

# Trent University

## ***Sarah Larratt Keefer***

The study of medievalism at Trent University, increasingly popular judged by student registration over the past decade, has just taken a new and exponential step forward with the approval by its Undergraduate Academic Development Committee of an Emphasis in Medieval and Renaissance Studies (M.A.R.S.), to begin in the Fall of 2003. Trent's M.A.R.S. Emphasis is under the aegis of the Medieval Academy of America: Committee on Centers and Regional Associations (CARA), and is open to all students eligible for any Joint or Single Honours program of study in Arts or Science at Trent.

M.A.R.S. candidates must complete a full-year 200-series Latin course as the program's core requirement, along with five other full credits in English and History, of which one must be at the 400-series level. On admission to the Emphasis, students opt either for a History or an English stream: students choosing the former must take three of their five options from Medieval and Early Modern History and two from Medieval and Renaissance English, while those in the latter choose three of the five from English, and the balance from History. In addition to these six required courses, a number of Ancient History and Classical Civilisation courses are strongly recommended as options during each student's upper-year program of study.

English's medieval professoriate at Trent has expanded from one to two with the arrival in 2002 of Joanne Findon (Ph.D. CMS, Toronto) who has taken over the Chaucer, Medieval Drama, and Medieval Romance offerings, allowing Sarah Keefer (Ph.D. English, Toronto) to concentrate her efforts on her widely-subscribed History of the English Language, on Studies in Old English, and on serving as director for the new program. Findon's research lies in woman's voice and woman's role within medieval English, Irish, and Welsh literature and Middle English drama, while Keefer

continues her life work, the examination of the development of liturgy and its cultural implications in Anglo-Saxon England.

History has two tenured medievalists, Ivana Elbl (Ph.D. History, Toronto) who teaches European expansionism in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period, and Fiona Harris-Stoertz (Ph.D., UC Santa Barbara) who is responsible for the popular Medieval Panorama survey and for a seminar on medieval women. Elbl (on sabbatical 2003-04) is currently engaged in biographical research on Henry the Navigator of Portugal and Portuguese social history in the era of the overseas expansion, while Stoertz examines the cultural apprehension of adolescence and women's health care and childbirth in high medieval England and France. As adjunct medieval faculty, History also has Martin Elbl (M.A. History, Toronto) whose research is centred on European commercial and diplomatic interaction with North Africa of the later Middle Ages, and representation of the material in multimedia format.

The M.A.R.S. Emphasis group plans to develop a Centre for Research over the next three years: this will focus its efforts, through public lecture series and special projects, on community and high school outreach programs. Such efforts will strengthen the already-significant ties between "town and gown," and will provide Trent's student body and members of the greater Peterborough area with an opportunity to share explorations of the European past, common to many Canadians and affecting us all as a nation.