ENGLISH 208H
ARTHURIAN LEGEND

Winter 1999
Prof. Kathryn McArthur

Office Hours: HH 266 Wed. 12:00-2:30
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TEXTS
Wilhelm & Gross, eds. The Romance of Arthur
Brewer, ed. Malory, Morte D'Arthur
Loomis & Loomis, Medieval Romances
White, T.H. The Sword in the Stone
Zimmer Bradley, M. The Mists of Avalon

Recommended: Aaron and McArthur, The Little Brown Compact Handbook (First Canadian Edition) (Royalties from the purchase of this book go to an English Scholarship Fund)

DATE
READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

January
5 Introduction
7 Pattern of Development
12 Arthur in the Latin Chronicles (Rom)
14 Arthur in the Early Welsh Tradition (Rom)
19 "The Tale of Culhwch and Olwen" (Rom)
21 Arthur in Geoffrey of Monmouth (Rom)
26 The Alliterative Morte Arthure (Rom)-
28 Lancelot, Courtly Love - Chrétien de Troyes, Lancelot (Rom)
"The Saga of the Mantle" (Rom)

Feb.
2-4 Tristan and Iseolde - Gottfried von Strassburg, Tristan and Isolt (Med Rom)
Thomas of Britain, Tristan ("The Death Scene") (Rom)
Marie de France, "The Lay of Chievresfuel" (Rom)
9-11 The Grail- Chrétien de Troyes, Perceval, or the Story of the Grail (Med Rom)
15-19 READING WEEK
23-25 Gawain - Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (Rom and Med Rom)

March
2 Term Test
9-16 Malory, The Book of Balin (Med Rom)
Morte D'Arthur
18-23 White, The Sword in the Stone
25-Apr. 1 Bradley, The Mists of Avalon

April
6 Review and Exam Preparation

ASSIGNMENTS:
Term Test, one hour, March 2, worth 20%.
Final examination, three hours, worth 40%.
Either two shorter essays (approximately 5 pages or 1300 words each), due
February 11 and March 11, and worth 20% each, or one longer essay
(approximately 10 pages or 2500 words), due March 11, worth 40%.
English 208H
Suggested Essay Topics

Winter 1999

Prof. K. McArthur

For: either two shorter essays (approximately 5 pages or 1300 words each), due February 11 and March 11, and worth 20% each, or one longer essay (approximately 10 pages or 2500 words), due March 11, worth 40%.

This list of general topics is intended to be suggestive, not definitive. Your essay should develop your own central idea on the subject with evidence and commentary. You may choose to use secondary material; be sure to acknowledge your sources. You may focus on one Arthurian work or more than one, comparing the topic in several works. The work(s) chosen may be one of those discussed in class or another Arthurian work (with permission).

1. A character or set of characters, analyzing the personality or role: e.g. Arthur, Gwenevere, Merlin, Lancelot, Gawain, Kay, Tristram, Isolt, Mark, Modred, etc.

2. A concept: e.g. chivalry, courtly and/or romantic love, honor and glory, justice, fate and/or fortune, historical and/or political theory, morality.

3. Theme: e.g., what is the central idea of the work and how do we know?

4. Narrative pattern and/or structure: romance, tragedy, comedy, irony.

5. A significant object, scene, or incident: e.g. the grail, the sword in the stone, games, hunts, the green girdle, dreams, magic and the supernatural, recurrent imagery or ideas.

6. Narrative point of view: Who is telling the story and what is his/her attitude toward it?

7. Extraliterary elements, such as myth, legend, history.