

Disputation is formalized argument or debate. This year, as a presidential election approaches in the United States, many American citizens will hear many debates, perhaps without knowing that the origins of this practice are very old. In the Western tradition, the process of formalizing argument among educated people, having begun with rhetoric and philosophy in antiquity, culminated in the disputations of the medieval university, where disputation was the governing practice of teaching and learning. Students were required to dispute weekly, and the masters of every faculty—arts, law, medicine and theology—were also expected to dispute regularly. What professors do now by testing students and publishing books and articles, their medieval ancestors did with disputations. So effective and enduring were these practices that disputation not only ruled the faculties of the medieval university but also shaped countless conversations and textual forms after that period and outside the university in art, science, medicine, literature, law, politics and other cultural domains. By better understanding how and why our ancestors disputed, we might learn to use this powerful tool of human culture more wisely in contemporary affairs.

UCLA's Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, presents a John E. Sawyer Seminar for 2007-8 on the topic of disputation. The seminar is a series of conversations on the topic of disputation from philosophical, literary, and social perspectives. Distinguished faculty from UCLA and other universities will make presentations and lead discussions. Professor Calvin Normore (Philosophy, UCLA) is responsible for the philosophical continuity of the Seminar, Professor Christopher Baswell (English, UCLA) for literary continuity, and Professor Jeffrey Prager (Sociology, UCLA) for sociological continuity. CMRS Director Professor Brian P. Copenhaver (Philosophy, and History, UCLA) will oversee the general direction of the Seminar.



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# Disputation

## DISPUTATION: WAYS OF ARGUING IN AND OUT OF THE UNIVERSITY

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
John E. Sawyer Seminar Series 2007-2008

Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies  
UCLA

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*Disputation: Ways of Arguing in and out of the University*  
CMRS Sawyer Seminar Series 2007-2008

# Disputation: Ways of Arguing in and out of the University

CMRS Sawyer Seminar Schedule ♦ All sessions are from 3:30-6:30 pm at UCLA in Royce Hall, Room 306, unless otherwise noted.

- ♦ October 18, 2007 — “Greek Roots: Socrates v. Gorgias on Dialectic and Eristic” — David Blank (UCLA), Sean Kelsey (UCLA), Catherine Atherton (UCLA)
- ♦ October 22, 2007 — “Qur’anic Roots: Jadal and Disputation in Islam” — Tony Street (University of Cambridge), Hossein Ziai (UCLA) — in Royce 314
- ♦ November 6, 2007 — “Biblical Roots: Talmud, Disputation and the Torah” — Howard Wettstein (UC Riverside), Elliot Dorff (American Jewish University), William M. Schniedewind (UCLA) — from 4-7 pm
- ♦ November 13, 2007 — “Gilbert Crispin: The Disputation of a Jew with a Christian” — Howard Wettstein (UC Riverside), Steven Kruger (Queens College and Graduate Center, CUNY)
- ♦ November 20, 2007 — “Ancient Church Councils: How formal were they, and was there discussion?” — Thomas Graumann (University of Cambridge)
- ♦ November 27, 2007 — “Disputing Love: Abelard, Heloise and Bernard of Clairvaux” — Constant Mews (Monash University)
- ♦ December 4, 2007 — “Owl v. Nightingale: Austere Philosophy Against Joyous Art” — Christopher Cannon (New York University)
- ♦ January 29, 2008 — “John Trevisa v. Lord Berkeley: Controlling the Language of Dispute” — Rita Copeland (University of Pennsylvania)
- ♦ February 5, 2008 — “After the Condemnations of 1277: Confining Disputation” — Alex Novikoff (St. Joseph’s University), Hans Thijssen (Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen)
- ♦ February 12, 2008 — “Chaucer’s *Parliament of Fowls* and the Good Parliament of 1376” — W. Mark Ormrod (University of York), Henry Ansgar Kelly (UCLA)
- ♦ February 19, 2008 — “Masculine Dispute and Female Response” — Karen Sullivan (Bard College)
- ♦ February 26, 2008 — “Pico’s 900 Theses: Disputation Unbounded” — Giulio Busi (Institut für Judaistik, Freie Universität Berlin)
- ♦ March 11, 2008 — “Latin v. Greek at the Council of Florence” — John Monfasani (State University of New York, Albany)
- ♦ April 8, 2008 — “Luther and the Leipzig Disputation: Dissent Disseminated” — Erika Rummel (Emmanuel College, University of Toronto), Debora Shuger (UCLA)
- ♦ April 15, 2008 — “Community Repair, Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Political and Sociological Considerations” — Jeffrey Prager (UCLA)
- ♦ April 22, 2008 — “Raphael’s *Disputa*: Adoration and Disputation” — Marcia Hall (Temple), Franco Mormando (Boston College), Joanna Woods-Marsden (UCLA)
- ♦ April 29, 2008 — “The Valladolid Junta of 1550-51: Rights of Native Americans Disputed in Spain”—José M. Hernández (UNED), Carole Goldberg (UCLA), Anthony Pagden (UCLA)
- ♦ May 8, 2008 — “Galileo: Scientific Disputation as Courtly Performance” — Mario Biagioli (Harvard University), Margaret Jacob (UCLA)
- ♦ May 15, 2008 — “*The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*: Disputing What Hell Is” — David Riggs (Stanford), Michael J.B. Allen (UCLA), Debora Shuger (UCLA)
- ♦ May 20, 2008 — “Epilogue: Heidegger, Cassirer and the Fracturing of Modern Western Philosophy” — Michael Friedman (Stanford)

Advance registration not required. No fee to attend. Seating is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Parking permits may be purchased for \$8 from any UCLA parking services kiosk. Driving directions are available on the UCLA website at [www.ucla.edu/map/driving.html](http://www.ucla.edu/map/driving.html).

For readings, changes of schedule, and other information, please see the regularly updated descriptions on the CMRS Sawyer Seminar website at [www.cmrs.ucla.edu/sawyerseminar.html](http://www.cmrs.ucla.edu/sawyerseminar.html)

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