

“Enlistment asks the question of what lists can ‘do’ as a kind of speech act as well as what poetic and cultural issues they indicate, all with a rigor and range that have not previously been attempted. With impressive scope and clarity, this volume makes an important contribution to medieval and early modern literary studies.”

—Andrew Galloway, author of *The Penn Commentary on Piers Plowman, Volume 1*

Bestiaries. Lapidaries. Lunaries. Inventories and household vocabularies. Lists are everywhere in medieval and early modern texts—evidence of the need to manage and order knowledge and experience. Yet until now, listing as a formal practice has received scant scholarly attention. In *Enlistment*, foremost medievalists and early modernists from both the Anglo-American and German traditions investigate the humble list as a platform for better understanding how and why lists captivated period audiences. From epic catalogues of trees in Geoffrey Chaucer and Edmund Spenser to genealogies and the names of the divine, the lists in question come from a variety of periods, languages, and genres. Throughout, contributors demonstrate how lists have the curious capacity to challenge our categories of thinking and ordering of the world. The lists we encounter in medieval and early modern literature can thus be seen as seismographs of cultural knowledge and also as testing grounds for defining the ineffable, or unfathomable, or that which would be dangerous if otherwise expressed.

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