

French 900/550 Truth and Lies in Medieval Literature  
Professor Christine Bourgeois  
MW 3:00-4:15

*What the "truth" is and how we identify it may seem so obvious as to defy the quicksand of cultural and historical difference. As we will see over the course of the semester, though, nothing is quite as simple as it seems. Together, we will examine a broad cross section of narrative and formal traditions in order to delve into the ways in which medieval readers and writers experienced- and produced - the impression of truthfulness and of falsehood. This will allow us to develop a nuanced understanding of the ways in which notions of textual veracity have evolved over time and the ways in which it has remained consistent. In addition to studying primary texts, we will gradually fold in more recent critical approaches, including considerations digital manuscript culture and modern critical theory.*

*Among the works to be covered:*

- La Chanson de Roland
- Marie de France, *Lais* (selections)
- Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Chevalier au Lion*
- Selections from the M.A. lyric poetry reading list