

Medieval Torture

- medieval Europe was famous for developing many awful kinds of torture

- torture was used during the Middle Ages for three reasons:

- to force confessions or secret information from those accused
- to discourage dissent and intellectual freedom
- to persuade non-believers to accept Christianity

- many tortures were common (burning or suffocating) but some were very elaborate:

a) Thumbscrews

- a device used to crush a victim's thumbs and fingernails

b) The Rack

- a person would be tied down, and slowly their joints would be pulled apart if a confession did not come

c) The Pillories

- a person would be put in a wooden frame that would trap their head and hands

- they would be kept there for days, with people throwing garbage at their heads

d) Hung, Drawn, and Quartered

- a person would be hung until almost dead, then disemboweled, and then torn into four pieces

- was saved for the worst of criminals (William Wallace)