

John David Cotts

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Research fields

Cultural and intellectual history of the High Middle Ages; clerical culture in twelfth-century France and England; intellectual history of the Crusades; learning, spirituality and practical theology; medieval epistolography

Teaching fields

Medieval and early modern Europe; cultural and intellectual history; history of religion; Western Civilization; France and England

Education

Ph.D. University of California, Berkeley, 2000
M.A. University of California, Berkeley, 1995
B.A. Oberlin College, 1993

Academic appointments

- Associate Professor of History, Whitman College, 2009-
- Assistant Professor of History, Whitman College, 2004-2009
- Visiting Assistant Professor of History, Grinnell College, 2002-2004
- Lecturer in History, University of California, Berkeley, 2001-2002
- Visiting Assistant Professor of History, The Colorado College, 2000-2001

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Book

*[*The Clerical Dilemma: Peter of Blois and Literate Culture in the Twelfth Century*](#)
(forthcoming, Catholic University of America Press, September, 2009)

Articles

- *“Was Bernard of Clairvaux a Republican? The Middle Ages and the Liberal Arts College,” *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching* 15 (2008): 67-77.
- *“Monks and Clerks in Search of the *Beata Schola*: Peter of Celle’s Warning to John of Salisbury Reconsidered,” in *Teaching and Learning in Northern France Before the University*, ed. Sally Vaughn and Jay Rubenstein (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 255-77.
- *“Peter of Blois and the Problem of the ‘Court’ in the Late Twelfth Century,” *Anglo-Norman Studies* 27 (2005): 68-84
- * “Monks and Mediocrities in the Shadow of Thomas Becket: Peter of Blois on Episcopal Duty,” *Haskins Society Journal* 10 (2001): 143-61
- *“The Critique of the Secular Clergy in Peter of Blois and Nigellus de Longchamps,” *Haskins Society Journal* 13 (2004 for 1999): 137-50

Current Projects

- **Europe's Long Twelfth Century: Order, Anxiety and Adaptation, 1095-1229*, book under contract with Palgrave Macmillan
- “Curiales and Crusaders: The English Clergy and the Problem of the Third Crusade,” article-length manuscript in preparation.

Reviews

- *Thomas N. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Lordship, Power and the Origins of European Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), forthcoming in *History: Reviews of New Books*, 2009.
- *Michael Reeve, ed., and Neil Wright, trans., *Geoffrey of Monmouth: The History of the Kings of Britain* (Woodbridge, UK, and Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2007), *The Journal of British Studies* 77 (2009):514-16
- *Martin Aurell, *The Plantagenêt Empire 1154-1224*, trans. David Crouch (Pearson Longman: Harlow, London and New York, 2007), [H-Albion reviews](#), April 2008
- *David Gary Shaw, *Necessary Conjunctions: The Social Self in Medieval England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), *Speculum* 82 (2007): 482-83
- * R. W. Southern, *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe. Volume 2: The Heroic Age* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), *Religion and the Arts* 6 (2003): 414-16
- * Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation*, 3rd edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), for [H-Net online reviews](#).

Scholarly presentations

- *“Clerical Culture and Anti-Semitism: Peter of Blois’ *Contra perfidiam Iudaeorum* Reconsidered,” presented at the 44th International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May, 2009
- * “*Curiales* and Crusaders: Intellectuals in England and the Third Crusade,” presented at the Early Middle Ages Seminar of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, February 25, 2009
- *“The Practical Theology of Holy War: The English Clergy and the Third Crusade,” presented at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in New York, NY, January 3, 2009
- *Presider, concluding roundtable, at the Twenty-Seventh International Congress of the Charles Homer Haskins Society, Washington, DC, November 9, 2008
- *“Anxiety, Remorse, and the Twelfth-Century ‘Renaissance,’” presented at the 43rd International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May, 2008
- *Chair and organizer, “History, Memory and Power in High Medieval Wales,” a session at the 43rd International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May, 2008
- *Chair and organizer, “Telling Truths in the Middle Ages: Approaches to the Medieval Historian’s Craft in the Postmodern World,” a session at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Washington, DC, January 3, 2008
- *Chair and organizer, “Unrest and Social Disorder in Twelfth-Century Towns,” a session at the 42nd International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 10, 2007
- *“The Practical Theology of Remorse: Penitence and the Secular Clergy in the Twelfth Century,” presented, by invitation, at “Sapientia inter Verbum et Res,” a one-day conference at the University of California, Berkeley on November 13, 2004

- *Peter of Blois and the Problem of the Court,” presented, by invitation, at the Battle Conference of Anglo-Norman Studies at Battle, England, July, 2004
- *Untitled presentation in “Teaching the Middle Ages at a Small Liberal Arts College,” a pedagogy session at the Thirty-Ninth International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May, 2004 (by invitation)
- *“Penitential Thought and the Formation of a Clerical Elite in Europe, 1140-1215,” presented at the Missouri Valley History Conference, March 4-6, 2004
- *“Remorseful Clerks and the Penitential Impulse in the Schools and in the World,” presented at the annual meeting of the Charles Homer Haskins Society, Cornell University, November 19, 2002
- *“*Alia est conditio mea*: Perceptions of Religious Difference in Twelfth-Century Correspondence,” presented at the Thirty-Seventh International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 2-5, 2002
- *“Clerks, Courtiers, and Shepherds: Peter of Blois and the Search for the Ideal Cleric,” presented at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Boston, MA, January, 2001
- *“Monks, Mediocrities, and Thomas Becket: Peter of Blois on Episcopal Duty,” presented at the International Conference of the Charles Homer Haskins Society, Ithaca, NY, November, 2000
- * “The Critique of the Secular Clergy in Peter of Blois and Nigellus de Longchamps,” presented at the International Conference of the Charles Homer Haskins Society, Ithaca, NY, November, 1999

Professional Service

- *Vice-President for North America and Conference Program Director, The Charles Homer Haskins Society
- *Referee, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching*
- *Referee, *The Haskins Society Journal*
- * Manuscript review for Longman Publishers

Awards

- *The Bethell Prize, for the outstanding paper given by a graduate student or junior professor at the International Conference of the Charles Homer Haskins Society, 1999
- * Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, University of California at Berkeley, 1997

Institutional Service

- * Core Curricular Committee, Whitman College, 2008
- * General Studies Committee, Whitman College, 2007-2008 (interim chair, fall 2008)
- * British Fellowships Committee, Whitman College, 2007-2008
- * Copyright Policy Task Force, Whitman College 2007-
- * Library Advisory Committee, Whitman College, 2005-2008
- *Aid to Scholarship and Instructional Development Committee, Whitman College, fall 2005
- *Graduate Student Representative to the Faculty Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning, University of California, Berkeley, 1999-2000

Memberships in Professional Organizations

*American Historical Association

*Medieval Academy of America

*The Charles Homer Haskins Society

*The American Society for Church History