

Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching

Volume 16, Issue 2

Fall 2009



'It's Only a Model': The Quest for King Arthur in Film and Literature Classes

Josephine A. Koster

There ought to be no simpler subject to teach than King Arthur in a film and literature course. Today's classroom technology makes showing films easier; recent copyright rulings give teachers of media arts more leeway to use films in classrooms; DVDs and video tapes of major Arthurian films are more easily available than ever; and many students are eager and willing to watch, discuss, and write about films. As Bonnie Wheeler says, "Even students who are suspicious and disdainful of 'old stuff' expect to enjoy Arthurian Studies."¹ It's all there, waiting for medievalists and students to come together. However, in my experience, it's not so easy to integrate film into the traditional Arthurian literature class; any number of issues can arise that may interfere with the best-laid pedagogical plans. This essay focuses on some of "the problems inherent in the system," as Dennis the Peasant would label them,² and how they might be overcome. The descriptions of the films that follow offer suggestions, based on my experience, for ways to wrestle with these films in a literature course focusing on Arthurian materials

As all medievalists know, fidelity to the original text is an issue, whether it be in translations of works into modern vernacular languages or into film, and this seems particularly true of Arthurian works. A good case in point is *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, which at first would seem to be an excellent candidate for film adaptation. It has pageantry, adventure, romance, and danger—but no particularly good film versions. The Internet Movie Database cites Stephen Weeks's 1973 version, described by one viewer as "so mediocre, it's depressing" and "not good enough to be even remotely interesting";³ there are also several made-for-television attempts, none distinguished. Weeks tried again with *Sword of the Valiant* (1984), a reshaping of the Pearl-poet's text with a layer of *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell* and a little *Gareth and Lynette* thrown in for kicks. Probably the kindest thing one can say about it is that at least it helped Sean Connery pay his alimony; about Miles O'Keefe's blond bombshell performance as Sir Gawain of the Unmussable Hair, the less said, the

Josephine A. Koster is Professor of English
at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

better. Both films point up a key issue of using film in the Arthurian literature course—are Arthurian films texts in themselves, as Malory and Chrétien’s versions are, or are they something else? Does one use them instead to emphasize themes and ideas from the written texts? To what extent do we hold these films accountable as versions of the legend? To what extent do we tolerate historical anachronism in them? The question of “fidelity to the original” has to be addressed at the outset to use film successfully in the Arthurian literature classroom.

Moreover, twenty-first century students, despite their frequent exposure to video and their assumed sophistication in decoding visual texts, have a tendency toward literalism. If they see it on the screen, they believe they have seen the *real* version of a work, no matter what the print text says. Over the years I have had a number of students assure me that Marion Zimmer Bradley’s *The Mists of Avalon* is “what it was like then,” and they truly believe their words. So when we teach Arthurian film in a literature and film class, we need to be careful to emphasize that it is only an *interpretation* of the legend, not the legend itself. We need to discuss the use of special effects, the acceptability of historical anachronism, and the extent to which artistic license may be in play with our students to help them evaluate cinematic Arthurian materials. In many ways, one of the real challenges of teaching the Arthurian tradition at all is the question of metahistory, which, as Hayden White reminds us, contends that “there are no grounds on which one [historical account] is more ‘realistic.’ This means that one being held as more ‘truthful’ than the others can only be seen as biases of the related establishment or author”⁴ or, in this case, biases of the teacher and students. In my own experience, foregrounding this issue has led to more complex and nuanced discussion of both the films and literary works in our class, since it focuses students’ attention on the construction of each imaginary world; nonetheless, some students resist any attempt to point out the differences between artistic creation and our best understandings of medieval reality.

Thanks to services such as Netflix and Blockbuster Online, most Arthurian films considered for teaching are now available in DVD, even the more obscure gems. This allows the possibility of teaching the Arthurian legend from a perspective that is unfamiliar to students. However, *caveat professor*: the fact that a film is available does not mean that it is necessarily good; check out the 1989 television version of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*, starring the *Cosby*

Show’s Keshia Knight-Pulliam, if you doubt this premise. While there is a certain utility in teaching bad films, for the most part they fail to provide the kinds of stimulating discussion or writing that we hope films will inspire in literature classes. A related issue is copyright; under Section 13301 of the U. S. Copyright Code (also known as the Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization [TEACH] Act of 2002), teachers may show copyrighted films in mediated instruction situations in their classrooms as long as the showing is limited to enrolled students in the course and meets certain other restrictions.⁵ Consequently, the nature and quality of the available materials pose a significant challenge to incorporating film into the Arthurian literature class.

Some of the best Arthurian films for classroom use focus on limited aspects of the story. Eric Rohmer’s *Perceval le Gallois* (1978), Terry Gilliam’s *The Fisher King* (1991), and Frank Corachi’s *The Waterboy* (1998) tackle one of the tangential Arthurian stories—that of the naïf who must meet the tasks set by a rigid mentor and the restrictions imposed by his past to realize his knighthood. Rohmer’s *Perceval* is limited, however, by inept subtitling and poor video quality—the film company apparently used an old print of the movie to make the DVD, and that poor quality shows. Moreover, the film includes a non-canonical but disturbing rape scene that can be very problematic in the classroom, since it occurs at a central point in the plot. However, if students are prepared for the episode beforehand, it can provoke excellent discussion of the relationship between violence and gender in the Arthurian tradition.

The Fisher King, which transports the Grail story to late 1980s Manhattan, implies that belief in the Quest and the Grail is the province of madmen. While there is an Arthurian flavoring to Parry’s bizarre knight-errantry, the heart of the film seems to be more about freeing one’s inner masculinity (largely by lying naked at night in the Sheep Meadow) than about the transference of Arthurian values to the modern world. *The Waterboy* also associates the naïf’s quest with mentally challenged status (and requires one to tolerate two hours of Adam Sandler humor, to boot). While all three of these films can be used to discuss elements of the Arthurian story—particularly mythology and symbolism—it would be hard to characterize any of them as a satisfactory equivalent to Malory, Chrétien, or another complete Arthurian work. Interestingly enough, students find it easier to accept

the variations on the Arthurian story in *The Fisher King* and *The Waterboy* than they do the intrusion of rape into the “medieval” world of *Perceval*. Perhaps this is because their sense of “perceptual complexity”—William F. Woods’s term for the audience’s concept of what is appropriate or decorous in a particular imaginary world—finds nudity in the Sheep Meadow and scatological humor more acceptable in a “modern” film environment than they do sexual violence in their imagined medieval world.⁶

A film that might also be used in this way is Robert Bresson’s *Lancelot du Lac* (1974), an extremely stylized fable so quirky that its cinematic technique often inhibits discussion rather than enables it. (For starters, Bresson frequently frames the actors and horses from the waist down; at times the actors narrate their own actions, etc.) The movie has been connected to the end of the Vietnam War by some critics, and it is a very different, bleak take on the story—or as one of my students said, “I’m a postmodernist but this makes *me* depressed!” Likewise with George Romero’s eclectic *Knightriders* (1981), which modernizes the fall of Camelot by making the Round Table knights a blend of Hell’s Angels and Renaissance Faire actors, slowly coming apart because of intergroup rivalries. Ed Harris gives an excellent performance as Billy the King, and a hoagie-munching Stephen King makes an uncredited cameo appearance decrying “all this bunk.” Caribbean storyteller Brother Blue plays Merlin as a rasta shaman, and it just gets weirder from there. Still, both films pair fairly well with the *Alliterative Morte Arthure* or the end of Malory, and as long as students do not take them too seriously or try to view either film in one sitting, both films can provide a useful vehicle for discussing the extent to which an interpretation can stretch its connection to the original work without severing it altogether.

Special attention for those who teach middle and high school literature should be given to Peter Werner’s *The Four Diamonds* (1995), the autobiographical story of Chris Millard, a teenaged boy who wrote an Arthurian short story while he was dying of cancer. The protagonist fantasizes about being a squire of the Round Table as he battles with doctor, treatments, and the illness. As his fantasy Squire Millard goes on a quest against an evil sorceress to gain the four diamonds of Courage, Wisdom, Honesty, and Strength, Chris himself attains those qualities as his health fails (Four Diamonds Fund). Finding copies to show in class can be very difficult, since Disney

never released it commercially on either VHS or DVD (used copies of the VHS version occasionally show up on IMDB, E-Bay, or Amazon.com). While in many ways the truest movie to Arthurian themes, student discussions often center on its pathos and emotional qualities—they are cathartic discussions but not always literary or cinematic ones. It is definitely a young adult film and work in terms of its depth, and advanced-level college students are inclined to find it somewhat simplistic.

Movies that claim to be “versions of the real Arthurian story” can be even more problematic in the classroom, since many of them evince a perceived need on the filmmaker’s (or studio’s) part to ‘correct’ flaws in the literary tales they interpret. For instance, T. H. White’s *The Once and Future King* connects Malory’s reflections about the Wars of the Roses to the pre-World War II political tensions of Europe, with his first book, *The Sword in the Stone*, serving as a handbook for the education of an anti-war ruler. Such a pacifist message was intolerable to Disney when the studio came to animate White’s book during the Cold War; thus, director Wolfgang Reitherman’s *Sword in the Stone* (1963) is far less politically aware than its progenitor, Friz Freleng’s *Knighly Knight, Bugs*. Freleng’s brief, Oscar®-winning cartoon (1958) (currently available on YouTube) swats at Eisenhower politics, Communism, and the space race, ending with the Tasmanian Devil/Black Knight being propelled into space along with his sneezing dragon. Reitherman’s version, however, strips away all of the political allusions in White, replacing them instead with a series of child-friendly adventures and Merlin’s rivalry with the anti-feminist stereotype Madam Mim, making it far less controversial (or significant). While some plot elements of White and Malory are retained in the Disney animated feature, the film itself shies away from the major themes of Arthurian literature. It may be useful in a classroom setting more to point out what is missing than what is there. Likewise with Josh Logan’s *Camelot* (1967), which ends before the battle of Camlann, attempting to rescue a happy ending from an essentially tragic literary story. In classroom terms, this film demonstrates chiefly that some actors should *not* try to sing on camera—even though Richard Harris did receive a Golden Globe® Award for his portrayal of Arthur. Lerner reduces the complexities of Malory’s tale and White’s novel to romantic melodrama. *Camelot* also shows that it’s probably best not to cast a Lancelot who speaks no

English and has to deliver his lines phonetically—though that does make for some inadvertently funny love scenes and resulting classroom hilarity.

John Boorman's *Excalibur* (1981) attempts to capture the whole story of Arthur from conception until death, again with some uneven results. While remaining true to the larger arc of the Arthurian legend, Boorman invents a relationship between Merlin and Arthur's sister Morgana, made more interesting by the fact that Nicol Williamson and Helen Mirren had ended their own affair acrimoniously just before filming began. Boorman collapses and condenses some parts of the story and overlays German mythology on top of it, using musical excerpts from Wagner's *Siegfried*, *Gotterdammerung*, and *Tristan and Isolde* to score the action; the patterns of repetition and symbolism that he emphasizes make the movie particularly effective in a literature and film course. The acting is uneven at best, and all of Arthur's lines have been dubbed in by a voice actor, the Irish accent of Nigel Terry having tested poorly in trial screenings. Some of the cinematography is quite stunning—the rising shot at Badon Hill, Childe Mordred in his creepy golden armor, the rebirth of the Waste Land as a revitalized Arthur and knights ride through, and the final scene of Perceval and the dragon boat—but the Peckinpah-ish violence, the fairly crude directorial technique, and the eccentricity of some of the performances—especially Williamson's and Mirren's—can make it difficult to get past these failings to the Arthurian themes themselves in classroom discussion. (Not even *That 70s Show*, apparently, is enough to prepare modern students for the eccentricities of 1980s “art” films.) Nonetheless, if teachers want a film that contrasts particularly well with literary versions of the Arthurian story, Boorman's *Excalibur* provides a wealth of teaching opportunities.

Several popular versions of the Arthurian story try to tell it from other points of view. Uli Edel's ponderous made-for-TV version of Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon* (2001), for instance, is political in ways that Malory and earlier Arthurian writers never envisioned. Edel focuses more on New Age religion and prurient sexuality than on traditional Arthurian themes (and showing the three-way sexual encounter among Arthur, Lancelot, and Guinevere in class will elicit some *serious* reactions). The script, direction, and acting of the four romantic leads leave a great deal to be desired, and the final message is not Arthurian but theological: “all religions are one.” Thus, while

Mists's feminist viewpoint attracts many students, the film uses Arthurian characters and settings, and Edel elicits strong performances from Angelica Huston and Joan Allen, the opportunity to make *Mists* into a strong reflection on the Arthurian legend is missed entirely, making it less appropriate for classroom use.

And then there's Terry Jones and Terry Gilliam's *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), now more than 30 years old and in some ways showing its age. Twenty-first century students fall into two camps: those who have never seen it and those who can recite the script by heart. Because its take on the Arthurian legend is satiric and its targets so scattered, *Holy Grail* is a movie that is fun to show and discuss; Bonnie Wheeler's students “bring their own coconut steeds.”⁷ But the light it throws on the Arthurian legend is often an indirect one, and teachers must spend considerable time explaining Thatcherism and who the “eminent historian” was to make parts of it understandable today. It would be difficult to leave *Holy Grail* out of an Arthurian literature and film course, but at the same time, it is hard to find works of literature to pair it with successfully (the tone making it a poor fit for pairing with *Connecticut Yankee*, while Thomas Berger's *Arthur Rex* sadly remains out of print). In many ways, it works best in critiquing the critics, which is why it may be most useful at the end of term, when students are more familiar with the codes, conventions, and elements that the Pythons deconstruct.

Two recent films with which students are familiar show in many ways both the advantages and disadvantages of teaching film in the Arthurian literature course: *First Knight* and *King Arthur*. In a Web essay entitled “Knowing Your Limits: Why Good Sci-Fi/Fantasy Avoids Stinking,” Julia Houston offers this advice to modern writers who rework an older legend: “Establish the limits of your fantasy world, then respect them.”⁸ Good advice, but as she notes in another essay:

The audience gets to know that fictional world and then relies on their familiarity to know what can and can't happen during the story. When the previously impossible just magically and without explanation becomes possible, the audience is betrayed, confused, and ultimately turned off.⁹

So in *First Knight* (1995), when Jerry Zucker creates an Arthurian world in which Sean Connery is a tubby Arthur, Richard Gere's Lancelot a brooding, hair-tossing slacker, Guinevere a political pragmatist, and Camelot a court where everything, even the clothes the peasants wear, is color coordinated and apparently designed by Todd Oldham, students familiar with the literary version are likely to be confused or possibly amused. Zucker's Arthurian love triangle removes all vestiges of guilt from Lancelot and Guinevere's liaison, since they barely get to second base; thus, when the battle with Ben Cross's Prince Malagant leaves Arthur dead and a rededicated Gere and Julia Ormond in charge of an upbeat Camelot, students are likely to feel betrayed, indeed. (I'll admit that one of the stated goals of my Arthurian literature and film class is "Students will be able to articulate why *First Knight* is one of the worst Arthurian movies ever made.")

Some critics have found political merit in Zucker's take on the legend; Caroline Jewers points to the continuation of Camelot as "the form of a democratic principle, a wish-fulfillment ideology, expressed via a simple vehicle that pares down the psychological complexity of the Arthurian model to a minimum,"¹⁰ and Jacqueline Jenkins reads the film as an extension of *The Fisher King*'s investigations of the men's movement and "the new order of freedom" that the Round Table represents.¹¹ My own classroom experience has been less positive; while the complete film, or bits of it, can be shown in class, it most often leads to negative discussion: Why do filmmakers find the original Arthurian story so unsatisfying? Why do they feel compelled to "fix" the perceived defects in the literary tradition? Is it because, as Charles McGrath argues (*New York Times*, July 4, 2004), "the more the movies have pursued the mythic aspect of the story, the more they seem to stumble"?

But hope springs eternal, and the announcement several years ago of Antoine Fuqua's *King Arthur* (2004) raised expectations that this would finally be a movie that focused on the historicity of Arthur. There were good technical advisors, the plot was based on the Sarmatian hypothesis of Arthur's origin, and a lot of money was spent to rebuild parts of Hadrian's Wall and a late Roman villa in the fields of Ireland. Unfortunately, the result was only a Jerry Bruckheimer movie, further diluted by studio influence. Fuqua's director's cut is better (and about 18 minutes longer) than the original Disney theatrical release, but we still have an Arthur who was a child when the teenaged

Sarmatian knights are indentured to serve—yet somehow, just 13 years later, he seems older than his knights. Guinevere is Merlin's daughter or ally, a guerilla warrior in a leather cat suit who represents a tribe of native Britons named after a kind of blue dye. Keira Knightley portrays Guinevere as an independent woman who is willing to seduce Arthur to gain his military protection for the Woods, a characterization that is particularly appealing to female students even though it is based on little historical or literary evidence

Fourth-century Arthur's loyal lieutenant is the twelfth-century French knight Lancelot, played with a strong Welsh accent by a brooding Ioan Gryffudd. Especially in the director's cut, Lancelot has the best of writer David Franzoni's rather ineffective speeches, but even these are not truly memorable. All the knights wear leather armor studded with fifteenth-century plate and use saddles with stirrups, crossbows, trebuchets, and English yew long bows, as well as kill adversaries without any visible blood, leaving open the question of historical anachronism and how "authentic" Fuqua's version really is. William F. Woods argues that such historical and character inaccuracies do not violate the audience's "register of descriptive features" acceptable for such a film, and so the audience tolerates them where they do not accept the compromises of "perceptual complexity" in movies like *First Knight*.¹² The film resonates with students' sense of what the early Middle Ages *should* have been like and so appeals greatly to them.

The plot—that the knights' indentured service to Rome is about to expire when they are ordered to undertake a suicide mission, rescue a valued youth, and endure the bloody consequences—is cribbed straight from *Saving Private Ryan*, and in best *Star Trek: The Wrath of Khan* fashion, Lancelot eventually sacrifices himself so that Guinevere can marry Arthur at Stonehenge-by-the-Sea, where the British traitor who has betrayed Arthur earlier ends up as one of the happy wedding guests. Disney reportedly imposed this ending on Fuqua about two weeks before the film's release date;¹³ the director's intended ending was an extended scene at the graveyard, where the orphan Lucan attempts to pull Dagonet's sword out of his grave to avenge Lancelot, and Arthur tells him that his time will come. The film was to end with the special effects shot of the smoke from Lancelot's pyre rising up into the clouds and blending into the final scene of the running horses.¹⁴ Treating *King Arthur* as a literary work in the classroom

requires consideration of how its artistic integrity may have been compromised by commercial pressures, just as White faced when forced to cut “The Book of Merlyn” from the end of *The Once and Future King*; this can be a most stimulating discussion for students.

This is not to say that *King Arthur* does not have its merits. While Disney apparently sanitized many of the battle scenes to preserve the film’s rating (Jensen), it still meets many of Joe-Bob Briggs’s requirements for an excellent drive-in movie, including bimbo fu, frozen lake fu, arrow fu, twirling swords fu, and a moderate breast count.¹⁵ But the producers’ tagline that this is “The Untold True Story That Inspired the Legend” (*King Arthur*) does not hold up. And so, once again, using this film usually revolves around what it does not show or show accurately rather than its truth as a version of the Arthurian legend. As Charles McGrath concludes, Fuqua’s meta-historical version is “a painless, very watchable illusion of history without all the bother of the real thing” (*New York Times*, July 4, 2004).

If one chooses carefully, however, there is plenty of Arthurian cinematic material to use in a course in Arthurian literature and film. That is not entirely the case with good cinematic and literary criticism of Arthurian film; if one of your goals in your Arthurian literature and film course is to teach students to work with peer-reviewed academic sources, you may find the going quite thin. There are not many articles on these films, and those in peer-reviewed journals are mostly published in small-circulation publications, so be prepared to make frequent interlibrary loan requests for journals such as *Florilegium* or the now-defunct *Quondam et Futurus* and even more obscure titles. The Camelot Project’s bibliography and filmography at the University of Rochester is almost a decade out of date, although Michael Torregrossa’s “King Arthur Forever” website is current through early 2004 (see note 18 for references). Kevin Harty, Raymond Thompson, Barbara and Alan Lupack, and a few others are the most active writers in the field known as Cinema Arthuriana; Harty, who coined the term, has published a book called by the same name, now in its second, slightly revised edition; he is also the editor of a second collection of major essays, *King Arthur on Film* (1999), and a more general collection of essays on films with medieval subjects, *The Reel Middle Ages* (also 1999). Many of these essays are quite redundant, so finding new insights in print may cause difficulty for students. A few general

survey Arthurian collections have one or two essays on Arthurian film: Edward D. Kennedy’s collection *King Arthur: A Casebook* (1996) and Alan Lupack’s *New Directions in Arthurian Studies* (2002) each have one, among the slim pickings. Considerable material on the pop-culture versions of the legend, such as *Mists of Avalon* and Steve Barron’s *Merlin* mini-series, mostly appears on fan websites. While some of this material is quite good, the overall quality is fairly uneven, and students must be warned to use it with caution in their own scholarly arguments.

The advantage of teaching Arthurian literature using these films is that they allow students to connect Arthurian and modern culture in some way and to contrast the ways in which they make meaning differently from film and text versions of the same stories, but they do not encourage them to directly reflect on the Arthurian story itself. However, when excerpts from them are shown in conjunction with their literary progenitors, they can provide students with the opportunity to make discoveries about plot, setting, characterization, and even thematic elements. And such conjunctions can, in fact, lead to the most potentially satisfying video versions of Arthurian film of all, video “mash-ups.”

In this age of viral video and user-friendly editing software, perhaps the real solution to the lack of a good Arthurian film is to make one of your own, or to challenge students to do so. Most computer software suites now come with programs that allow users to manipulate video clips, and in the YouTube generation, students are often quite facile in using these programs. Such video mash-ups can allow the highlighting of themes, characters, and issues in ways that will spark productive discussion and writing assignments. As an example that shows the possibilities inherent in non-traditional Arthurian film, consider T. Jonesy and Killa’s classic mash-up *Knights of the Round Table*.¹⁶ It combines the Monty Python song “Knights of the Round Table” with scenes from the original Star Trek series in a brief, humorous juxtaposition that shows how many of the formulaic conventions of medieval romance can be found in Gene Roddenberry’s space opera. In challenging students to compose (or at least storyboard) a similar mash-up between music, film, and literature, perhaps we can finally achieve that Holy Grail of Arthurian film and literature—the “very contemporary resonance” that, in John Aberth’s words, allow us to “revel . . . in the differences between those times

and our own and . . . [draw] us into another world in order to better understand and appreciate those differences.”¹⁷ In a course focusing on Arthurian literature and film, no more appropriate outcome could be achieved.¹⁸

Notes

¹Bonnie Wheeler, “King Arthur and the Seductions of Chivalry,” *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching* 12, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 7.

²Terry Jones, “Constitutional Peasants,” Disc 1, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, special ed. DVD, directed by Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones (Culver City, CA: Columbia Tristar Home Entertainment, 2001).

³*Internet Movie Database*, s.v. “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: User Comments,” <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0070093/usercomments> (accessed June 13, 2008).

⁴Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), ix.

⁵Peggy E. Hoon, “What Does the TEACH Act Say?” in *The TEACH Act Toolkit*, Scholarly Communication Center, North Carolina State University Library, <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/scc/legislative/teachkit/overview.html> (accessed February 28, 2007).

⁶William F. Woods, “Authenticating Realism in Medieval Film,” in *The Medieval Hero on Screen*, ed. Martha W. Driver and Sid Ray (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 2004), 47.

⁷Wheeler, 19.

⁸Julia L. Houston, “Knowing Your Limits (2): Why Good Sci-Fi/Fantasy Avoids Stinking,” About.Com Science Fiction, <http://scifi.about.com/library/weekly/aa041902.htm> (accessed February 28, 2007).

⁹Julia L. Houston, “Knowing Your Limits (1): Why Good Sci-Fi/Fantasy Can Start to Stink,” About.Com Science Fiction, <http://scifi.about.com/library/weekly/aa041102.htm> (accessed February 28, 2007).

¹⁰Caroline Jewers, “Hard Day’s Knights: *First Knight*, *A Knight’s Tale*, and *Black Knight*,” in *The Medieval Hero on Screen*, ed. Martha W. Driver and Sid Ray (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 2004), 197.

¹¹Jacqueline Jenkins, “First Knights and Common Men: Masculinity in Modern American Arthurian Film,” in *King Arthur on Film: New Essays on Arthurian Cinema*, ed. Kevin J. Harty (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 1999), 84–85.

¹²Woods, 47.

¹³Jeff Jensen, “Return of the King: Jerry Bruckheimer’s Quest to Capture the Real Story Behind the Legend of King Arthur Proves That in the Pursuit of a Summer Hit, There Is No Holy Grail,” *Entertainment Weekly* (July 16, 2004), 38.

¹⁴Anton Fuqua, “Alternate Ending with Director’s Commentary,” *King Arthur: The Director’s Cut*, DVD (Burbank, CA: Touchstone/Buena Vista, 2004).

¹⁵*Wikipedia*, s.v. “Monstervision” (accessed February 27, 2007).

¹⁶T. Jonesy and Killa, “Knights of the Round Table,” 1 min., 39 sec., <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YkTOa-ZkrQ> (accessed February 28, 2007).

¹⁷John Aberth, *A Knight at the Movies: Medieval History on Film* (New York: Routledge Press, 2003), viii.

¹⁸Weblinks for this article are available at <http://faculty.winthrop.edu/kosterj/scholarly/onlyamodel.htm>.