

The Medieval Studies Program at the University of Connecticut and the Center for Professional Development present the sixth annual Medieval Studies Secondary Schools Outreach Seminar

## **SLAVERY, SERFDOM, AND FREEDOM IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE**

A One-Day Seminar for Middle and High School Teachers of History, English and the Social Sciences on Friday, March 14, 2003 (with Connecticut Department of Education CEUs Available)

**Location:**

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

**Intent and Description:**

One of the great 'silent revolutions' of the early Middle Ages was the disappearance of the slave-based economies of the ancient world, and their replacement with other methods of organizing and commanding labor. To the slave gangs housed in barracks on the state grain farms of the Roman Empire there succeeded small-scale agriculturalists who held their land independently or in a variety of dependent tenures. Modern appraisals of landholding and lordship in medieval Europe have often equated the various forms of medieval servitude with slavery, but is such an approach accurate? Where did slavery survive in the culture and society of medieval Europe, what forms did it take, how did it differ from other systems of organizing labor? What do freedom and 'unfreedom' mean in medieval civilization?

This outreach is designed to assist public school teachers in teaching the history and culture of the medieval world, specifically in raising questions about varieties of slavery, servitude and freedom, not only in pre-modern Europe but also in the early modern era, when the forces of imperialism revived slavery on a scale unknown in the recent medieval past. The faculty speakers represent the disciplines of History, English, and Modern and Classical Languages.

As part of the University of Connecticut's mission to promote multicultural studies and teaching excellence, the Medieval Studies faculty offers its sixth annual outreach to secondary school teachers, in the hopes that public school and university educators will benefit from the exchange of ideas and curriculum objectives in introducing the Middle Ages to students of all ages. The faculty of the Medieval Studies program also wishes to foster an understanding of the history and culture of the Middle Ages and its role in the shaping of the Western world.

## Faculty Speakers:

**Robert Hasenfratz** is Associate Professor of English and Co-Director of the Medieval Studies Program at the University of Connecticut. His research interests are Old and Middle English literature, anchoritic spirituality, and Old Norse sagas. He has recently co-authored a grammar of Old English, and is currently compiling an annotated bibliography of Beowulf scholarship as well as researching a book on lay literacy in the late Anglo-Saxon period.

**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 working on a book that investigates village cultural history through local legal records.

**Benjamin Liu** is Assistant Professor of Spanish at the University of Connecticut, specializing in the literatures and cultures of medieval Iberia. He is the author of *Medieval Joke Poetry* (Harvard University Press, forthcoming) and a number of scholarly articles. His current research studies the economic aspects of interfaith relations in medieval Spanish literature.

**Ugo Nwokeji** is Assistant Professor of History and the Institute for African American Studies at the University of Connecticut. His specialty is the African slave trade, and he is currently working on a database derived from registers made in Sierra Leone, Havana and Rio de Janeiro between 1819 and 1845, that record the names of more than 70,000 liberated Africans.

## Seminar Program

9:00 Registration and Coffee

Please Note!

Period music will be provided during registration by the Storrs *Collegium Musicum*  
Director, Bruce Bellingham

10:00 Welcoming Remarks  
Sherri Olson  
Faculty Organizer, Medieval Studies Outreach

10:15 Robert Hasenfratz (English), "The Vocabulary of Slavery in English"

11:00 Sherri Olson (History), "What Does Freedom Mean in Medieval Europe?"

11:45 General discussion

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Benjamin Liu (Modern and Classical Languages), "Interfaith Slavery in

Medieval Spain"

1:45 Ugo Nwokeji (History), "Slavery in West Africa in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries"

2:30 Closing Remarks

*The Medieval Studies program* at the University of Connecticut offers coursework leading to the interdisciplinary degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy in Medieval Studies. The Departments of Art, Dramatic Arts, English, History, Modern and Classical Languages, Music, and Philosophy cooperate in the program.