

## ***In Memoriam***

### **Joanne Norman 1943-2007**

#### ***Andrew Taylor***

“There are so many books and treatises of vices and virtues and of diverse doctrines that this short life may have an end for any man before he may either study or read them.” With these words taken from an English translation of a fourteenth-century German preacher’s manual, Joanne Norman opened an article in *Medieval Sermon Studies* on one of her last major projects, the edition and translation of the Latin *Etymachia*. Perhaps she chose them because they evoke not only the challenges and historical significance of her work on late medieval vernacular preaching but also her own enthusiastic pursuit of the material. Joanne, as one of her colleagues in the Canadian Society of Medievalists once put it, was “a constant source of robust energy and goodwill, with only a casual sense of proper bookkeeping.” Those of us who had a chance to hear her at meetings of the CSM, of which she was founding president, or in her interdisciplinary classes at Bishop’s University remember her gift for making her subject come alive through her enthusiasm and also through the marvellous images which she gathered on numerous forays across England and France.

Joanne was born and grew up in Calgary, but she received all her postsecondary education in eastern Canada: BA (joint honours in English and History) at McGill, MA in Renaissance Literature (University of Toronto), and PhD in Medieval Studies (University of Ottawa, 1979). Her interdisciplinary research interests were primarily in the dialogue between literature, art, and culture in the late Middle Ages. Her publications included *Metamorphoses of an Allegory: The Iconography of the Psychomachia in Medieval Art* (1988) and a range of articles on William Dunbar. A generous colleague, she was President of the Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric from 1995 to 1997 and served

for a decade on the editorial board of the *Early Book Society*, in addition to her numerous contributions to the *Canadian Society of Medievalists / Société canadienne des médiévistes*.

Joanne's interdisciplinary research concentrated on the seven deadly sins, both their visual depiction and its role in medieval preaching. For over two decades, she had been photographing and cataloguing French and English medieval wall paintings and manuscripts that depicted the sins, especially those in more remote locations. With her customary energy, she winkled out sacristans and found ladders to get the best shot possible in village churches. She leaves a major archive of slides. Joanne showed the same passion in her work on the *Etymachia*, or spiritual struggle, a treatise on the seven deadly sins that is noteworthy for its vivid images, such as that of Pride, riding on a dromedary and wearing golden armour with a peacock as the crest on his helmet. Building on the work of Richard and Mary Rouse and of Nigel Harris, Joanne had identified over 115 manuscripts of the *Etymachia*, mostly commissioned by religious houses. A gifted lecturer and dedicated teacher herself, Joanne was filled with admiration for the work, which she described as "a well designed, original resource for the creation of many individual and varied sermons." We will miss her own originality and her varied lectures and stories.