Medievalism and Fundamentalism in the Twenty-First Century

Thursday, October 25, 2012
4:10 p.m.
Location BU 21

Twenty-first-century America has experienced a surge in popular representations of the Middle Ages. Despite movement further and further into a technological future, audiences are increasingly indulging in medieval fantasy through video games like Dragon Age and Skyrim, movies about King Arthur and Robin Hood, television series like Camelot and Game of Thrones, and knighthood and princess memes in products for young adults. In addition to these popular returns to the Middle Ages, extreme religious movements also promise a return to an idealized medieval past. Kaufman will examine the use of medieval imagery in the American Fundamentalist Movement’s events—purity balls, princess rallies, and knighthood ceremonies—exploring what seemingly disparate phenomena like grandiose modesty balls and salacious episodes of Game of Thrones have in common: their desire to naturalize gender roles with the weight of history.