

**The Medieval Studies Program and the Early College Experience Program
at the University of Connecticut present the
Eighth Annual Medieval Studies Secondary Schools Outreach Seminar**

**THE POOR AND THE IDEA OF POVERTY
IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL SOCIETY**

A One-Day Seminar for High School Teachers of History, English and the Social Sciences on Friday, March 31, 2006 (with Connecticut Department of Education CEUs Available)

Location:

Konover Auditorium
Thomas J. Dodd Research Center
University of Connecticut
Storrs, Connecticut

Intent and Description:

Historian Michel Mollat has observed that poverty is “an idea as well as a composite of complex, shifting hard-to-grasp social realities.” In recent years scholars have turned their attention to the study of the poor and other people on the margins of society, not only to illuminate the “hard-to-grasp” history of these individuals and groups, but also in the belief that the interplay between mainstream and marginal cultures is a vital arena of historical and cultural development. This outreach is designed to assist public school educators in presenting the history and culture of the ancient and medieval world, with specific reference to social groups that tend to be overlooked in the traditional approaches to teaching Western civilization. Faculty presenters this year are drawn from the departments of Music, English, Modern and Classical Languages, and History.

The Medieval Studies Outreach series is offered in the hopes that public school and university educators will benefit from the exchange of ideas and curriculum objectives. The program’s mission has recently been enhanced by making this a cooperative venture with the University of Connecticut’s Early College Experience Program.

Faculty Speakers:

Eric Rice is Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Connecticut. He studies music of the Western liturgy and its relationship to architectural space and politics, particularly at Charlemagne’s former palatine chapel in Aachen, Germany.

Thomas Jambeck is Associate Professor of English and Co-Director of the Medieval Studies Program at the University of Connecticut. His specialty is medieval drama and the history of the English language. He has recently published, with Professor Robert Hasenfratz, *Reading Old English*, and is now working on an essay on the religious backgrounds of the Towneley Creation Play.

Daniel Caner is Associate Professor of History and Modern and Classical Languages at the University of Connecticut. He works in late antiquity on the social and religious history of the Late Roman Empire, with special focus on church and monastic history. His current research is on church and monastic economic ideals in the fifth-seventh centuries.

Stuart Miller is Professor of Hebrew, History, and Judaic Studies in the Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies section, Department of Modern and Classical Languages at the University of Connecticut. His teaching concentration is in the Ancient Near East and Israel, and his research focus is the history and literature of the Jews of Roman Palestine. His forthcoming book, *Sages and Commoners in Late Antique 'Erets Israel*, is devoted to the place of the rabbis within Jewish society in Roman Palestine.

Sherri Olson is Associate Professor of History at the University of Connecticut. Her research interests are the social and cultural history of the late medieval village, peasant religion, and monastic estate administration. She is currently completing a book that investigates village cultural history through local legal records.

Robert Hasenfratz is Associate Professor of English at the University of Connecticut and currently a Faculty Fellow at the University of Connecticut Humanities Institute. He has interests in both Old and Middle English literature with an emphasis on lay devotion and vernacular religious texts, anchoritic spirituality, and social history. He has taught several courses in Old Norse language and literature, particularly the family sagas. He is currently engaged on a project entitled "Walking as Social Practice in Late Medieval England."

Seminar Program

9:30-10:30 Registration and Coffee

Period music will be provided during registration by the Storrs *Collegium Musicum*
Director, Eric Rice (Music)

10:30-10:45 Welcoming Remarks
Sherri Olson (History), ECE Coordinator for History
Thomas Jambeck (English), Co-Director, Medieval Studies Program

10:45-11:30 Daniel Caner (Modern and Classical Languages & History)
"The Invention of the Poor in Late Antiquity"

11:30-12:15 Stuart Miller (Modern and Classical Languages)
"Poverty and Charity in Late Antique Judaism: The View of the Rabbis"

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch

1:30-2:15 Sherri Olson (History)
"To Be a Pauper Among the Poor: the Cult of Voluntary Poverty"

2:15-3:00 Robert Hasenfratz (English)
"Down and Out in Late Medieval England"