

Grant report from Eric Weiskott

With the support of an Oxford Bibliographical Society grant, I traveled to London and Oxford in August 2016 for archival research at the British Library and the Bodleian Library. My research centered on English political prophecy, a little-studied and difficult but pervasive genre of writing in late medieval and early modern England. Most prophetic texts are to be found unedited in undercatalogued manuscripts. My time in London and especially Oxford (where I spent three weeks) led to numerous bibliographical discoveries and a more comprehensive view of this problematic literary genre. I will be drawing on my notes from that trip for years to come. My archival research has already resulted in the publication of a note, "More Prophetic *Piers Plowman*" (*ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes, and Reviews*), announcing my discovery of five prophetic excerpts from the fourteenth-century English alliterative poem *Piers Plowman*.

Since August I have written the bulk of a new book, partially based on this archival research and titled *Meter and Modernity in English Verse, 1350-1650*. This book assesses the relationship between English verse form and periodization over three centuries. The first two chapters of the book concern English political prophecy and draw directly on archival research carried out in London, Oxford, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cambridge MA, New Haven, Washington DC, and (electronically) Cambridge UK, Cheshire, and Aberystwyth. In the first chapter I provide a general introduction to English political prophecy, with examples from the little-known manuscripts I saw during my OBS-supported research trip. I will present part of the second chapter of *Meter and Modernity*, also on prophecies, at the First Biennial Conference of the International Network for the Study of Lyric in Boston in June 2017.