What Julian Saw:  
the re-examination of the bodily and ghostly sight in Julian of Norwich's "Showings"
Who was Julian of Norwich (and why should we care)?

Born 1342
Died after 1416
“Showings” May 1373
Popularity after 1901
Potential sources of her visions:

John Onians (2007) argued that the origins of art in the Upper Palaeolithic period arises from the intense and repeated observation of groups of animals in a stressful environment.
Psalters and Books of Hours
Psalters and Books of Hours: Example 1
Psalters and Books of Hours: Example 2
Psalters and Books of Hours: Example 2 -- continued
Psalters and Books of Hours:
Example 3
Julian’s doubts in her visions
Further use of neuroscience: left and right hemispheres 1

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFs9WO2B8ul
6:36-7:40
“Right-brain” characteristics

- “Religious” and, more specifically, "mystical" experiences ("Lalaland “ of Jill Bolte Taylor)
- The sudden leap of intuition (aka “inspiration” or the “working of divine grace”)
- Lack of predictability ("wise passivity“/"beholding“)
- Even the organic nature of Julian's experience, shifting focus
- “The maternal comforting substrate“
- A few more, e. g. "gaining distance“; depth and colour, etc.

"The phenomenon must never be thought of as finished or complete, but rather as evolving, growing, and in many ways as something yet to be determined."

Further use of neuroscience: left and right hemispheres 2
What I do – let’s do it together!

- I am interested in how we could use the findings and methods of Neuroscience and Neuropsychology in Humanities research;

- *Sixth Sense and Sensibility: Making Sense of Unusual Experiences in the Late Middle Ages*;

- Submitted a proposal for a volume of essays *Neuroscience and Psychology for Humanities* to the British Academy;

- If you think we could do something together, do get in touch!

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“No Doc, I'm afraid it's your time that's up”