

William Ian Miller

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Academic Appointments

Thomas G. Long Professor of Law, University of Michigan, 1998-2021; Emeritus, 2021-present; Professor of Law, 1985-1998
Honorary Professor of History, University of St. Andrews, 2011- present
Carnegie Centenary Professor, University of St. Andrews, 2007
Visiting Professor, Buchmann Faculty of Law, Tel Aviv University, Dec., 2002, 2003, 2004, 2015
Visiting Professor, Harvard Law School, 2001 (fall)
Visiting Professor, Department of History, University of Bergen, Norway, 1996 (spring)
Visiting Professor, University of Chicago Law School, 1990 (fall)
Visiting Professor, Yale Law School, 1988 (fall)
Visiting Assoc. Professor of Law, University of Michigan, 1984-85
Assoc. Professor of Law, University of Houston, 1981-84
Asst. Professor of English, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT, 1975-80
Visiting Lecturer in English, Williams College, Williamstown, MA, 1975 (fall)

Bibliography

Books

- Outrageous Fortune: Gloomy Reflections on Luck and Life* (Oxford University Press, 2021).
- Hrafinkel or the Ambiguities: Hard Cases, Hard Choices* (Oxford University Press, 2017) pbk, 2021.
- “Why is your axe bloody?”: A Reading of Njáls saga* (Oxford University Press, 2014); pbk, 2016.
- Losing It, in which an aging professor laments his shrinking brain, which he flatters himself formerly did him noble service: a plaint, tragic-comical, historical, vengeful, sometimes satirical and thankful in six parts, if his memory does yet serve* (Yale University Press, 2011). Named to top ten list for 2011 non-fiction in Macleans: <http://www2.macleans.ca/2011/12/08/review-maclean%E2%80%99s-top-20-books-of-2011/>; and similarly to top ten by Chicago Tribune: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/sc-ent-1214-books-best-of-year-20111216,0,1108324.column>; Korean translation, 2014.

Books (cont.)

Audun and the Polar Bear: Luck, Law, and Largesse in a Medieval Tale of Risky Business (Brill, 2008); pbk, 2014.

Eye for an Eye (Cambridge University Press, 2006); Arabic, Italian, Chinese translations, 2008.

Faking It (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

The Mystery of Courage (Harvard University Press, 2000); Spanish translation, 2005.

The Anatomy of Disgust (Harvard University Press, 1997); Spanish and Italian translations, 1999, Slovenian translation, 2006; Korean and Portuguese translations, 2022. Chosen best book by the Association of American Publishers, 1997, in sociology/anthropology.

Humiliation: and other essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence (Cornell University Press, 1993).

Bloodtaking and Peacemaking: Feud, Law, and Society in Saga Iceland (University of Chicago Press, 1990).

Law and Literature in Medieval Iceland: Ljósvetninga saga and Valla-Ljóts saga (Stanford University Press, 1989) (with Theodore M. Andersson).

Articles and Essays

"Grágás and the Legal Culture of Commonwealth Iceland," *The Cambridge History of Old Norse-Icelandic Literature*, edited by Heather O'Donoghue and Eleanor Parker (Cambridge University Press, 2024), 537-57.

"De Minimis non Curat Lex? Law and Little Things," in *Law and Revolution: Past Experiences, Future Challenges*, edited by Matej Accetto, Katja Škrubej, and Joseph H. H. Weiler (Routledge, 2024), 253-60.

"Lines in Lava. Of Metes and Bounds in Old Iceland," *Saga-Book* 44 (2020), 167-88: the Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture.

"Of cursing, prophesying, advising, and anxieties of causation: *Laxdæla saga* ch. 75 and beyond," E. C. Quiggin Memorial Lecture, 2019), published by Univ. of Cambridge, Dept. of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic, 2020.

"Dégoût" in *Passions Sociales*, sous le direction de Gloria Origgi (Paris: PUF, Presses Universitaires de France, 2019), 162-68.

"Where's Iceland," in "*The Making of Europe*": *Essays in Honour of Robert Bartlett*, edited by John Hudson and Sally Crumplin (Brill, 2016), 76-95.

"Epilogue: Do I disgust you? (Or rather, you me?) mes frères, mes sœurs, mes semblables?" in *Le Dégoût: Histoire, langage, esthétique et politique*, edited by

- Michel Delville, Andrew Norris, and Viktoria von Hoffmann (Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2015), 149-61.
- “Finding, sharing, and risk of loss: whales, bees and other valuable finds in Iceland, Denmark and Norway,” *Comparative Legal History* (2015), 1-22; with Helle Vogt.
- “May you have my luck,” *The Chronicle Review, The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Feb. 6, 2015. <http://chronicle.com/article/May-You-Have-My-Luck/151627?cid=megamenu>
- “Feeling Another’s Pain: Sympathy and Psychology Saga Style,” *European Review*, 22 (2014), 55–63.
- “Conscience, Interest, Side-Switching and *Laxdæla saga*, chapters 59 and 61,” in *The Creation of Medieval Northern Europe: Essays in Honor of Sverre Bagge*, edited by Leidulf Melve and Sigbjørn Sønnesyn (Oslo: Dreyer Forlag, 2012), 373-88.
- “Losing It,” excerpted from the opening chapters of the book of the same title, *Michigan Quarterly Review* 50 (2011), 153-67.
- “The Messenger,” in *Frieden stiften: Vermittlung und Konfliktlösung vom Mittelalter bis heute*, edited by Gerd Althoff (Darmstadt: WBG, 2011), 19-36.
- “Threat,” in *Feud, Violence and Practice: Essays in Medieval Studies in Honor of Stephen D. White*, edited by Belle S. Tuten and Tracey L. Billado (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), 9-28. Icelandic translation with some modifications as “Haft í hótunum,” *Ritið* 1 (2018), 39-63.
- “Hatred,” in *The Oxford Companion to Emotion and the Affective Sciences*, edited by David Sander and Klaus R. Scherer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 203-04.
- “Deceit in War and Trade,” in *The Philosophy of Deception*, edited by Clancy Martin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 49-66.
- “Death, Danger, and ... Dieting?” *In Character* (Winter 2009), 4-11.
- “Is a Gift Forever?” *Representations*” No. 100 (2007), 13-22.
- “Home and Homelessness in the Middle of Nowhere,” in *Home and Homelessness in the Medieval and Renaissance World*, edited by Nicholas Howe (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), 125-42.
- “Of Optimal Views and other Anxieties of Attending to the Beautiful and Sublime,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 1 (2002), 71-85.
- “Weak Legs: Misbehavior Before the Enemy,” *Representations*, No. 70 (2000), 27-48; a somewhat different version appears in *The Passions of the Law* edited by Susan Bandes (New York: NYU Press, 1999), 241-64 and in *Demokratie, Recht und soziale Kontrolle im klassischen Athens*, edited by David Cohen and Elisabeth Müller-Luckner (München: Oldenbourg, 2002).
- “Near Misses,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 38 (1999), 1-15; excerpted in *Harper’s* 298 (June, 1999), 26-27.

- “In Defense of Revenge,” in *Medieval Crime and Social Control*, edited by Barbara A. Hanawalt and David Wallace (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 70-89.
- “Sheep, Joking, Cloning and the Uncanny,” in *Clones and Clones: Facts and Fantasies about Human Cloning*, edited by Martha C. Nussbaum and Cass R. Sunstein (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), 78-87.
- “Clint Eastwood and Equity: The Virtues of Revenge and the Shortcomings of Law in Popular Culture,” in *Law in the Domains of Culture*, edited by Austin Sarat and Thomas Kearns (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 161-202.
- “Gluttony,” *Representations*, No. 60 (Fall, 1997), 92-112. Repr. with substantial additions in *Wicked Pleasures: Meditations on the Seven Deadly Sins*, edited by Robert C. Solomon (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), 19-50.
- “Sanctuary, Redlight Districts, and Washington, D.C.: Some Observations on Neuman’s Anomalous Zones,” *Stanford Law Review* 48 (1996), 1235-1246.
- “Upward Contempt,” *Political Theory* 23 (1995), 476-99.
- “Deep Inner Lives, Individualism, and People of Honour,” *History of Political Thought* 16 (1995), 190-207.
- “‘I can take a hint’: Social Ineptitude, Embarrassment, and The King of Comedy,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 33 (1994), 322-44; reprinted in *The Movies: Tests, Receptions, Exposures*, edited by Laurence Goldstein and Ira Konigsberg (University of Michigan Press, 1996), 75-97.
- “Sagas and Emotions.” In *From Sagas to Society*, edited by Gisli Pálsson (Middlesex, UK: Hisarlik Press, 1992), 89-109.
- “Of Outlaws, Christians, Horsemeat, and Writing: Uniform Laws and Saga Iceland,” *Michigan Law Review* 89 (1991) 2081-95.
- “Some Aspects of Householding in the Medieval Icelandic Commonwealth,” *Continuity and Change* 3 (1988), 321-55.
- “Beating Up on Women and Old Men and Other Enormities: A Social Historical Inquiry into Literary Sources,” *Mercer Law Review* 39 (1988), 753-766.
- “Ordeal in Iceland,” *Scandinavian Studies* 60 (1988), 189-218.
- “Dreams, Prophecy and Sorcery: Blaming the Secret Offender in Medieval Iceland,” *Scandinavian Studies* 58 (1986), 101-123.
- “Gift, Sale, Payment, Raid: The Negotiation and Classification of Exchange in Medieval Iceland,” *Speculum* 61 (1986), 18-50.
- “Avoiding Legal Judgment: The Submission of Disputes to Arbitration in Medieval Iceland,” *American Journal of Legal History* 28 (1984), 95-134.
- “Choosing the Avenger: Some Aspects of the Bloodfeud in Medieval Iceland and England,” *Law and History Review* 1 (1983), 159-204.

“Justifying Skarpheðinn: Of Pretext and Politics in the Icelandic Bloodfeud,” *Scandinavian Studies* 55 (1983), 316-344. Reprinted with revisions as “The Central Feud in *Njáls Saga*,” in *Sagas of the Icelanders*, edited by John Tucker (New York: Garland, 1989), 292-322.

“Dorothy Thompson and the Court-Packing Plan: Of Muse and Men,” *Houston Law Review* 19 (1982), 695-711.

Occasional Pieces

Graduation speech for class of UM Law Dec. 2017:

<http://web.law.umich.edu/flashmedia/public/Default.aspx?mediaid=57239>

“What Books Changed Your Mind?” <http://chronicle.com/article/What-Book-Changed-Your-Mind-/149839/> *The Chronicle Review, The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Nov. 7, 2014

“The Question of Courage,” *SJI Quarterly* No. 69 (July, 2012), 14-17.

Interview in *Inside Higher Ed*, Dec. 7, 2011, for which I supplied written answers:

“*Losing It*: New book takes a tragicomic look at aging in literature and academe.” <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/12/07/new-book-aging-and-academic>

“*Losing It*: the Lament of an Aging Professor,” <http://chronicle.com/article/Losing-It-in-the-Golden-Groves/129543/>, *The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Chronicle Review* Oct. 30, 2011.

“I’m sorry, so sorry, so very, very sorry,” *Globe and Mail* Dec. 22, 2007.

“Okó za okó: obračunavanje s talionom,” *Pamfil* (Dec. 2005), 6-13, Slovenian translation by Lucija Učakar.

“Yale Kamisar: Up Close and Personal.” *Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law* 2 (2004), 65-67.

“Pretension and Pomposity in Academe,”

<http://chronicle.com/article/PretensionPomposity-in/10295>, *The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Chronicle Review*, Sept. 12, 2003.

“Shapes of Courage,” *Harper’s* 301 (Oct., 2000), 21-24 (excerpted with changes from *The Mystery of Courage*).

“Journal: Ann Arbor, December 1997,” *The American Scholar* 67 (1998), No. 2, 143-46.

“Giving the Gift of Humiliation,” *Harper’s* 288 (Feb. 1994), 26-27. (A short excerpt from ch. 1 of *Humiliation*.)

“Hœnsa-Þóris saga,” *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Scandinavia* (Garland Press, 1992).

“Diebstahl, England,” *Lexikon des Mittelalters im Artemis Verlag* (Munich), cols. 992-93 (1985).

“A Relic of Divine Dispensation,” *The Explicator* 42, No.4 (1984), 2-4.

“The Middle English Ballad ‘Robyn and Gandeleyne’ (1.57),” *Notes and Queries* NS 25 (1978), 30-31.

Reviews

- Review of Alexandra Cuffel, *Gendering Disgust in Medieval Religious Polemic*. *Medievalia et Humanistica* NS no. 34 (2008), 161-65.
- Review of J. A. Burrow, *Gestures and Looks in Medieval Narrative*. *The Medieval Review* <http://www.hti.umich.edu/t/tmr/>; (2003), TMR ID: 03.01.34.
- Review of Jon Elster, *Alchemies of the Mind: Rationality and the Emotions*. *London Review of Books* (10 August, 2000), 36-37.
- Review of Bruce Lincoln, *Authority: Construction and Corrosion*. *History of Political Thought* 17 (1996), 453-54.
- Review of Kirsten Hastrup, *Culture and History in Medieval Iceland*, *Scandinavian Studies* 58 (1986), 183-186.
- Review of John Bossy, ed., *Disputes and Settlements: Law and Human Relations in the West*, *American Journal of Legal History* 30 (1986), 266-68.
- Review of Carola L. Gottzmann, *Njáls saga: Rechtsproblematik im Dienste soziokultureller Deutung*, *Scandinavian Studies* 57 (1985), 84-85.
- Review of J. L. Byock, *Feud in the Icelandic Saga*, *Speculum* 59 (1984), 376-79.

Named lectures and plenary talks last 15 years

- “Lines in lava: of metes and bounds in old Iceland. The Dorothea Coke Memorial Lecture, University College London, March 11, 2020.
- “Of cursing, prophesying, advising, and anxieties of causation: *Laxdæla saga* ch. 75 and beyond. E. C. Quiggin Memorial Lecture, Cambridge, Dec 5, 2019.
- “Getting Even: or just you wait and see,” the 11th Annual Francis Lee Utley Lecture, Center for Folklore Studies, The Ohio State University, Feb 9, 2018.
- “A Jaundiced View of Authenticity and Identity in a World of Alternative Facts and an Ugly Reality.” Freiburg im Breisgau, University Graduate School, Workshop on Authenticity, May 5, 2017.
- “Food (fast and) and the Ties that Bind.” Annual Lecture of the Institute of Legal and Constitutional Research, University of St. Andrews, April 27, 2017.
- “Competition and its Unavoidability.” For “Kreativität und Zerstörung: Zur riskanten Produktivität von Wettkampf in mittelalterlicher Literatur und Kultur,” University of Konstanz, April 19, 2017.
- “Imprecise Specificity: aspects of legal diction.” Keynote Lecture Haskins Society Annual Meeting, Carleton College, MN, Nov. 6, 2016.
- “Psychological Acuity in the Sagas: You don’t know what you’ve been missing.” Strengleiker, University of Iceland, Reykjavík, March, 10, 2016.
- “Life Ain’t Cheap When Body Parts Are Money,” Rushton Lecture, Aug. 28, 2014, Honors Program, University of Alabama, Birmingham.

- “Breaking Bread,” Annual Medieval Studies Lecture, Oxford, April 28, 2014.
- “Tricks of the Trade,” Medieval Church and Culture Seminar, Oxford, April 29, 2014.
- “Do I disgust you? (or, rather, you me?) mes frères, mes sœurs, mes semblables?” Université de Liège, May 23, 2013.
- “Making a Scene: Embarrassability in Historical Sources,” Kings College, Cambridge, Oct. 16, 2012.
- “Limiting the Law’s Domain and End-runs Around Those Limits,” Law and Disputing Conference, University of Copenhagen, May 8, 2012.
- “I can’t get no satisfaction: revenge and some small portion of its sentiments,” Shannon Lecture, Carleton University, Ottawa, Oct. 2011.
- “Drawing Lines: Fuzzy or Bright, in or out of lawry, and points in between.” Legalism seminar, St. Johns College, Oxford, Feb. 2011, variant version presented as plenary lecture at conference “Law, Violence, and Social Norms,” at St. Andrews, May, 2011.
- “Self-abnegation and Debt Collection,” Universidad Finis Terrae, Santiago, Chile, Oct. 2010.
- “Getting Even,” Distinguished Speaker Series, St. Thomas University School of Law, Sept. 2010.
- “The Politics of Courage,” Einstein Forum, Potsdam, June, 2009.
- “Fasting against God, Humiliating the Torah,” Conference on Human Dignity and Shame in Jewish law, Harvard Law, May, 2009.
- “The Messenger,” Ringvorlesung des Exzellenzclusters “Religion und Politik” im Wintersemester 2008/09, University of Münster, Mediation. Arbeitsweisen und Befugnisse der Vermittler und Friedensstifter von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart. Keynote address, Rackham conference on Revenge, Feb. 2008.
- “Eye for an Eye: Revenge and Valuation.” Carnegie Centenary Professorship Lecture, St. Andrews, March, 2007.
- “Eye for an Eye,” 39th Chapel Hill Colloquium in Philosophy. Keynote address. UNC, Oct. 2005.

Academic Degrees

J. D., Yale University, 1980

Ph.D. in English, Yale University, 1975

M. Phil. in English, Yale University, 1973

B. A. in History, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1969

Fellowships and Awards

Festschrift, sub nom. *Emotion, Violence, Vengeance and Law in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of William Ian Miller*, edited by Kate Gilbert and Stephen D. White (Brill, 2018)

Honorary Professor of History, University of St. Andrews, 2011-
 Carnegie Centenary Professor, University of St. Andrews, 2007
 Faculty Fellow, Institute for the Humanities, University of Michigan 1995-96
 Lansdowne Lectures, University of Victoria, Feb. 1991
 Senior Fellow, University of Michigan Society of Fellows, 1988-92
 Benjamin Scharps Prize for best third year essay, Yale Law School, 1980
 Danforth Foundation Graduate Fellow, 1969-74
 Woodrow Wilson Fellow, 1969
 Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Alpha Theta, 1969
 Phi Eta Sigma, 1965

Professional Activities and Administrative Corvées (selected)

Board, PIMIC (Power and Institutions in Medieval Islam and Christianity)
<http://www.pimic-itn.eu/content/itn-board> 2013-
 Editorial Board, Society for Early English and Norse Electronic Texts, 1994-97
 Editorial Board, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 1995-98
 Law School Tenure Committee 2007-09
 Law School Hiring Committee 1986, 1989-91 (Chair), 1993, 1997-98 (Chair), 2004,
 2011-12
 Law School Dean Search Committee 1993-94
 Executive Board, U. of Michigan Press 1992-95