

The Medieval Studies Program is sponsoring a lecture:  
Jesse Njus (English, Theatre and Dance, UCSB)

"Guilty of Christ's Blood?: Representing Jews in Medieval  
Passion Plays."

Please note change of date and place:

Friday, 1 June 2012 in 4080 HSSB at 12:00-1:30



The representation of Jews in medieval theatre has not inspired the same enthusiasm as the portrayal of Jews in medieval art, perhaps because there exists an assumption that the dramatic characterization of Jews lacks nuance and provides less valuable information than the study of the pictorial record. Through a comparative study of the medieval Passion plays of Western Europe, I demonstrate that the representation of Jews varies surprisingly among plays, illustrating an increasing complexity in medieval drama and in the portrayal of Christ's Passion as well as differing attitudes towards the role of the Jews in Christ's death. In the most intriguing case, a dramatic tradition rooted in France found itself transformed by an Italian adaptation. Yet this instance is only one example of the intricacy behind dramatic representations of the Jews in medieval drama and of the ways in which, by following these representations across national and linguistic boundaries, they can be unraveled to reveal the conceptual debates central to the medieval understanding of sacred history.

If you have any questions, please contact Edward D. English at [english@history.ucsb.edu](mailto:english@history.ucsb.edu)