

Professional Development Award Report for Catherine G. Martin

University of Memphis, 2014-15

My Professional Development Award research was conducted in two places, first in Regensburg, Germany, where I held a Bavarian Ministry of Education Fellowship in May-July 2014, and then a Fulbright Teaching and Research Fellowship at the same university in the Fall of 2014. The following year I remained here in Tennessee conducting research at the Vanderbilt University Library until I returned to teaching at the University of Memphis in the fall of 2015. In Regensburg I studied all the university's holdings on two subjects, Johannes Kepler and the early history of science. The library's holdings are very rich in both fields, though I was somewhat limited by the fact that I do not know German. All the professors there are nevertheless fluent in English, and I met with the University of Regensburg's Kepler specialist to confirm that my study of Kepler's rhetoric would be a fruitful contribution to the field, as he very strongly agreed. During the spring phase of my stay in Germany I also presented a paper on Francis Bacon and early science fiction at a small university conference on "Early Utopias and Science Fiction," and it was very well received. Partly as a result of this paper I was invited to deliver the concluding remarks at the International Conference on Epic Knowledge, LudwigMaximilians Universitat, Munich, Germany, on November 7, 2014. This conference touched on many areas of my research and I took extensive notes throughout, also making several important contacts, most notably with a prominent Cambridge scholar, Collin Burrow. During the final phases of my stay I began drafting a new introduction to the book project behind this research, "Proteus Unbound: The Literary Foundations of the Scientific Imagination, Montaigne, Kepler, and Bacon." Directly before I left Germany I conducted a Graduate Seminar on the epic foundations of C. S. Lewis's science fiction and films based on similar "myths."

After returning to Tennessee in December, 2014, I began making extensive use of the Vanderbilt library's holdings on both the history of science and Montaigne, which in both areas far exceed those at the University of Memphis. At the same time I kept writing on the new introduction to the project mentioned above and studying my personal collection of Kepler's works, which is not complete but quite solid. Most of my writing time, however, consisted in completing the paper I gave early during my stay in Regensburg, which will soon be published as "Sailing to the Moon: Francis Bacon, Francis Godwin, and the First Science Fiction" in *Literature in the Age of Cosmological Discovery*, ed. Judy Hayden (Palgrave, 2016). Because the editor of this volume is relatively new to this field, we frequently consulted on matters related to its publication. Toward the end of the following year (2015) I was also invited to two more international conferences, where I presented three papers, two on John Milton and one on Christopher Marlowe. Their subjects were not related to my science project, but during this time several conferees drew my attention to the fact that the subject of Milton and science has not been updated in any one volume for many, many years. Many urged me to edit such a volume, and now, this spring (2016), I have begun doing just that. I have enlisted a very distinguished experts on science and literature to participate, including Leah Marcus at Vanderbilt University, Karen Edwards at the University of Exeter, Joanna Picciotto at Berkeley, Stephen Fallon at Notre Dame, Rachel Trubowitz at the University of Vermont, Erin Webster at the University of London, Reid Barbour at Chapel Hill, and John Rumrich at the University of Texas. I have already begun receiving and editing abstracts for projected contributions to the volume (which as

yet has no official name), and I am hoping to have a book prospectus completed by the end of this summer, or August, 2016. I plan to send the completed prospectus to an editor I know would be interested, Ray Ryan at Cambridge University Press.

Also during this summer (2016) I will return to researching and writing my projected monograph, "Proteus Unbound," the central focus of my PDA and Fulbright awards. Since I have long been a contributor to Bacon studies and have many unpublished manuscripts in that field, I will again focus on Montaigne and Kepler. I am very fortunate that the co-editor of my last book collection, *French Connections in the English Renaissance*, has also begun researching Montaigne's connection to broader continental developments in the later sixteenth century, so that aspect of my project will be at least loosely collaborative. A French Renaissance specialist at Chapel Hill, Hassan Melehy will be spending this summer working in Paris but we will keep in close contact via email, exchanging insights and advice on our roughly similar Montaigne projects. In both areas the Vanderbilt Library will again be invaluable to my work, although I will also be proofing another book recently accepted for publication by Routledge, *Milton's Italy*. The book itself was largely complete before its acceptance late last year, but all through the spring of this year (2016) I have been polishing the manuscript and generally readying it for submission by getting permissions to reprint quotations from other sources as well as illustrations for the book. All this has been a serious distraction from my work on "Proteus Unbound," but I nevertheless believe I have made major headway on that project thanks to my PDA from the University of Memphis.

