Bad Chaucer

The Great Poet's Greatest Mistakes in the Canterbury Tales

Tison Pugh

Explores how Geoffrey Chaucer's blunders in the classic *Canterbury Tales* make it far from a perfect masterpiece

Acclaimed for centuries as the "Father of English Literature," Geoffrey Chaucer enjoys widespread and effusive praise for his classic *Canterbury Tales*—and rightfully so. Still, even the greatest of authors cannot claim perfection, and so *Bad Chaucer* analyzes his various missteps, missed opportunities, and other blunders in this peerless masterpiece. From a vexing catalog of trees in the *Knight's Tale* to the flirtations with blasphemy in the *Parson's Tale*, this volume progresses through the *Canterbury Tales* story by story, tale by tale, pondering the most egregious failing of each in turn. Viewed collectively, Chaucer's troubles stem from clashing genres that disrupt interpretive clarity, themeless themes that undermine any message a tale might convey, mischaracterized characters who act without clear motivation, purposeful and otherwise pleasureful badness that show Chaucer's appreciation for the humor of bad literature, and outmoded perspectives that threaten to alienate modern readers. Badness is not always to be lamented but often celebrated, even cherished, for badness infuses artistic creations with the vitality that springs from varied responses, spirited engagements, and the inherent volatility of enjoying literature. On the whole, *Bad Chaucer*: swerves literary criticism in a new direction by examining the provocative question, for too long overlooked, of what this great author got wrong.

Tison Pugh is Pegasus Professor of English at the University of Central Florida. He is the author or editor of over two dozen books, including *On the Queerness of Early English Drama: Sex in the Subjunctive* and *Chaucer's (Anti-) Eroticisms and the Queer Middle Ages.*

"*Pugh's willingness to kick Chaucer off his pedestal is a refreshing departure from staid scholarship on the poet, but it's clear that Pugh's criticisms stem from a deep love for his subject, warts and all. The result is an unusually lively take on the medieval classic.*"

— *Publishers Weekly*

MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES | LITERARY CRITICISM AND THEORY

Bad Chaucer

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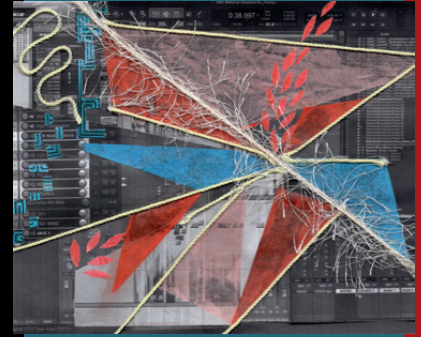# Narrative Podcasting in an Age of Obsession

Neil Verma

Evaluating the rise of podcasting and the storytelling trends that emerged

It has been a decade since *Serial* brought the narrative podcast to the center of popular culture. In that time, there has been an enormous boom in the production of podcasts that tell stories, particularly in the fields of true crime, storytelling, history, and narrative fiction. Now that the initial glow around the medium has begun to fade, it is time to reevaluate the medium's technological, political, economic, and cultural rise, in particular what types of storytelling accompanied that rise.

Narrative Podcasting in an Age of Obsession is the first book to look back on this prodigious body of material and attempt to make sense of it from a structural, historical, and analytic point of view. Focusing on more than 350 podcasts and other audio works released between *Serial* and the COVID pandemic, the book explores why so many of these podcasts seem "obsessed with obsession," why they focus not only on informing listeners but also dramatizing the labor that goes into it, and why fiction podcasts work so hard to prove they are a brand new form, even as they revive features of radio from decades gone by. This work also examines the industry's reckoning with its own implication in systemic racism, misogyny, and other forms of discrimination. Employing innovative new critical techniques for close listening—including pitch tracking software and spectrograms—*Narrative Podcasting in an Age of Obsession* makes a major contribution to podcast studies and media studies more broadly.

Neil Verma is Assistant Professor of Sound Studies in the Department of Radio/Television/Film at Northwestern University. His books include *Theater of the Mind: Imagination, Aesthetics and American Radio Drama* (2012) and, as coeditor, *Indian Sound Cultures, Indian Sound Citizenship* (2020) and *Anatomy of Sound: Norman Corwin and Media Authorship* (2016).

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Narrative Podcasting in an Age of Obsession

By Neil Verma

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Sensing Health

*Bodies, Data, and
Digital Health Technologies*
Mikki Kressbach

An exploration of the experience of health in the age of the smart watch

In the age of smart watches and fitness trackers, the concept of health emerges through an embodied experience of a digital health device or platform, not simply through the biomedical data it provides. *Sensing Health* analyzes popular digital health technologies as aesthetic experiences to understand how these devices and platforms have impacted the way individuals perceive their bodies, behaviors, health, and well-being.

Across five chapters focused on different categories of digital health—menstrual trackers, sexual wellness technologies, fitness trackers, meditation and breathing technologies, and posture and running wearables—*Sensing Health* demonstrates a method of analysis that acknowledges and critiques the biomedical structures of digital health technology while remaining attentive to the lived experiences of users. Through a focus on the intersection of technological design and experience, this method can be used by researchers, scholars, designers, and developers alike.

Mikki Kressbach is an Assistant Professor of Film, TV and Media Studies at Loyola Marymount University.
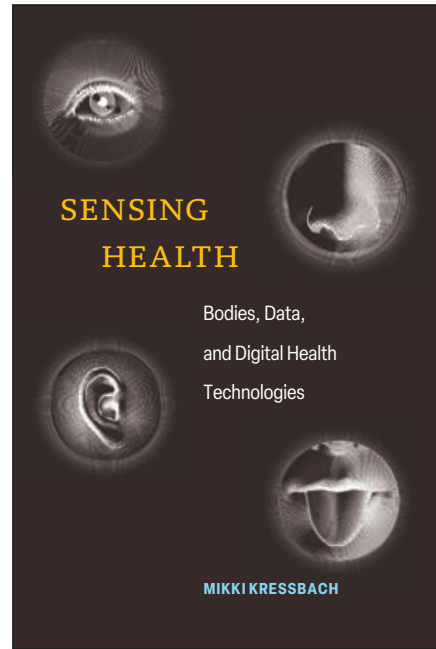
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Sensing Health
Bodies, Data, and Digital Health Technologies

By Mikki Kressbach

StarCraft
## *Legacy of the Real-Time Strategy*
Simon Dor

One game's influence on the rise of e-sports and video game strategy

StarCraft (Blizzard Entertainment, 1998) is a real-time strategy video game, placing the player in command of three extraterrestrial races fighting against each other for strategic control of resources, terrain, and power. Simon Dor examines the game's unanticipated effect by delving into the history of the game and the two core competencies it encouraged: decoding and foreseeing. Although *StarCraft* was not designed as an e-sport, its role in developing foreseeing skills helped give rise to one of the earliest e-sport communities in South Korea.

Apart from the game's clear landmark status, *StarCraft* offers a unique insight into changes in gaming culture and, more broadly, the marketability and profit of previously niche areas of interest. The book places *StarCraft* in the history of real-time strategy games in the 1990s in terms of visual style, narrative tropes, and control. It shows how design decisions, technological infrastructures, and a strong contribution from its gaming community through Battle.net and its campaign editor were necessary conditions for the flexibility it needed to grow its success.

Simon Dor is Associate Professor of video game studies at the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue.
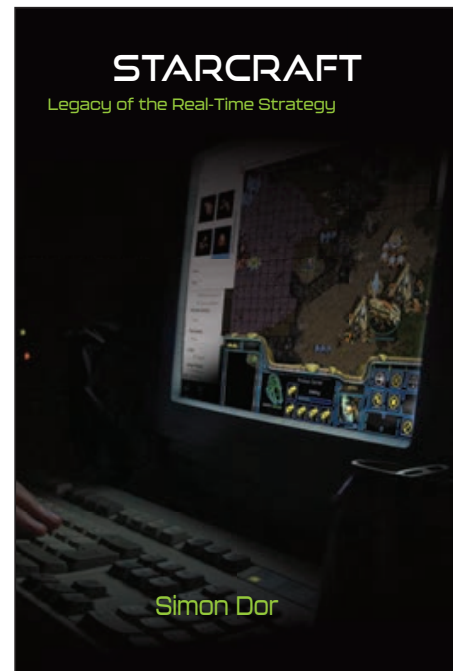
CULTURAL STUDIES | MEDIA STUDIES

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Lucina Schell, World English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish; The Netherlands, Poland, Scandinavia

Adriana Yochelson, World Arabic; Asia, Central & Eastern Europe, Greece, Israel, Turkey

StarCraft
Legacy of the Real-Time Strategy

By Simon Dor

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Climate Games

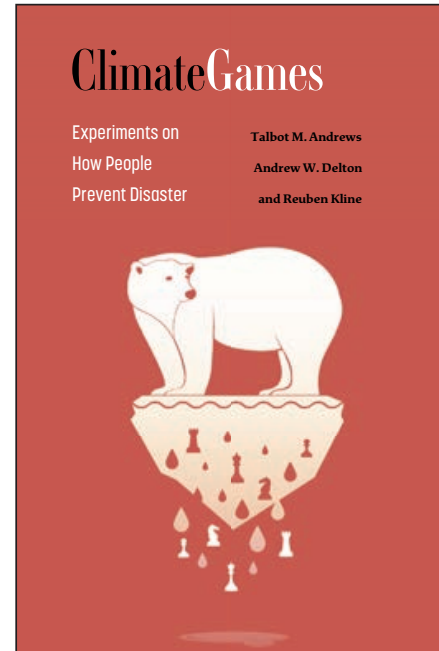*Experiments on How People Prevent Disaster*
Talbot M. Andrews, Andrew W. Delton, and Reuben Kline

Experiments reveal people can work together to prevent climate change

Can humanity work together to mitigate the effects of climate change? *Climate Games* argues we can. This book brings together a decade and a half of experimentation, conducted by researchers around the world, which shows that people can and will work together to prevent disasters like climate change. These experiments, called *economic games*, put money on the line to create laboratory disasters. Participants must work together by spending a bit of money now to prevent themselves from losing even more money in the future. Will people sacrifice their own money to prevent disaster? Can people make wise decisions? And can people decide wisely on behalf of others? The answer is a resounding yes. This book describes disaster experiments that test how real people respond to climate change's unique constellation of challenges and deliver a positive message: People will prevent disaster.

Talbot M. Andrews is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Connecticut. **Andrew W. Delton** is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and the College of Business at Stony Brook University. **Reuben Kline** is Associate Professor of Political Science at Stony Brook University.

ClimateGames

Experiments on
How People
Prevent Disaster

Talbot M. Andrews
Andrew W. Delton
and Reuben Kline

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES | PUBLIC POLICY

Climate Games

Experiments on How People Prevent Disaster

By Talbot M Andrews, Andrew W Delton, and Reuben Kline
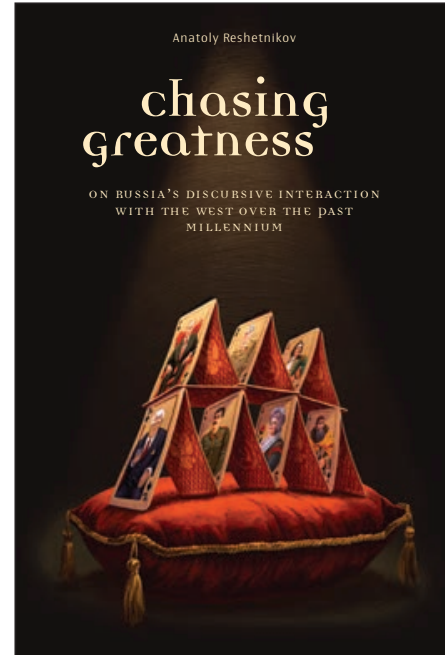
Chasing Greatness

*On Russia's Discursive Interaction with the
West over the Past Millennium*
Anatoly Reshetnikov

**How a millennia idealizing political greatness has
affected Russia**

Over the last two decades, it has become clear that Russia
insists on its great power status, even at considerable cost.
Chasing Greatness provides an interpretive explanation
of the tacit rules that shape Russia's great power identity
today. Anatoly Reshetnikov argues that this never-
ending chase for greatness is a result of how Russia and
its predecessors—including the USSR, Russian Empire,
Muscovy, and Kievan Rus'—historically interacted with
its neighbors to the east, the south, and particularly
the west. By analyzing an extensive amount of original
source material, including primary sources that have not
been previously translated into English, he reconstructs
a millennial history of the Russian concepts that express
political greatness. He also traces numerous encounters
between Russia and the West, as well as Russia's
troubled integration into the European society of states
in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to show how
these concepts have affected Russia's interaction with
international society.

Anatoly Reshetnikov is Assistant Professor of International
Relations at Webster University.

**RUSSIAN HISTORY |
POLITICAL THEORY |
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Chasing Greatness
On Russia's Discursive Interaction with the West over the Past Millennium

By Anatoly Reshetnikov

Mediating Gender in Post-Authoritarian South Korea

Michelle Cho and Jesook Song, Editors

An interdisciplinary look at gender and sexuality in contemporary South Korea

Mediating Gender in Post-Authoritarian South Korea focuses on the relationship between media representation and gender politics in South Korea. Its chapters feature notable voices of South Korea's burgeoning sphere of gender critique enabled by social media, doing what no other academic volume has yet accomplished in the sphere of Anglophone studies on this topic. Seeking to interrogate the role of popular media in establishing and shaping gendered common sense, this volume fosters cross-disciplinary conversations linked by the central thesis that gender discourse and representation are central to the politics, aesthetics, and economics of contemporary South Korea. In the post-authoritarian period (the late 1980s to the #MeToo present), media representation and popular discourse changed the gender conventions that are found at the core of civic, political, and cultural debates.

This book maps the ways in which popular media and public discourse make the social dynamics of gender visible and open them up for debate and dismantling. In presenting innovative new research on the ways in which popular ideas about gender gain concrete form and political substance through mass mediation, our contributors investigate the discursive production of gender in contemporary South Korea through trends, tropes, and thematics, as popular media become the domain in which new gendered subjectivities and relations transpire. The essays in this volume introduce new ways of thinking about gender as a platform and a conceptual infrastructure in the post-authoritarian era.

Michelle Cho is Assistant Professor of East Asian Studies at the University of Toronto in Canada. **Jesook Song** is Professor of Anthropology, affiliated with Women and Gender Studies, Sexuality Diversity Studies, and Korean Studies at the University of Toronto in Canada.

Mediating Gender in Post-Authoritarian South Korea

Volume editor Jesook Song & Michelle Cho

Acknowledgments

Introduction: Mediating Gender in Post-Authoritarian South Korea (Michelle Cho and Jesook Song)

China as Number One?

The Emerging Values of a Rising Power

Yang Zhong and Ronald F. Inglehart

Examining the contemporary rise in China's political, economic, and military power through the opinions of its citizens

One of the most significant global events in the last forty years has been the rise of China—economically, technologically, politically, and militarily. The question on people's minds for decades has been whether China will replace the United States as a superpower in the near future. *China as Number One?* explores China's soft powers through the eyes of Chinese citizens. Utilizing data from the World Values Survey, the contributors to this collection analyze the potential soft power of a rising China by examining its residents' social values. A comprehensive study of changes and continuities in the political and social values of Chinese citizens, the book examines findings in the context of evolutionary modernization theory and cross-national comparison.

China as Number One? explores China's soft powers through the eyes of Chinese citizens. Utilizing data from the World Values Survey, the contributors to this collection explore the potential soft power of a rising China by examining its residents' social values. A comprehensive study of changes and continuities in the political and social values of Chinese citizens, the book examines findings in the context of evolutionary modernization theory and cross-national comparison.

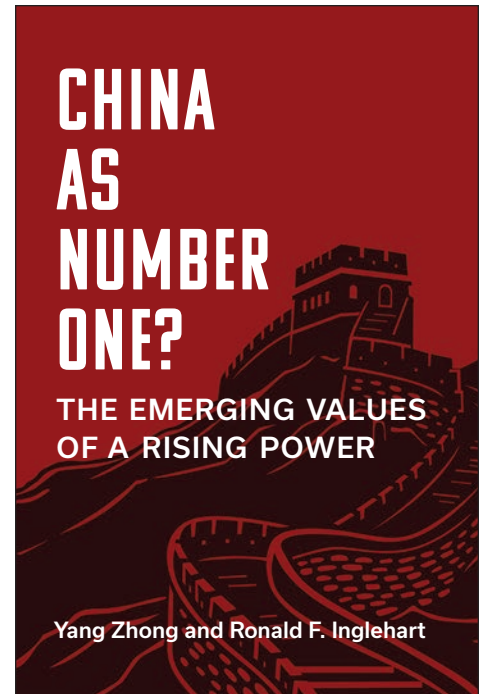**Yang Zhong** is Professor of Political Science at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Ronald F. Inglehart was Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Michigan. In his lifetime, Inglehart published over 400 peer-reviewed articles and fourteen authored or co-authored books. *China as Number One?* is his final book

"This is a very timely study of changing political values in China based on the most recent wave of the World Values Survey in 2018. With Ronald F. Inglehart's recent passing, it is a fitting tribute to him."
—**Bruce J. Dickson,
George Washington University**

CHINA | POLITICAL SCIENCE | POLITICAL BEHAVIOR AND PUBLIC OPINION

China as Number One?
The Emerging Values of a Rising Power
By Yang Zhong & Ronald F. Inglehart

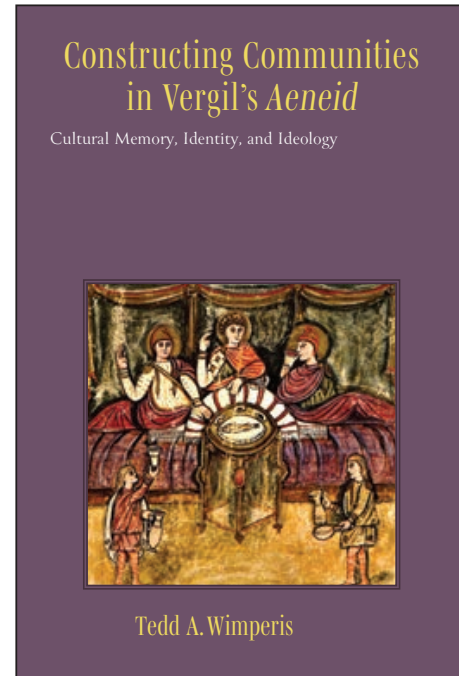# Constructing Communities in Vergil's *Aeneid*

Cultural Memory, Identity, and Ideology

Tedd A. Wimperis

A new take on the *Aeneid*, drawing previously unexplored connections between Vergil's fictional world and its political context

This book presents a new examination of memory, ethnic identity, and politics within the fictional world of this Roman epic, drawing previously unexplored connections between Vergil's characters, settings, and narrative and the political context of the early Roman Empire. This book investigates how the *Aeneid*'s fictive ethnic communities—the Trojans, Carthaginians, Latins, and Arcadians who populate its poetic world—are shown to have identities, myths, and cultural memories of their own. And much like their real-life Roman counterparts, they engage in the politics of the past in such contexts as royal iconography, diplomacy, public displays, and incitements to war.

Where previous studies of identity and memory in the *Aeneid* have focused on the poem's constructions of Roman identity, Wimperis turns the spotlight onto the characters themselves to show how the world inside the poem is replicating, as if in miniature, real forms of contemporary political and cultural discourse, reflecting an historical milieu where appeals to Roman identity were vigorously asserted in political rhetoric. The book applies this evidence to a broad literary analysis of the *Aeneid*, as well as a reevaluation of its engagement with Roman imperial ideology in the Age of Augustus.

Tedd A. Wimperis is Assistant Professor of Classical Languages at Elon University.

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Constructing Communities in Vergil's Aeneid
Cultural Memory, Identity, and Ideology

By Tedd A. Wimperis
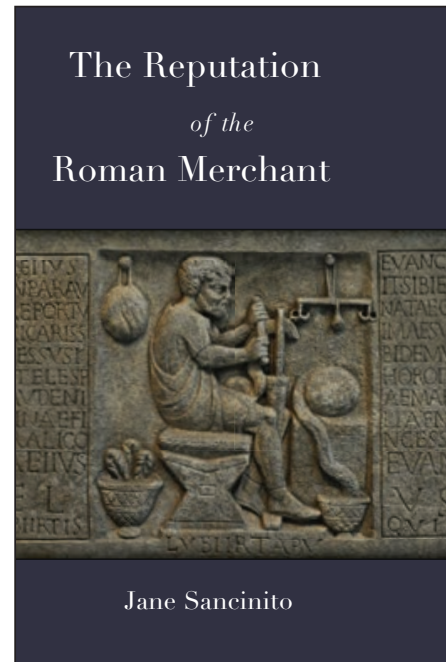
The Reputation of the Roman Merchant

Jane Sancinito

Defying a reputation for deceit and greed, Roman merchants strategized to present their good traits and successes

Roman merchants, artisans, and service providers faced substantial prejudice. Contemporary authors labeled them greedy, while the Roman on the street accused merchants of lying and cheating. Legally and socially, merchants were kept at arm's length from respectable society. Yet merchants were common figures in daily life, populating densely packed cities and traveling around the Mediterranean. *The Reputation of the Roman Merchant* focuses on the strategies retailers, craftsmen, and many other workers used to succeed, examining how they developed good reputations despite the stigma associated with their work. In a novel approach, blending social and economic history, This book considers how reputation worked as an informal institution, establishing and reinforcing traditional Roman norms while lowering the cost of doing business for individual workers. From histories and novels to inscriptions and art, this volume identifies common reputation strategies, explores how points of pride and personal accomplishments were shared with others, and explains responses to merchant activities on the small-scale. The book concludes that merchants invested heavily in their reputations as a way to set themselves apart from common, negative stereotypes without admitting that there was anything shameful about the work they did.

Jane Sancinito is Assistant Professor of History, University of Massachusetts-Lowell.

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The Reputation of the Roman Merchant
By Jane Sancinito

Garden of Egypt

Irrigation, Society, and the State in the Premodern Fayyūm

Brendan Haug

Examining how relationships with water flow through Egyptian history

Garden of Egypt: Irrigation, Society, and the State in the Premodern Fayyūm is the first environmental history of Egypt's Fayyūm depression. The volume studies human relationships with flowing water, from the third century BCE to the thirteenth century CE. Until the arrival of modern perennial irrigation in the nineteenth century, the Fayyūm was the only region of premodern Egypt to be irrigated by a network of artificial canals. By linking large numbers of rural communities together in shared dependence on this public irrigation infrastructure, canalization introduced to Egypt a radically new way of interacting both with the water of the Nile and with fellow farmers. Drawing upon ancient Greek papyri, medieval Arabic literature, and modern comparative evidence, this book explores the ways in which the Nile's water, local farmers, and state power together continually reshaped this irrigated landscape over more than thirteen centuries. Following human/water relationships through both space and time further helps to erode disciplinary boundaries and bring multiple periods of Egyptian history into contact with one another.

Brendan Haug is Archivist of the Papyrology Collection, University of Michigan, and Associate Professor of Classical Studies, University of Michigan.

"*Garden of Egypt revolutionizes our understanding of water and society in ancient Egypt. Haug grasps the dynamic interactions between humans and the environment in the Fayyūm specifically and more generally in the ancient Roman world.*"
—Cynthia Bannon,
Indiana University

CLASSICAL STUDIES | ROMAN | GREEK | ARCHAEOLOGY

Garden of Egypt

Irrigation, Society, and the State in the Premodern Fayyum

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