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## **Raiding the Archive: A Study in the Veneration and Visibility of the Lindisfarne Gospels**

Rebecca Welzenbach  
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Oral Presentation O5.1

**RAIDING THE ARCHIVE: A STUDY IN THE VENERATION AND VISIBILITY  
OF THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS**

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The Lindisfarne Gospels, an eighth-century English manuscript, has been revered throughout history for its unique illuminations and its translation of the four gospels from Latin into Old English. This manuscript has changed hands many times, surviving Viking attacks, the Norman Conquest, and the tragic biblioclasm associated with the English Reformation. This study examines the way that three owners of the manuscript have understood and negotiated the balance between protecting the book while sharing its treasures with pilgrims and scholars. I explore the methods and motives of the eighth-century monastic community that produced the Gospels, the Elizabethan librarian Sir Robert Cotton, and London's British Library. While advances in growing collections, impressive buildings, and digital technology suggest increased accessibility to rare books like this one, I argue that scholars today enshrine the Lindisfarne Gospels almost the same way that medieval clergy did.