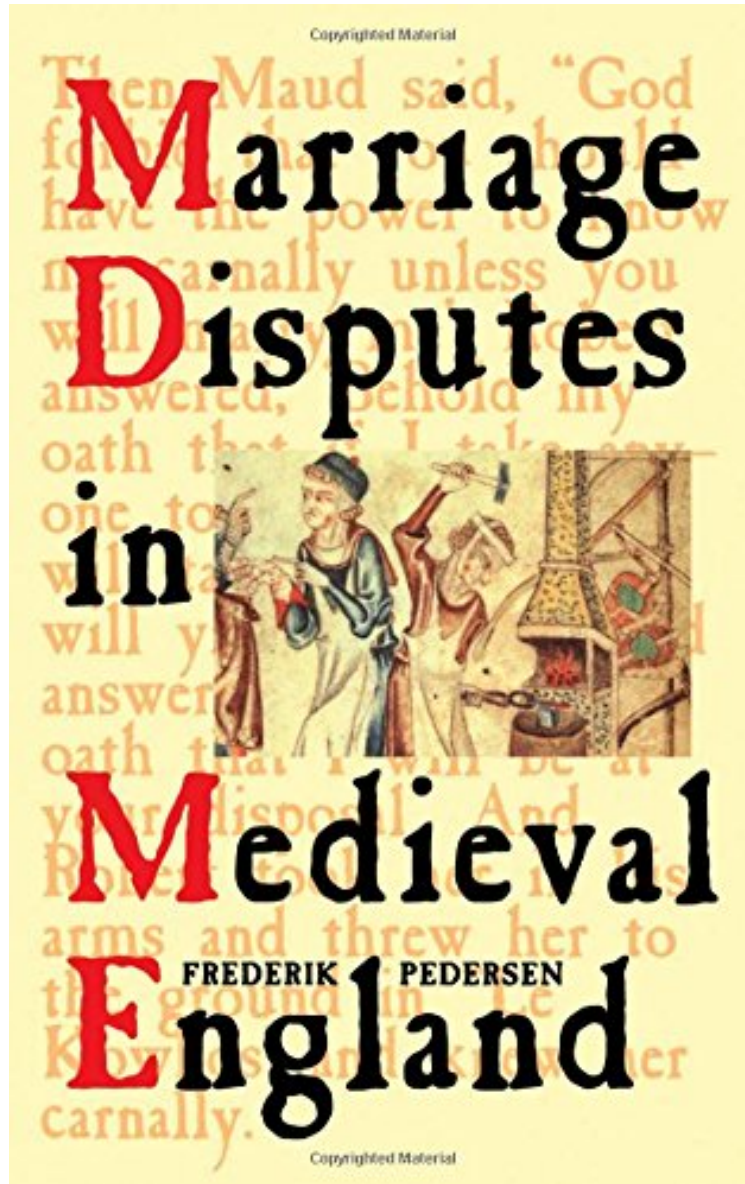


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## Marriage Disputes in Medieval England

Frederik Pedersen

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Intimate details about the personal lives of medieval people are frustratingly rare. We seldom know what the men and

women of the middle ages thought about marriage, let alone about sex. The records of the church courts of the province of York, mainly dating from the fourteenth century, provides a welcome light on private, family life and on individual reactions to it. They include a wide range of fascinating cases involving disputes about the validity of marriage, consent, sex, marital violence, impotence and property disputes. They also show how widely the laws of marriage were both known and accepted. *Marriage Disputes in Medieval England* offers a remarkable insight into personal life in the middle ages. Then Maud said, "God forbid that you should have the power to know me carnally unless you will marry me". Robert answered, "Behold my oath that if I take anyone to be my wife I will take you if you will yield to me". Maud answered, "Behold my oath that I will be at your disposal". And Robert took her in his arms and threw her to the ground in "Le Kowbos" and knew her carnally.' --Maud Schipyn and Robert Smyth, October 17, 1355

About the Author Frederik Pedersen is Lecturer in Medieval History at the University of Aberdeen.