**FRIDAY**

12:00 p.m. Registration

1:30 p.m. Session I *Chair:* John Pinto, Smith College
  Michelangelo’s Sonnets of the Night: The Hidden Meaning
  *Margherita Frankele, New York University*
  
  Marsilio Ficino’s Cosmic Temple
  *George Hersey, Yale University*
  
  Daniele Barbaro and the Iconography of the Venetian Republic
  *Inge Jackson, Columbia University*

4:30 p.m. The Macri-Weil Sicilian Puppet Theatre
  *Chapin Auditorium*

5:30 p.m. Cocktails *Greenhouse*

6:45 p.m. Dinner *Willetts-Hallowell Center*
  Welcome *Elizabeth Keman, President, Mount Holyoke College*
  
  Response *David Berkowitz, Brandeis University*
  *President, New England Renaissance Conference*

8:30 p.m. Giamatti Dante Lecture
  Dante’s Misreading of His Auctores in *Inferno* XX
  *Robert Hollander, Princeton University*
  
  Sponsored by the Department of Italian

10:00 p.m. Reception *Art Museum*

**SATURDAY**

9:00 a.m. Coffee and donuts

9:30 a.m. Session II *Chair:* Ann Jones, Smith College
  The Paradox of Print: Guillaume Bouchet as Scholar-Printer in the Late Renaissance
  *Hope Glidden, Wesleyan University*
  
  Going Public: Rabelais, Montaigne, and the Printed Word
  *Barry Lydgate, Wellesley College*

11:00 a.m. Coffee and donuts

11:30 a.m. Session III *Chair:* Robert Hollander, Princeton University
  Re-membering Dante: Petrarch’s ‘Chiare, fresche, e dolci acque’
  *Nancy Vickers, Dartmouth College*
  
  Dante and Petrarch in Florentine Portraiture of the Sixteenth Century
  *Robert Simon, Metropolitan Museum of Art*

1:00 p.m. Luncheon *Prospect Hall*
  A performance of Renaissance music by *da Camera Singers*
  *Ann Kears, Conductor*

Throughout the weekend in the Art Museum there will be an exhibit of illustrated editions from the Valentine Giamatti Dante Collection. On Saturday Professor Giamatti will be present to discuss his collection.
1978 New England Renaissance Conference

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For their generous assistance we are grateful to Irene Cronin, Anne Edmonds, Valentine Giamatti, Elizabeth Kennan, Irma Rabbino, Margery Roy, Lu Stone, John Walker, and Wendy Watson; the departments of Art, English, French, History, and Italian; the Mount Holyoke College and Five-College lecture committees; and the Five-College Renaissance Seminar.

The woodcuts are from Paradiso I, in an edition by Matheo da Parma, Venice, November 1493. (The Valentine Giamatti Collection, Williston Memorial Library, Mount Holyoke College.) Program printed by Carol J. Blinn.
Michelangelo's Sonnets Of The Night: The Hidden Meaning

According to the biographer Charles de Tolnay, Michelangelo seems to have been a follower of the so-called "Italian Reformation". From recent research it is known that the Church's rigid persecution of heresy led many Italians to conceal pro-Lutheran or pro-Calvinistic beliefs. To such dissimulation, which was widespread, Calvin gave the name "Nicodemism".

Analysis of the text seems to show that Michelangelo's obscure "Sonnets of the Night" can be understood in the light of his "Nicodemism". Further support of this view is sought in the fact that Michelangelo's Pietà of Florence includes in its composition the figure of Nicodemus with the features of the artist himself. Since Nicodemus is, according to the Gospels, "he who came to Jesus by night", it is easy to associate Nicodemus and the night. Night would be the time when a timorous man can practice in secrecy the religion he believes in and which he must dissimulate by day.

Michelangelo's obsession with night in his poems could thus be seen as referring to the night of Nicodemus, with whom Michelangelo would identify himself.

Margherita Frankel
New York University

Marsilio Ficino's Cosmic Temple

The earthly collaboration among Italian artists of the Renaissance suggests a supernatural dimension as well. I have in the Neoplatonic notion that there are invisible beings in the cosmos, ultimately directed by God, who assist man in his activities. Some of these creatures are the normal sort of angels, demigods, or daemons, of course. But others are numbers and geometrical forms. And these mathematical creatures have a direct relation to the fine arts. Sculptors, painters, and architects had unseen helpers as well as seen ones. The labors of visible architects could be lightened through their contact with unseen but sentient models and formulas. The Quattrocento writer who most completely expressed these ideas for architecture was Ficino.

George Hersey
Yale University
Daniele Barbaro and the Iconography of the Venetian Republic

The paper discusses the meaning and cultural significance of the iconographic program of the chamber of the Council of Ten in the Venetian Ducal Palace. The program, devised in 1553 by the patrician humanist Daniele Barbaro and executed by Veronese, Zelotti and Ponchino, expresses the powers of the Council of Ten on a purely pagan, allegorical level. The subjects represent a departure from the traditional historical, votive, and Biblical formulae used in ducal palace decoration. The evolution of the Chamber's unique humanist iconography of the Venetian Republic resulted from the combination of Barbaro's interests and education with a special moment in Venetian history. The use of pagan allegory to refer to the domestic and foreign power of the Empire as well as to her virtù implies that the mid-sixteenth-century viewers of these paintings believed, with Barbaro, that the "myth" of Venice could be expressed without specific historical or Biblical associations. This belief did not endure.

Inge Jackson
Columbia University

Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

The Paradox of Print:
Guillaume Bouchet as Scholar-Printer
in the Late Renaissance

This paper has four parts. In the first I take issue with two caricatures of Renaissance man: Foucault's hermetic reader of the prose of the world and the collège educated humanist Foucault's critics claim he overlooked. We may look to another type of Renaissance man to correct the one-sidedness of these portraits: the new reader—particularly merchants—addressed by scholar-printers like Bouchet. In his Serées (1584), Bouchet set out to preserve both of the traditions emphasized by Foucault and his critics—the hermetic and the antique humanistic. But Bouchet was aware of a danger in the printing boom of his day: printing can preserve not only knowledge, but nonsense. The second and third parts of the paper explore and illustrate Bouchet's (2) strategies for demystifying classical sources and his (3) techniques for comic debunking of occult lore. A brief conclusion explores the paradox of print. The printer preserves and also criticizes; as a printer he undermines, at the same time as he establishes, the text's authority. By constructing and deconstructing textual authority, Bouchet worked to foment his own particular brand of skepticism.

Hope Glidden
Wesleyan University
Abstracts of Papers

Going Public: Rabelais, Montaigne and the Printed Word

The advent of printing brought changes in the traditional habits of writers and readers in the Renaissance which literary studies have neglected. The present paper examines two 16th-century authors writing in the vernacular in France to see how print affected their creative enterprises. Rabelai's Pantagruel and Gargantua suggest an author emerging through the printed book from the anonymity of connectedness with popular forms to the full individuality of eponymous authorship. In Montaigne's Essais, characteristics of the new medium appear to shape and define the autobiographical process itself, and publication in print creates the modern paradox of a self-study conducted for a public of intimate strangers.

Barry Lydgate
Wellesley College

Saturday, 11:30 a.m.

Re-membering Dante: Petrarch's "Chiare, fresche e dolci acque"

Petrarch's hostility to Dante was already a source of surprise and confusion during his lifetime. In those rare passages where Petrarch speaks of him directly, it is only to tell us that he never seriously read the Commedia and that he considered Dante's popularity somewhat suspect. Whether we attribute this posture of vaguely disinterested antipathy to disdain, envy or simple misapprehension, his refusal to acknowledge any real debt to his predecessor is indeed troubling. Contemporary critics have returned to this enigmatic relationship, some to find in Petrarch a "tissue of allusions" to Dante, others to note the "first example in the West" of the "anxiety of influence." Through the analysis of a single canzone containing two direct references to the Purgatorio, we sense both Petrarch's obsessive fascination with Dante and his brilliant manipulation of a sub-text to reinforce and enhance his own poetry.

Nancy Vickers
Dartmouth College
Portraits of Dante in Sixteenth Century Florence

A cursory review of the portraits of Dante executed in sixteenth-century Florence reveals that few images of the poet by major artists. But if major portraits of Dante are rarely encountered, minor examples appear legion. Dozens of small-scale, usually bust-length, painted portraits are now found in private collections, provincial galleries, and museum storerooms. The work of anonymous artists, copyists, and workshops, these pictures have generally not been studied; their condition, quality, anonymity, and obscurity have, for the most part, served to remove them from both artistic and historical studies and works on Dante iconography. The large number of these images (and one must presume that many are lost) not only reflects the flourishing of the portrait idiom and the creation of a near-business in portrait production in Cinquecento Florence; the popularity of these privately commissioned ricordi of the poet underscores as well the increased study of the works of Dante following the advent of the printed book and the growth of a Florentine literary self-consciousness, which found in Dante both model and hero. Despite the number of extant Dante portraits nearly all conform to one of perhaps three or four distinct portrait types. Tracing the history of these images back to their proto-typical sources both reveals evidence of either lost or imperfectly known paintings of Dante and elucidates the manner of Cinquecento appreciation of II Divino Poeta.

Robert Simon
Metropolitan Museum