

2014-2015 Medieval Lecture Series

ANATOMY OF A CRIME: DEATH INVESTIGATION IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

THURSDAY, 12 MARCH 2015, 4:30 – 6:00 PM



St. Jerome's University, Room 3027



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England has traditionally been understood as a latecomer to the use of forensic medicine in death investigation, lagging nearly two hundred years behind other European authorities. Using the coroner's inquest as a lens offers a fresh perspective on the process of death investigation in medieval England. The medieval relationship with death and disease, in particular, shaped coroners' and their jurors' understanding of the inquest's medical needs and led them to conclusions that can only be understood in context of the medieval world's holistic approach to health and medicine. By studying cause of death in the coroners' reports, this perspective sheds new light on subjects such as abortion by assault, bubonic plague, cruentation, epilepsy, insanity, senescence, and unnatural death.