



INTRODUCCIÓN

This special issue is dedicated to the memory of Professor Nancy F. Marino, who valiantly fought an eleven-month battle against cancer that ended on March 10, 2018. A world-renowned scholar of Medieval and Renaissance Iberian Studies, Nancy was the consummate university professor. She was selfless in all aspects of her professional life. As a mentor to me and many others, she spent countless hours reading manuscripts, writing letters, discussing ideas—whether good or bad, she’d let you know—in order to help us reach our goals. Indeed, she is responsible for many successful careers, both within and outside of academia. Her last doctoral student and a contributor to this collection, Dr. Mark Davis recounts the following:

“When I think of Nancy as a mentor, the first thing that comes to mind was a little joke we shared; she called herself my “Mother Superior”. It was a joke, of course, but it was an apt way to characterize her ability to perfectly balance firm demands and respect for rules and decorum, while simultaneously offering support, encouragement and even inspiration.”

But her graciousness goes beyond simple mentoring, people were constantly in the doorway of her office, chatting about whatever topic that came to mind. She made people feel welcome and took the time to listen.

Nancy’s unselfishness was even more evident in the classroom. She was one of the finest professors to grace our department. She shared her profound knowledge and inspired

1000s of students through a tireless passion for teaching. She is one of few professors capable of motivating her students to finish *with enthusiasm* the 1000+ pages of Don Quixote—no small feat in this day and age. She commented to me on several occasions that her most valuable time spent was with her students. Nancy’s accomplishments in the classroom were recognized posthumously when she won the prestigious Paul Varg Alumni Award at Michigan State University. She was also strong proponent of study abroad and developed several programs in her career.

Nancy earned the title of Distinguished Professor at Michigan State University in recognition of her scholarly accomplishments. Indeed, her influence on Iberian Studies is longstanding and far-reaching. She authored nine books, served as guest editor in numerous academic journals, published over forty articles, and gave numerous invited lectures and professional papers during her illustrious forty-four-year career. Her wide-ranging areas of expertise include courtly poetry in late Medieval Castile; dress, imagery, and material culture in the Court of Isabel I; and the history and reception of Jorge Manrique’s *Coplas por la muerte de su padre*, to name a few. Nancy considered this last one “The Book” —her *magnum opus*— an opinion shared universally. Julian Weiss of King’s College London remarks that this monograph “is unique in scope and a fundamental work of reference, made possible by a scholar who combined impeccable research with sensitivity to the enduring human significance of poetry from the distant past.” Michael Gerli of the University of Virginia agrees: he notes that it is a “brilliant exercise in tracing the reception of the Coplas from the time of their composition on into the internet; an exemplary exercise in medievalism, or the study of the representation of the Middle Ages in modernity, especially in and through new media.” Nancy’s last book, *El cancionero de la corte de Carlos V (y su autor, Luis de Ávila y Zuñiga)*, was published posthumously in 2018.

The contributors to this issue include former students and colleagues —all are friends—who have distinguished themselves in their fields. The breadth of topics reflects Nancy’s broad scholarly interests. The first two studies explore the relevance of medieval Iberian travel literature in contemporary approaches to medieval studies, more specifically Post-Colonial readings and Race Theory. The two pieces that follow focus on the varied reception of salacious poems and their protagonists. The collection closes with three studies dealing with material and visual cultures in the past and the present. This rich selection of articles offers us a glimpse at the influence that Nancy’s work has on us all and our admiration of her as a scholar, teacher, and person.

Following this introduction is a short essay written by Dr. Eliseo Valle, one of her closest friends. In it he describes the connections that they shared and how Spain, and especially Valencia, was her home away from home.

ANTHONY GRUBBS