

Augustine's *Confessions*, Bodley 343, and the Exeter Book: The Things of the World
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ENGL 3335

Ancient and Medieval Literature

Confessiones

- Written between about 397 and 400
- Very detailed text about his first 33 years of life, focusing on his conversion to orthodox Christianity
 - Had become a priest c. 391 and had just been chosen as bishop of Hippo Regius in 395; a lot of people knew him before he was a convert
 - probably one reason for writing was to counter some resentment at his rapid ascension
 - Confession of sins, but also promoter of the faith (*confessor*); two senses of the Latin *confessio*

The Exeter Book (review)

- Exeter, Cathedral Library (Dean and Chapter), MS 3501, s. x² (Conner - 950-970)
- Miscellany - various types of poems in the MS
- Probably used as a repository for material for use in preaching
- First known mention is 1170 in a catalog of books that Bishop Leofric left for the monastery

Soul and Body II

- Soul and Body I – Vercelli Book (Vercelli, Bibliotheca Capitolare, MS cxvii)
 - Very similar, but about 40 lines longer
 - <https://oldenglishpoetry.camden.rutgers.edu/soul-body/> for comparison
- Soul and Body II – Exeter Book
- Recurring theme of the temptations to which the body is subject and the dangers they pose to the soul

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 343

- Official dating is s. xii² (second half of twelfth century)
 - Material from Ælfric's first and second series of *Catholic Homilies* plus several of his additional homilies and letters; various homilies in Latin and Old English; sermons by Wulfstan; Latin dialogues and treatises; *The Grave*