University of Rochester from 1968-72, Spenser's critical fortunes, it is fair to say, were at a low ebb. One of my mentors at Rochester, Joseph Summers, explained why: Spenser was just too *sprawly* for New Criticism. My undergraduate mentors had been no help. My honors thesis adviser Marvin Morillo at Newcomb College was a terrific teacher but a sparse publisher. Of the ten articles to his credit in the MLA Bibliography, five are devoted to Donne. For Morillo, the key to Renaissance poetry was to be found in Donne's "Anniversaries." Junior year abroad at the University of Birmingham, my mentor was I. A. Shapiro, famous for having signed a contract to edit Donne's letters for Oxford University Press in 1930 and having never delivered the goods at the time of his death in March 2004, at the age of 99. (He is rumored to have left on a train the suitcase that contained the edited manuscript, but that was in the 1950s.)

Instead, I had to study up on Spenser on my own in graduate school. Because of that, Spenser is my Proust. Let me explain. My study plan was to hole myself up in my garret (really, it *was* a garret), read through an entire book of *The Faerie Queene* and then the major criticism on that book (all without going to bed), and until I was through pay no attention to the outside world—which was easy enough in February in Rochester, New York, especially during the blizzard that descended soon after I started. One of my major sources of critical advice was Hugh Maclean's Norton Critical Edition of *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*, which had just been published. When I emerged after the Mutabilitie Cantos, the blizzard had ended, the snow had been shoveled off the sidewalks (to await the May melting), and I headed to the university to turn in some library books and treat myself to a free campus movie. As I walked away from the circulation desk, I was summoned back. "These books were due yesterday," the clerk informed me. "No, they are due today, Friday," I retorted. Silence. A strange look. "Today is *Saturday*." Somehow, between the Red Cross Knight pricking across the plain and "O thou great Sabbaoth God," I had lost time. Hence Spenser is my Proust. Despite that experience, I am happy to have been a contributor to the first volume of *Spenser Studies* in 1980, an essay entitled "On Reading *The Shepheardes Calender*." So in my recently published book *The Key of Green*, I am, as it were, *making up for lost time* by writing about Spenser in several chapters. And, as you'll hear, the border between sleep and wake figures in my search.

A correction is needed to the title of today's paper: it is not Spenser who is being "greened" but the *readers* of Spenser: *we* are catching up with *him*. As soon as I began work eight years ago on *The Key of Green,* I discovered just how central Spenser was going to be to the whole enterprise. *The Key of Green* is partly a cultural history of the color green in the seventeenth century, partly a contribution to the history of consciousness, partly a critique of the dominant critical methodologies since the linguistic turn of the 1970s, but mostly a brief for an approach that I and others have been calling "historical phenomenology," "ambient poetics," "ambient reading," and "ambient studies." Spenser is one of the heroes of the book—not because he writes so exquisitely and knowingly about flowers, trees, streams, and meadows but because he writes *about*, *out of*, and *into* a way of

knowing that engages fancy, imagination, and passion as well as cognition and because he situates the person doing the knowing in *particular* environments—environments that determine not only *what* one can know but *how* one can know it. If Donne was the paradigmatic writer for the New Criticism, Spenser has good claims to be the paradigmatic writer for historical phenomenology.

I want to focus today on a text by Spenser that does not figure in *The Key of Green* but which does figure in my forthcoming handbook on how to do historical phenomenology. *Phenomenal Shakespeare* (coming out from Wiley-Blackwell in late 2009) has a chapter entitled "Carnal Knowledge," primarily about *Venus and Adonis*, but with an important detour—an *essential* detour—via Spenser's *Epithalamion*. Whenever I teach Spenser's *Epithalamion*, I love to come in to the first class after the assignment and ask, "OK, tell me about the stanza in which the sex happens." And they go "Huh?" It comes, of course, in stanza 22 (or 10:00 pm), after the bride has been put to bed at 5:00 pm, a calm night has been invoked at 6:00 pm, gossips and sprights have been dispelled at 7:00 pm, and foreplay has begun at 8:00 pm. That's when the poet transfers to the bed of Night sensations that are happening in his own bed: the soft touches of "an hundred little wingèd loves, / Like divers feathered doves" (357-58) that flit around the bed and try "To filch away sweet snatches of delight" (362) as if they were fruits on a tree. Two powerful goddesses are invoked in the next two stanzas: Cynthia at 9:00 pm as the helper of "wemens labours" and "generation goodly" and Juno at 10:00 pm as patroness of "the lawes of wedlock." Finally, in the middle of stanza 22, at 10:30 pm, at the moment of conception, the speaker summons Genius. Not bad: an hour of foreplay, an hour and a half of intercourse, thirty minutes for fertilization. (According to WikiAnswers, sperm live for up to 72 hours, so thirty minutes is quick.)

As I read this part of stanza 22, let yourself visualize the "scene" of consummation:

> And thou glad Genius, in whose gentle hand,
> The bridale bowre and geniall bed remaine,
> Without blemish or staine,
> And the sweet pleasures of theyr loves delight
> With secret ayde doest succour and supply,
> Till they bring forth the fruitfull progeny,
> Send us timely fruit of this same night. (398-404)

I use the word "scene" here in three senses, one material, one philosophical, and one material/philosophical/psychological. Let us explore these three scenes—the material scene, the philosophical scene, and the material/philosophical/psychological scene—one by one.

First, the material scene. With the phrase "bridal bowre and geniall bed" in stanza 22, Spenser gestures toward a room and a bed that were as solidly *there* for him and his readers as other places and objects in the poem—places like the bride's bedchamber in the morning, the woods and meadows and streams of Kilcolman, and the church; objects like the birds cited by species name, the organ, the cups of wine, and the bonfires. For putting objects into place, "bower" proves to be a key image. It figures, in terms more usually applied to Donne, as a "conceit." The word "bowre" first occurs in stanza two, when the poet sends the muses to "the bowre of my belovèd love" (23) with orders to awaken her. This first mention embraces the general sense of the word "bower" as a dwelling or abode (*OED*, "bower," *n.*[1], 1) as well as making specific reference to an inner apartment (2), more specifically a bedchamber (2.a), and more specifically still a *lady's* bedchamber (2.b). When in the next stanza Spenser's bridegroom sends the muses and the nymphs of the rivers, forests, and sea of Youghal "To deck the bridale bowers" (47) with posies and other flowers, he invokes another sense of "bower" as an arbor or leafy covert (*OED* "bower," *n.*[1], 3). (The spelling this time, "bridale," perhaps suggests the flower-bedecked site of a "bride-ale," the communal celebrating of a wedding among yeomen, artificers, and laborers. The country folk at Kenilworth put on a bride-ale, complete with mock-tournament, for visiting Queen Elizabeth in 1575.) It is the sense of "bower" as an inner apartment that informs stanza 10, when the poet uses the phrase "honors seat and chastities sweet bowre" (180) to designate the residence of his beloved's spirit in a chamber high atop the "pallace fayre" of her body (178), reached by ascending up "many a stately stayre" (179). Shades here of the Castle of Alma in *The Faerie Queene*, Book Two. All of these "bowers" —even the chamber that houses the bride's soul—call up material spaces that for Spenser and his readers could actually be seen, walked through, slept in, dreamed in, *lived in*. As such, they offer *habitable* knowledge.

As for the "brideale bower" in stanza 22, the furnishings of the bed itself have been specified in stanza 17:

> Lay her in lilies and violets,
> And silken courteins over her display,
> And odourd sheets, and Arras coverlets. (302-04)

Evidence about household goods that I explore in *The Key of Green* suggests that Spenser is being quite literal here. Those silken curtains were likely to be linen that was *embroidered* with silk, the arras coverlets were likely woven with the leaves, fruits, and flowers that Spenser and his contemporaries knew as "*mille fleurs,*" "verdure," or "boscage." If the bedchamber looked like a "bower" in the *OED*'s third sense, it was because the walls were hung with tapestries showing "park work" or scenes of hunting or perhaps mythological or biblical subjects placed within leafy settings. In the case of a "bride-ale," these costly weavings might be replicated in *actual* garlands of flowers and greenery.

We can get a sense of these bowers by examining

tapestries woven by the Sheldon Workshops in Worcestershire in the 1590s and the first decades of the seventeenth century. Most of the surviving examples display the *ostensible* subject—mostly from the Bible, in a few cases from Ovid—within a central cartouche that occupies only 15 percent of the surface area. The other 85 percent is filled with arabesques of plants like the flowers of Youghal that Spenser describes in stanza 3, a groundwork "strewed with fragrant flowers all along, / And diapred lyke the discolorèd mead" (50-51). You can see examples of this arrangement in the Sheldon "Judgment of Paris" that hangs in the British Galleries in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and in a suite of Sheldon biblical tapestries now divided between the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and Aston Villa in Birmingham. (You can see examples of the Sheldon workshops' style, including an image of the "Judgment of Paris," by going to http://collections.vam.ac.uk / and searching for "Sheldon." A color reproduction of the "Judgment of Paris" appears as color plate 22 in *The Key of Green*.) All of the Sheldon tapestries set the narrative subject within an elaborate surround of flowers, fruits, and greenery that is much larger in scale than the human figures within the cartouche. A plant leaf or blossom outside the cartouche may be larger than a human figure within. The design of the "Judgment of Paris" would, at first blush, seem to encourage free play of the imagination as the perceiver's eye moves around and through the weaving's luxurious plant forms on its way to the narrative subject in the center. Once the perceiver has arrived there, however, it is not just gods in the shape of human bodies that are waiting to be encountered but words. Inscriptions on the strap-work frame supply the words needed to fix the experience in memory. "WHEN PARESE GAVE THE GOLDENE APPEL" reads the caption at the bottom. The inscription at the top cites—incorrectly—book and chapter, if not verse, as if the subject were taken from the Bible: "OVT[ ]OF[ ]OVID[ ]EPE[S]TELS IX CHAPTER." Understanding may reach its goal at the center, but only after the imagination has made its way through a tangle of green thoughts from margin to center, from becoming to being.

The Sheldon "Four Seasons" suite, woven for Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, and still to be seen *in situ*, sets the presiding deity of each season in the midst of a landscape depicting the labors and sports of that season. In each case, the presiding deity is several times larger than the human figures. Vis-à-vis the deity, the human figures are on the same scale with the flowers, leaves, fruits, and animals. As with the narrative tapestries, the human figures are overwhelmed by flora and fauna. Confronted in the Sheldon tapestries with a floral frame that threatens to engulf the narrative, we might well ask, "Which is the *figure* and which is the *ground*?"

A Sheldon design is suggested by the mythical identity Spenser's groom gives his bride as he instructs the attendants to lay her in the midst of those lilies and violets, silken curtains, perfumed sheets, and arras-work coverlets:

> Behold how goodly my faire love does ly
> In proud humility;
> Like unto Maia, when as Jove her tooke,
> In Tempe, lying on the flowry grass,
> Twixt sleep and wake, after she weary was,
> With bathing in the Acidalian brooke. (305-10

In this fertile surround, Spenser's bride figures as the Judgment of Paris does in the Sheldon tapestry in the V&A. The bride's fictional identity as Maia makes Spenser's ekphrasis of a piece with bed furnishings preserved in museums: Venus, Ceres, and Juno in fragments of a valence in the Burrell Collection in Glasgow; Europa in a panel at Blickling Hall, Norfolk; and (more disturbingly) Myrrha and Venus lamenting the death of Adonis in valences in the V&A.

The second scene, the philosophical scene, will be well known to this audience, and hardly needs to be mentioned. I refer, of course, to the Platonic cast of Spenser's notions of "generation," "Genius," and "genial." Those ideas are set forth at greater length in the Garden of Adonis section of *The Faerie Queene*, Book Three. In the garden "all the goodly flowres, / Wherewith dame Nature doth her beautify, / And decks the girlonds of her Paramoures, / Are fetcht" (3.6.30.1-4). It is just such ideal flowers, I suggest, that Spenser's groom fetches for his bride in the *Epithalamion*. The garden's two gates—one for entrance into the material world and one for return—are guarded by Genius, the same figure who acts as porter to the bridal bower at Kilcolman. The nature of conception in both places is imagined as being chaste and pure—"without blemish or staine," in the *Epithalamion*'s phrase (400)—before the progeny enters the world of flesh and time. By casting his bride as Maia, impregnated by Jupiter while "lying on the flowry gras, / Twixt sleepe and wake," after bathing herself, Spenser invites comparison with the conception that Chrysogone experiences in Book Three. After bathing herself in a fountain and "with roses red, and violets blew, / And all the sweetest flowres, that in the forrest grew" (3.6.6.8-9), Chrysogone lies down on the grassy ground:

> the whiles a gentle slombring swowne
> Vpon her fell all naked bare displayd;
> The sunbeames bright vpon her body playd,
> Being through former bathing mollifide,
> And pierst into her wombe, where they embayd
> With so sweet sence and secret power vnspide,
> That in her pregnant flesh they shortly fructified.
> (3.6.7.3-9)

Belphoebe and Amoret are the progeny of that miraculous conception. Diana raises Belphoebe in the forests; Venus raises Amoret in the Gardens of Adonis. Just as babes who leave the Garden of Adonis by one gate return by the other gate in states that may be close to or quite far from the unsullied states in which they left, so Spenser's bridegroom

prays to the heavens

That we may raise a large posterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long possesse,
With lasting happinnesse,
Up to your haughty pallaces may mount,
And for the guerdon of theyr glorious merit
May heavenly tabernacles there inherit. (417-22)

All these details of the philosophical scene will be familiar to you, and I apologize for seizing the opportunity anyway to read such delicious lines.

It is the third scene of consummation—the material/philosophical/psychological scene—that I wish to emphasize today. Because it embeds the knower in the thing known, this third scene might be called the *phenomenological* scene. The refrain "The woods shall to me answer and my Eccho ring" (18) conjures this scene of embedded speaking and embedded hearing and keeps it in place throughout the poem. The change in the refrain at stanza 17—"The woods no more shall answere, nor your Eccho ring" (314)—turns this scene inward, turning a state-of-landscape into a state-of-mind. It is within the luminal realm of landscape and mind that both Chrysostome and Maia *conceive*. Chrysostome's state is a "gentle slumbering swoon"; Maia's, a state "twixt sleep and wake." What one sees, feels, and conceives in such an in-between state is precisely the attitude of reading that I am advocating in *The Key of Green* and *Phenomenal Shakespeare*. The result is a mode of conception, a mode of concept-formation, that is more closely attuned to Spenser's text than the reading and concept-formation fostered by any of the critical strategies that I have encountered in the academy during my lifetime. Among those strategies I include New Criticism as well as structuralism, new historicism, cultural materialism, deconstruction, and Lacanian psychoanalytical theory. All of these methodologies rigorously objectify the texts under study. Aesthetic response, sense experience, and emotion—the main concerns of criticism based on rhetoric—that is, criticism before structuralism—have been regarded as retrograde and politically suspect, as "false consciousness" in the face of contemporary political preoccupations.

To be fair, all of these methods have their interpretative pay-offs. I myself have made use of them in the work I have done on sexuality and gender. But I believe they miss something essential in Spenser. They assume a way of knowing that post-dates Spenser by at least half a century. The first chapter in *The Key of Green*, "Light at 500-510 Nanometers and the Seventeenth-Century Crisis of Consciousness," argues that the 1650s witnessed a fundamental shift in the *circumstances* of knowing, a change in the story that people told themselves about what was happening to them when they sensed, felt, thought, and spoke. We can see evidence of that narrative shift in readings of Spenser by John Hughes and John Upton.

Although one can find versions of the pre-Enlightenment story of perception in ethical writers like Thomas Wright and John Reynolds, it is Spenser who provides the most memorable version in his account of the Castle of Alma in Book II of *FQ*. After touring the lower quarters, Sir Guyon and Prince Arthur are escorted up into the castle's high turret, which is constructed according to Renaissance ideas about the brain, with three chambers, one devoted to things future (presided over by Phantastes), one to things present (presided over by "a man of ripe and perfect age" [2.9.54.2]), and one to things past (presided over by Eumnestes, "an old old man, halfe blind" [2.9.55.5]). The progression here is not only spatial (from front to middle to back) but chronological (from past to present to future), generational (from fantastic youth to ripe and perfect age to old age), and teleological (from thinly dispersed colors and shapes and buzzing sounds in the chamber of Phantastes to painted "picturals," "gestes," and "decretals" in the middle chamber to texts inscribed on rolls in the chamber of memory). There is no doubt that Spenser's progression ends with words, but it begins with sensations. Spenser is finely attuned to what comes *before* cognition: colors and sounds that have not yet become characters, deeds, and words.

Of the three rooms atop the Castle of Alma, it is the chamber of Phantastes that seems most strange to us. Spenser describes it as "dispainted all within, / With sundry colours, in the which were writ / Infinite shapes of things dispersed thin," including things "such as in the world were neuer yit," as well as things "daily seene, and knowen by their names, / Such as in idle fantasies doe flit" (2.9.50.1-7). This passage helps us understand why the bridegroom in the *Epithalamion* might describe his beloved's head as a "sweet bowre." The emergent images in the chamber of Phantastes there are like those that surround the pictures, gests, and decrees in Sheldon tapestries—and in the coverlet that adorns the bridal bed in the *Epithalamion*. Spenser's knowledge is *ambient* knowledge: to know what they come to know, Sir Guyon and Prince Arthur must traverse *all three* of the tower's rooms. The final form of knowledge may be verbal, but that knowledge *involves*—literally, "turns in"—the colors and sounds of the first room and the pictures giving way to deeds giving way to words in the second room. This may be logo-*tending* knowledge, but it is not logo-*centric* knowledge in the way Derrida has taught us to understand that term. The scene-of-knowing in Spenser, in all its plenitude, is material, philosophical, and psychological, all at the same time. Spenser summarizes the contents of the middle chamber as "All artes, all science, all Philosophy, / And all that in the world was aye thought wittily" (2.9.53.8-9). To inhabit that middle bower—and the bowers that precede it and follow it—we need to be as attentive to what surrounds us as we are to what we are choosing to isolate as the object of study. The kind of reading

that Spenser invites is ambient reading.

In the course of the seventeenth century, the chamber of Phantastes was visited less and less often. "The Allegory," Hughes opines in his 1715 edition, "seems to be debas'd by a mixture of too many low Images, as Diet, Concoction, Digestion, and the like." Upton in his1758 edition identifies Spenser's Alma with "mind." Spenser's Latin name for her literally means "nourishing" or "kind"—as in the name *alma mater* for one's old school—but Tom Roche and other commentators are surely right to identify *alma* with *anima*, "soul." Now, as entities-that-know, "mind" and "soul" are very different. *Anima* (which happens to mean "breath" as well as "soul") inhabits the entire body; "mind," only the head. Since the eighteenth century, most readers have followed Upton's lead. And the result is an impoverished understanding of Spenser that is most at home, not in the chamber of memory or the chamber of arts, sciences, and philosophy, much less in the chamber of Phantastes, but in the basement, in the footnotes.

Let me conclude with an example of ambient reading. The fact that my example dates from the early eighteenth century, just when Hughes and Upton were remodeling the Castle of Alma along the rational lines of a Georgian country house, demonstrates that earlier protocols of reading need not be lost forever. A copy of the 1609 edition of *FQ* in the Folger Library contains numerous and consistent annotations supplied by Sir Brook Bridges, who died in 1728. (A sample page appears as Figure 25 in *The Key of* Green.) These markings take three forms: vertical lines next to passages that Bridges wants to remember, Latin tags in the margin, and those pointing index fingers that Bill Sherman has taught us to call "manicules." The 107 manicules in Bridges' copy of *FQ* insistently point toward words, albeit towards words that do not just *name* things. When Bridges wants to remember words alone, he typically writes a Latin tag in the margin, as he does next to Book III, canto iv, stanza 9, about the dangers to one's "feeble vessell" when Love is the "lewd Pilot": "*Apta Allegoria*," Bridges writes in the margin. A hand further down the page points toward one of the passages in which Bridges takes special delight, passages in which a striking visual simile ends in a revelation, illumination, or discovery. What is revealed, illuminated, or discovered is not necessarily a moralization (the Latin tags take care of that) but a *passion*. In this case it is the mist-clearing storm of Britomart's wrath when she espies Marinell along the seacoast and forthwith attacks him:

> As when a foggy mist hath ouercast
> The face of heuen, and the cleare ayre engroste,
> The world in darkenes dwels, till that at last
> The watry Southwinde from the seabord coste
> Vpblowing, doth disperse the vapour loste,
> And poures it selfe forth in a stormy showre;
>
> So the fayre Britomart hauing disclo'ste
> Her clowdy care into a wrathfull stowre,
> The mist of griefe dissolu'd, did into vengeance power.
> (3.4.13.1-9)

What delights Bridges, a hundred times over, are Spenser's similes, his use of words to point toward something *beyond* words. The words that Bridges prizes do not *close in* on a single, verbally precise meaning; they *open out* into picture and passion. In terms of the Castle of Alma, these lexical events take place on the *threshold* between the chamber of Phantastes and the Chamber of the Arts, Sciences, and Philosophy. In terms of the *Epithalamion*, they take place within the green bower of conception.

I propose that we as readers, after 250 years of estrangement, rejoin Spenser there.