Medieval Saints' Lives
The Gift, Kinship and Community in Old French Hagiography

EMMA CAMPBELL
Contending that the study of hagiography is significant both for a consideration of medieval literature and for current theoretical debates in medieval studies, this book considers a range of Old French and Anglo-Norman texts, using modern theories of kinship and community to show how saints’ lives construe social and sexual relations. Focusing on the depiction of the gift, kinship and community, the book maintains that social and sexual systems play a key role in vernacular hagiography. Such systems, along with the desires they produce and control, are, it is argued, central to hagiography’s religious functions, particularly its role as a vehicle of community formation. In attempting to think beyond the limits of human relationships, saints’ lives nonetheless create an environment in which queer desires and modes of connection become possible, suggesting that, in this case at least, the orthodox nurtures the queer. Medieval hagiography is worthy of greater attention and this corpus might provide an important resource for theorizing community in its medieval contexts and for thinking it in the present.

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MEDIEVAL SAINTS’ LIVES
THE GIFT, KINSHIP AND COMMUNITY
IN OLD FRENCH HAGIOGRAPHY

Emma Campbell

D. S. BREWER
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For my family
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