

Arthurian Legend

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Office Hours: M-F, 11:30-12:00
A205

ENGL U199
Summer 2005
MTWRF 10:00-11:30
314 Bobet Hall
Prerequisites: ENGL T122 or

This course surveys the origins, development, and subsequent appropriation of one of the richest and most enduring traditions in all of world literature: the legend of Arthur, rex quondam, rexque futurus, “the once and future king.” We will explore the complicated but rewarding history of this legendary king of the Britons by analyzing and discussing works of medieval literature, history, and art, as well as modern film. The course will also introduce Arthurian archaeological sites, manuscripts and their illustrations, music, and other cultural and material contexts that will inform our study of the legend. The course emphasizes the sometimes vexing and always fascinating medieval primary sources that gave rise to Arthur, Guinevere, Lancelot, Merlin, Camelot, the Holy Grail, and the Round Table, but some attention will also be given to the reinterpretation of these medieval tales of chivalry and sanctity, love and betrayal, by the modern imagination.

The goals of this course are several:

1. to familiarize students with the Middle Ages generally and the historical development of a vibrant and influential literary tradition specifically;
2. to support their practice and refinement of critical thinking and writing techniques; and
3. to introduce some of the resources and tools available for the pursuit of medieval studies.

ENGL U195 is an Advanced Common Curriculum course (humanities/arts pre-modern).

required texts

All books are available through the campus bookstore. If you purchase your texts from another vendor be sure to purchase these editions and translations only. The abbreviations I use throughout the syllabus appear in square brackets:

- Geoffrey of Monmouth, History of the Kings of Britain (trans. Lewis Thorpe) **[HKB]**
- The Romance of Arthur, new ed. (ed. James J. Wilhelm) **[RA]**
- The Quest of the Holy Grail (trans. P. M. Matarasso) **[QHG]**
- Thomas Malory, Le Morte D'Arthur, 2 vols. (ed. Janet Cowen) **[Morte 1/2]**
- Derek Pearsall, Arthurian Romance: A Short Introduction **[Pearsall]** - optional

Additional readings will be made available through reserve [*].

course requirements

The primary source for information about course assignments, besides this syllabus, is our Blackboard web site, <http://blackboard.loyno.edu>. After you log in, you will be able to access the site by clicking on the link for **05M-ENGL-U199-001-JTS: ARTHURIAN LEGEND**. Here you will find a variety of tools for your consultation during the semester as well as detailed descriptions of the required written assignments.

Blackboard and e-mail are essential tools in this class; if you are not able and/or willing to check both regularly, you will find succeeding in this course extremely challenging.

1. Daily postings to Blackboard (30 points).

You are expected to complete the readings on the schedule by the beginning of class on the day for which they are assigned. I will not grade your participation in the class per se; rather, you will be required to submit by the beginning of most classes a thoughtful response (i.e., you must **analyze** the text, not merely **summarize** it) to the day's readings. Your commentary should take the form of a brief paragraph (4-6 sentences). Further details are available on Blackboard. I will grade your postings twice (after weeks 2 and 4). You may skip any 2 postings of your choice.

Postings are due by 10:00 a.m. Late postings will not be accepted except for cases of documented illness.

2. Essays (15 points each; 45 points total).

Given the compressed nature of a summer course, writing assignments will be frequent but brief (3 essays, 2-3 pp. each). Specific instructions will be posted on Blackboard in advance for each essay.

Essays are due by the beginning of class on the day for which they are assigned. Late papers will be penalized a half-grade per day. Extensions must be requested at least one day in advance and are granted at the discretion of the instructor.

3. Final exam (25 points).

The final exam will consist of multiple sections that will require you to identify and define concepts and

people, comment on selections from the course readings, and compose a long essay. There will be ample opportunity for individual choice throughout the exam. Additional details concerning the format of the exam will be provided nearer the exam date.

The grading scale for the course is as follows:

92-100 A
87-91 B+
82-86 B
77-81 C+
72-76 C
67-71 D+
61-66 D
0-60 F

attendance policy

Each class meeting costs you and/or your parents approximately \$63.36. I consider that incentive enough to attend class regularly. While I will take attendance daily, attendance does not factor into your grade in any formal way except in the following two cases:

1. Finishing the course with no more than one absence for the term will result in a 2-point bonus to your final grade.
2. Chronic tardiness, sleeping in class, and/or the persistent ringing of your cell phone will result in a deduction from your final grade at my discretion.

Informally, however, poor attendance invariably correlates to poor performance on writing assignments and especially on the exam, for which questions will be drawn not only from my lectures but also from discussion generated by the class.

a few final notes

If you are in need of accommodations on account of a disability, please contact Disability Services at 865-2990 as soon as possible. I cannot make accommodations in the absence of a plan authorized by that office.

I respect and uphold all Loyola policies pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to the disabled; sexual harassment; and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, creed, sex, or sexual preference. You should become familiar with these policies and regulations. Please feel free to discuss any specific concerns or questions with me at any time.

Plagiarism is the act of passing off someone else's work as your own. It can assume a variety of forms and constitutes only one of several kinds of academic dishonesty, none of which will be tolerated in this course and all of which carry with them the possible consequence of a final failing grade and a trip to the dragon pit (see below). Loyola's policies about academic dishonesty appear in Loyola University Bulletin and in the Arts and Sciences' Guide to Academic Survival. When in doubt, come and talk to me. I would much rather grant you an extension than fail you for turning in a plagiarized assignment on time.



schedule
(subject, and likely, to change)

Most class meetings will begin with some amount of lecture on the topic(s) indicated below followed by group discussion of the day's reading.

Where possible, the reading assignments should be completed in the order in which they are listed for any given day.

* Reserve reading (full bibliography appears following the schedule)

† Optional reading

| Day | Date | Lecture topic(s) | Reading | Writing |
|------------|--------------|--|---|----------------|
| M | 5.23 | Course introduction Introduction to the Middle Ages | syllabus Bede handout | |
| T | 5.24 BB 1 | Varieties of history: the vera lex historiae Film: <i>King Arthur</i> | RA 3-23 HKB 51-74 | †Pearsall ch 1 |
| W | 5.25 | Film: <i>King Arthur</i> | | |
| R | 5.26 | “When Christ and His saints slept” | †HKB 80-87 HKB 90-100 HKB 107-69 | BB 2 |
| F | 5.27 BB 3 | The “historical” Arthur | †HKB 170-185 HKB 186-211 *Geoffrey Ashe | |
| M 1 | 5.30 | Reception of Geoffrey | HKB 212-261 Reception handout | Essay |
| T | 5.31 BB4 | Courtly love, Chrétien, and the romance tradition | †Pearsall ch 2 *Andreas Capellanus *Lyrics RA 123-150 *Perceval | |
| W | 6.1 | Film: <i>Monty Python and the Holy Grail</i> | | |

R 6.2 Loyalty and betrayal: feudalism and adultery *Geoffroi de Charny BB5
*Bullough
RA 150-199

| | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|--|----------------|
| F | 6.3 BB6 | Origins: Robert de Boron and the Grail | †Pearsall ch 3 QHG 31-80 | |
| M | 6.6 | Hermeneutics and allegory | *Can Grande QHG 80-134 | Essay 2 |
| T | 6.7 | Chivalry vs. spirituality in the Lancelot-Grail cycle Film: <i>The Fisher King</i> | *Lancelot *Inferno QHG 134-175 | BB7 |
| W | 6.8 | Film: <i>The Fisher King</i> | | |
| R | 6.9 BB 8 | Visualizing the quest | QHG 175-251 | |
| F | 6.10 BB9 | After the Quest | QHG 251-284 *Tennyson *Eliot | |
| M | 6.13 Essay 3 | Going native in <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> | †Pearsall ch 4 RA 401-430 | |
| T | 6.14 | Loyalty vs. love and the quest for the self | RA 430-466 | BB 10 |
| W | 6.15 | Film: <i>The Sword in the Stone</i> | | |
| R | 6.16 BB 11 | The Wars of the Roses and Sir Thomas Malory Guest lecturer: Dr. Sara Butler, Dept. of History | †Pearsall ch 5 Morte1 92-118 Morte1 231-66 | |
| F | 6.17 | The Winchester Manuscript and Caxton | Morte1 266-302 | BB 12 |
| M | 6.20 | Malory and his sources | *Stanzaic *Morte Roi Morte2 373-455 | |
| T | 6.21 | The Arthurian landscape | Morte2 456-504 | |
| W | 6.22 | Film: <i>Excalibur</i> | Morte2 505-532 | |
| R | 6.23 | Film: <i>Excalibur</i> | | |

F 6.24 Final exam

Reserve and Electronic Readings

Geoffrey Ashe: Geoffrey Ashe, "The Origins of the Arthurian Legend," *Arthuriana* 5.3 (1995): 1-24.

Andreas Capellanus: Andreas Capellanus, *On Love*, trans. P. G. Walsh (London: Duckworth, 1982), pp. 270-285.

Lyrics: Peire Vidal, *Pus tornatz sui em proensa*; Raimon de Miraval, *Aissi cum es genser pascors*; Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, *Eissamen ai gerreiat ab amor* (*Teaching Medieval Lyric with Modern Technology CD-ROM*)

Perceval: Chrétien de Troyes, *The Story of the Grail*, in *The Complete Romances of Chrétien de Troyes*, trans. David Staines (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 390-391).

Geoffroi de Charny: Richard W. Kaeuper and Elspeth Kennedy, eds., *The Book of Chivalry of Geoffroi de Charny: Text, Context, and Translation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), pp. 166-171.

Bullough: Vern L. Bullough, "Medieval Concepts of Adultery," *Arthuriana* 7.4 (1997): 5-15.

Can Grande: "Epistle to Can Grande,"
<http://www.english.udel.edu/dean/cangrand.html>.

Lancelot: Norris J. Lacy, ed., *The Lancelot-Grail Reader: Selections from the Medieval French Arthurian Cycle* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), pp. 112-119.

Inferno: Dante, *Inferno V*, <http://etcweb.princeton.edu/dante/pdp/>.

Tennyson: Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Sir Galahad,"
<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/galahad.htm>.

Eliot: T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, V. "What the Thunder Said,"
<http://eliotswasteland.tripod.com/>.

Stanzaic: *Stanzaic Morte Arthure*, ll. 835-887,
<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/teams/stanzfrm.htm>.

Morte Roi: *The Death of King Arthur*, trans. James Cable (New York: Penguin, 1972), pp. 82-83.