

Death and the Maiden: From Chaucer to Pearl Jam

JUDITH M. BENNETT

Professor of History
University of Southern
California

Ever since the ancient Greeks, European cultures have nurtured a darkly erotic link between death and maidenhood. This connection was particularly charged during Chaucer's time when, in the wake of the Black Death, people began to cope with the challenges posed by large numbers of unmarried women in their midst.

How did Chaucer and his contemporaries imagine the deaths of maidens? How did the maidens approach death? And in what ways do these themes resonate in contemporary culture? Professor Bennett will place medieval imaginings of the deaths of maidens within a cultural history that extends from ancient Greek myths to contemporary American pop songs.

Thursday, January 29, 2009

7:00 – 9:00 PM

Pigott Hall (Bldg. 260), Room 113

Stanford University

Free and open to the public



MARTYRDOM OF ST. LUCY / Image © Regents of The University of California

Judith M. Bennett has received numerous awards for teaching and research. Focusing on peasant women, women's work and feminist history, her books include:

- ❖ *Women in the Medieval English Countryside*
- ❖ *A Medieval Life: Cecilia Penifader of Brigstock*
- ❖ *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England*
- ❖ *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism*

She is also co-author of the most widely used textbook on the European Middle Ages, *Medieval Europe: A Short History*, now in its tenth edition.

Medieval Matters public lectures explore the relevance of medieval history and culture for understanding the modern world. The series is sponsored by Stanford Continuing Studies, the Program in Medieval Studies, and the Sarum Seminar, with additional support from the Center for Medieval and Early Modern Studies and the Center for European Studies.