

The Medieval Studies Program is sponsoring a lecture by  
Kathryn Lavezzo of the University of Iowa.

## "The Minster and the Privy."

Tuesday, 26 May 2009 at 4:00-6:00 PM in the McCune  
Conference Room of the IHC, HSSB 6020



This talk offers a new vantage point on the politics of identity in Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale* by examining how its built environments--namely the abject privy into which the murdered schoolboy is thrust and the conventual church where his corpse finally rests--at once make and unmake notions of Christian selfhood and Jewish alterity. Through a cultural geographic and historicist analysis of the minster and the privy as spaces whose production is mutually constitutive with the making of identities, Lavezzo decelerates our analysis of the dynamic of Christian purity and Jewish danger at work in the tale. Ultimately, by reading the minster and the privy not as fixed entities but as contingent, fluid spaces joined through the infrastructure of the tale, she identifies in Chaucer's anti-Semitic text an early materialist critique of any effort to conceive of a purely religious space.

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