

The Renaissance Studies Program
“Renaissance Cultures in Transit” Lecture Series
Presents the first lecture by

WALTER W. WOODWARD

*John Winthrop, Jr., Renaissance Alchemy,
and the Creation of New England Culture*

4:00 p.m., Thursday, February 17, 2011
Persimmon Room, Indiana Memorial Union



John Winthrop Jr., an early colonial governor, natural philosopher, and founding member of the Royal Society, engaged in a lifelong effort to transfer alchemical culture and practices from Europe to America, and these efforts, in turn, significantly shaped the culture of colonial New England. Winthrop was a disciple of the English alchemist John Dee, a proponent of the Rosicrucian movement, and a follower of the ideas of Paracelsus. He was enthusiastically committed to the pansophic movement associated with Jan Comenius. His life work focused on efforts to realize in America the fulfillment of Renaissance dreams of the universal reformation of humankind as a critical stage of preparation for the millennium. This was expressed through a series of alchemically informed development schemes and projects intended to render Christian service to New England’s settler and native communities. These endeavors, and the Renaissance ideas underpinning them, will be explored in this presentation.

Walter W. Woodward is Associate Professor of History, University of Connecticut, Storrs and State Historian of Connecticut

This lecture is made possible through the generous support of the College Arts and Humanities Institute, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Office of the Provost, the Department of History and the Department of History and Philosophy of Science. Refreshments to follow.