

# University of Victoria

## *Catherine Harding*

The Medieval Studies program at the University of Victoria is an interdisciplinary unit whose members come from the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Fine Arts. The idea of creating an undergraduate program in Medieval Studies was developed in 1986-87; since that date faculty members teaching in the Departments of English, French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, Greek and Roman Studies, History, Philosophy, Music, and History in Art have offered courses leading to a Major in Medieval Studies (The program began as a Minor and changed to a Major in 1994). Undergraduates are introduced to key concepts in the study of medieval culture and society in Europe, as well as the medieval Islamic world.

Students enrolled in the Major take two core courses at the third-year level, which present an "Introduction to the Middle Ages," parts I and II. They are required to take at least two upper-level or fourth-year seminars (see listings below). Our program is aimed primarily at undergraduates, but graduate students based in home departments can also take upper-level undergraduate courses in Medieval Studies, to encourage the exchange of ideas between students at various stages in their training.

The following list of courses provides a brief sketch of specialised seminars that students may take from year to year, either within home departments, or through the Medieval Studies program (For further details of members' research interests, see: <http://www.uvic.ca/medieval>):

*English:* In Fall 2002 John Tucker offered "The Viking North: Old Norse Sagas in Translation," and he has also taught "Filming the Middle Ages." He is a specialist in Old English and Old Icelandic language and literature. Kathryn Kerby-Fulton has taught "Literature, History, and the Politics of Book Production in a Manuscript

Culture”; “Images of Women in Middle English Literature”; “Authority and Dissent: Authorship in a Manuscript Culture,” for the English department, and she continues to offer “The Culture of the Book: Authors, Scribes and Readers in Late Medieval England” for the Medieval Studies program. Her areas of research are: Middle English literature; Medieval Latin religious writings; and manuscript studies. Iain Higgins has taught “Strangers, Pilgrims and Missionaries: Writing the World in the Middle Ages” and “Tall Tales and Moral Fables.” He specialises in late medieval prose and translation; medieval orientalism; and early travel writing.

*Hispanic and Italian:* Lloyd Howard regularly offers a fourth-year course in his area of specialisation, Dante’s *Commedia*. He also offers “Boccaccio’s *Decameron*” and “Francis Petrarch: His Life as Literature.” In the area of Hispanic studies, Gregory Andrachuk regularly offers “Medieval Literature in Spanish.” He specialises in early fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Spanish sentimental romances, and Counter-Reformation theater in Spain.

*History:* Timothy Haskett has offered courses for the History department focusing on: “Advanced Manuscript Studies I: Practicum in Palaeography,” and “Advanced Manuscript Studies II: Practicum in Diplomatic Editing.” He has also taught “Medieval Foundations of the Western Legal Tradition;” “Medieval London;” “Medieval Murder and Mayhem;” “The Medievals and the Written Word.” His areas of specialisation are: medieval and legal social history; manuscript studies; and the English court of Chancery in the later Middle Ages. The Dean of Humanities, Andrew Rippin, offered “Medieval Arabic” in Summer 2001. He offers “The Formation of Islamic Civilisation” on an annual basis. He specialises in the interpretation of the Qur’an in the classical period of Islam.

*Philosophy:* Beginning July 2003, Taneli Kukkonen has been appointed as a Canada Research Chair in Aristotelian Studies. His areas of research include: the Aristotelian tradition; Islamic Philosophy; ancient philosophy; and the philosophy of religion.

*History in Art:* Newly arrived in Victoria in Fall 2002, Marcus Milwright offered a graduate seminar, “Islam and the Christian World: Cross-Cultural Exchange, 7th-16th Centuries.” His specialisation is Early and Middle Islamic art and archeology in Syria, Jordan and Iran, and the history of ancient and medieval medicine. In the past few years, Catherine Harding has offered “Late Medieval Florence;” “Vision and Visual Culture in Late Medieval Italy;” “Interrogating Race and Gender in Italian Medieval and Renaissance Art.” She has taught “Text and Image in Later Medieval European

Manuscripts” for the Medieval Studies program. Her area of specialisation is Italian fourteenth-century manuscript studies; gender issues in the Italian *trecento*; and later medieval European cosmography after 1200.

*Music:* Another recent appointment at the University, Susan Lewis in the Department of Music will offer: “Music of the Medieval Period, ca. 800-1400,” which can be taken by students at both levels, and she has proposed a new advanced undergraduate course entitled “Music and Culture in Medieval Paris.” Her research focuses on the emergence of the “modern” editor in early modern music prints across Europe (including France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, England and Denmark).

*Postdoctoral Fellows:* We are fortunate to have two SSHRC postdoctoral fellows in the English department: Elizabeth Baldwin, who is working on the Cheshire volume of the Records of Early English Drama (REED) project, and Maidie Hilmo, whose focus is “The Function of Visual Images in Fifteenth-century Illustrated Literary Manuscripts and Early Printed Books.” Janis Elliot is a SSHRC postdoctoral fellow in the Department of History in Art. She is working on “Kings and Queens: Politics and Gender Issues in the Visual Culture of Angevin Naples, 1266-1382.”

Since 1988, we have offered a day-long Medieval Workshop in early February, with prestigious international guest lecturers (this year’s event, *The Love of Learning in the Middle Ages*, featured Giles Constable and John Van Engen). The workshop provides students, faculty, and the wider community in Victoria with new perspectives on the medieval world: it typically attracts an audience of close to 300 people.

In closing, I note that the members of the program wish to promote a renewed sense of community for medievalists in the Pacific Northwest by forming a Regional Association for Medieval Studies in the near future.