ENGLISH 208H  
ARTHURIAN LEGEND  
Winter 2005  
Prof. Kathryn McArthur  
Office Hours: HH 262 T/R 1-2, X3398  
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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*  
Tennyson, A.L. *Idylls of the King*  
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 4 Introduction  
6 Pattern of Development  
11 Arthur in the Latin Chronicles (*Rom*)  
13 Arthur in the Early Welsh Tradition (*Rom*), "The Tale of Culhwch and Olwen" (*Rom*)  
18-20 Arthur in Geoffrey of Monmouth (*Rom*)  
"The Saga of the Mantle" (*Rom*)  
1-3 Tristan and Isolde - Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan and Isolt* (*Med Rom*)  
Thomas of Britain, *Tristan* ("The Death Scene") (*Rom*) Marie de France, "The Lay of Chievrefueil" (*Rom*)  
8 The Grail - Chrétien de Troyes, *Perceval, or the Story of the Grail* (*Med Rom*)  
10 The Alliterative *Morte Arthure* (*Rom*)

Feb 15-17 Gawain - *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (*Rom and Med Rom*)  
24-26 **READING WEEK**

March 1 Gawain cont’d/review  
3 **Term Test**  
8-17 Malory, *The Book of Balin* (*Med Rom*)  
*Morte D'Arthur*  
22 Tennyson, *Idylls of the King*  
24 White, *The Sword in the Stone*  
March/April 29-5 Bradley, *Mists of Avalon*

ASSIGNMENTS: Term Test, 1 hour, March 3, worth 15%; Final Examination, 3 hours, worth 35%. Either two short essays (4 pages or 1,000 words each), due Feb. 10 and March 17, and worth 25% each, or one longer essay (8 pages or 2000 words), due March 17, worth 50%.
COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 208H, Arthurian Legend, is a course in the origin and development of the stories about the legendary King Arthur and his court. The literature is extensive and originally in many ancient languages. Where necessary we will read only excerpts and translations into modern English. These excerpts and translations are contained in three of the required books for the course: The Romance of Arthur, Medieval Romances, and the Morte D'Arthur. Because of time and reading constraints we can cover only a very limited number of post-15th century works: a brief selection from Tennyson’s Idylls of the King and T. H. White’s The Sword in the Stone. Marion Zimmer Bradley’s Mists of Avalon, a revisioning of the entire legend from another perspective, a work interesting in itself which can also serve as a kind of review of the core/central material, is the final book on the course, but is rather lengthy and students should start reading it as soon as possible. We will only have 3 classes on this work. Students may choose to go beyond the reading list on essays and exams with the instructor’s approval.

Formal essays for this course will be marked for the quality of literary interpretation and of writing. The examination will be marked for the knowledge of the texts displayed and the ability to find connections between them.

The Dean of Arts Office requires the inclusion of the following statement on all undergraduate course outlines:

"Note on avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1: 11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean."

Note: Undergraduate Calendar, p. 1: 11 is also available at http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucaL/UW/poUcy_7 I.html
SUGGESTED ESSAY TOPICS

ENGLISH 208H

Winter 2005

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For: **either** two shorter essays (approximately 4 pages or 1000 words each), **due** February 10 and March 17 and **worth** 25% each, or one longer essay (approximately 8 pages or 2000 words), **due** March 17, **worth** 50%

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 those discussed in class or other Arthurian works (with permission). You may also choose to do a creative project, with at least 2 pages of accompanying analysis, also 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.