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**St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo**  
**Department of History**  
**HIST 291-002**  
**Game of Thrones**  
**Winter 2019**  
**M 10:30-12:20; W 11:30-12:20**  
**SJ2 2003**

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Jolanta N. Komornicka  
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I am available outside of office hours by appointment

**Course Description**

"Just because you put in dragons doesn't mean you can put in anything you want. I wanted my books to be strongly grounded in history and to show what medieval society was like...Most stories depict what I call the 'Disneyland Middle Ages' - there are princes and princesses and knights in shining armor but they didn't want to show what these societies meant and how they functioned." – George R. R. Martin

So is Martin more medieval than other fantasy renditions of the Middle Ages? What makes one form of the Middle Ages more authentic or genuine than another? Fantasy novels aren't the only places we can see our modern world's love and reinterpretation of the medieval. It's there in the medieval face-palm meme, in role-playing and video games, politics and newspaper headlines, white supremacist rallies, and children's toys. In this course, we'll look at how our modern world uses the medieval—and what relationship that use has to what the Middle Ages actually looked like—through a series of four case studies: *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Game of Thrones* by George R. R. Martin, the political use of the Crusades, and *Guards! Guards!* by Terry Pratchett.

This is not a traditional history class. It is in many ways a current events/modern culture and society course approached through the lens of medievalism. Therefore, you are not expected to have any knowledge of the historical Middle Ages coming in, but I do anticipate that you'll know more about modern medieval memes than I do (so please share!). At the end of the course, you'll have gained an understanding of how history is a force within modern society and how to critically analyze modern uses and appropriations of history (whether medieval or otherwise).

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Think critically and analytically in their writing
- B. Analyze primary documents, answering who, what, why, and for whom
- C. Reference readings and previous conversations in both their written and oral communications
- D. Identify what work the idea of the medieval is doing in a given example
- E. *Write your own course-related goal in the space below, including how you intend to monitor your progress toward the achievement of that goal:*

## Expectations

The basic requirement for participation is attendance and, in HIST 291-002, attendance is mandatory. Students who do not attend 80% of the classes have not adequately participated in the course and may, consequently, be denied the credit.

Students, moreover, must fulfill all the course requirements in order to receive credit. This not only includes attendance at lectures and tutorials but also all written assignments and examinations.

There are several tools available to help students familiarize themselves with the Middle Ages. The best reference source for quick facts about medieval topics is the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, which is available in the reference department at both the St. Jerome and Dana Porter Libraries. The standard textbook used in survey courses on the Middle Ages is Edward Peters' *Europe and the Middle Ages*.

Each week's classes focus on a given theme or topic. The weekly two-hour lecture is supported by a discussion period with required exercises.

## Texts

George R. R. Martin, *A Game of Thrones: The Graphic Novel*, volume 1

George R. R. Martin, *The Hedge Knight*

Elizabeth Emery and Richard Utz, *Medievalism: Key Critical Terms*

Tison Pugh and Angela Jane Weisl, *Medievalisms: Making the Past in the Present*

Andrew B. R. Elliott, *Medievalism, Politics and Mass Media: Appropriating the Middle Ages in the Twenty-First Century*

Terry Pratchett, *Guards! Guards!*

George R. R. Martin, *A Game of Thrones* (**optional**)

Additional readings are available via Learn and Electronic Course Reserve (accessed via the course page on Learn).

## Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting*
Participation	Weekly	15%
Reflection Paper	Jan. 16	10%
Create-Your-Own Medievalism	March 11	15%
Paper 1	Feb. 11	25%
Paper 2	April 15	35%
Total		100%

## Participation

The basic requirement for participation is attendance and attendance is mandatory.

Students who do not participate in weekly lectures and discussions, or who fall behind on weekly readings and group work, will find it challenging to catch up. The best way to avoid this difficulty is to

keep up to date with the workload. This means, each week, reading carefully and taking meticulous notes. Students should come to class armed with questions or opinions and be prepared to voice them.

Some students find it helpful to read more extensively on the material covered in the course. The best reference source for quick facts about medieval topics is the Dictionary of the Middle Ages, available in Dana Porter Library's reference department at D114.D5 1982.

### **Reflection Paper**

By the second week of class, you will complete a 2-page reflection paper. Guidelines are on Learn.

#### **Paper 1**

For this paper, you will select either a passage from the Dungeons and Dragons guide provided to you or a scene from either of the two graphic novels by George R. R. Martin. In a 1500 word essay, you will identify and analyze a medieval theme. Further guidelines are on Learn.

#### **Paper 2**

Select two of the chapters from Medievalism: Key Critical Terms that we haven't read. Read those chapters and think about the concepts presented. Then find an example of a modern medievalism and use the concepts and analyze the medievalism in conjunction with them. See the guidelines on Learn.

### **Create Your Own Medievalism**

For this assignment, you will reimagine either your day or a section of the city you know well as existing in a medieval world. See guidelines on Learn.

**\* Please look at the assessment weighting provided above once again.** You have the opportunity to change how you want your grade weighted. You have 15% that you can redistribute as you will (subtracting from one area, adding to another, but such that the total remains 100%). There are a few hard rules.

#1. No assessment can be worth less than 3%.

#2. Participation cannot be more than 20%.

#3. No single assignment can be worth more than 35%.

Submit your weighting adjustment and your self-created course goal to the instructor via the quiz on Learn. You must determine your weightings and course goal by January 21st. At this point all weightings will be locked in for the term. You will not receive your marks on the Reflection Paper until you've submitted your weighting decision.

### **Course Outline / Class Schedule**

Assigned readings are to be completed for our first class meeting of the week, with the exception of Week 1, when they're due for Wednesday.

The week tags on electronic course reserves are wrong. I am working on getting them fixed. Go by what's in the syllabus, not the tags.

Please Note: "Secondary Reading" does not mean it is less important than "Primary Reading." These terms are part of History jargon that you are expected to know (I'm sure you all know this by now, but every term someone surprises me).

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>January 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup></b> <b><u>DUNGEONS &amp; DRAGONS</u></b>
Topic	Introduction to the Course and Playing D&D
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapters 24 and 27</li> <li>2. Pugh and Weisl, chapter 1</li> </ol>
Primary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. D&amp;D packet (Learn)</li> </ol>
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>January 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup></b>
Topic	Dungeons & Dragons
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lampert, "Race, Periodicity, and the (Neo-) Middle Ages" (Course Reserves)</li> <li>2. Pugh and Weisl, chapter 8</li> <li>3. Young, "Place and Time: Medievalism and Making Race" (Course Reserves)</li> </ol>
Primary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. D&amp;D packet (handout)</li> </ol>
	<b>*** Reflection paper due in class Wednesday ***</b>
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>January 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup></b>
Topic	Race, Class, and Authenticity
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapter 23</li> <li>2. Marshall, "A World unto Itself: Autopoietic Systems and Secondary Worlds in <i>Dungeons &amp; Dragons</i>" (Learn)</li> </ol>
<b><u>GAME OF THRONES</u></b>	
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>January 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup></b>
Topic	<i>Game of Thrones</i> free-for-all
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapter 3</li> </ol>
Primary Readings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Martin, <i>The Hedge Knight</i></li> <li>2. Martin, <i>Game of Thrones: Graphic Novel</i>, volume 1</li> </ol>
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>February 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup></b>
Topic	Violence in <i>Game of Thrones</i>
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapters 2 and 20</li> <li>2. Guthrie, "Time Travel, Pulp Fictions, and Changing Attitudes toward the Middle Ages" (Course Reserves)</li> </ol>
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>February 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup></b>

Topic	Gender in <i>Game of Thrones</i>
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pugh and Weisl, chapter 5</li> <li>2. Tolmie, "Medievalism and the Fantasy Heroine" (Course Reserves)</li> </ol>
Primary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Howse, "8 Lessons in Manhood from the Vikings" (Learn)</li> </ol>

**\*\*\* Paper 1 due in class Monday \*\*\***

**Week 7** **NO CLASS THIS WEEK, FEBRUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>-22<sup>ND</sup>**

**POLITICAL MEDIEVALISMS**

<b>Week 8</b>	<b>February 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup></b>
Topic	Modern uses of history
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapters 15, 29, 30</li> <li>2. Elliott, chapter 3</li> </ol>
Primary Reading	See Learn

<b>Week 9</b>	<b>March 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup></b>
Topic	Propaganda
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapters 4 and 22</li> <li>2. Elliott, chapters 4 and 6</li> <li>3. Pugh and Weisl, chapter 9</li> </ol>

<b>Week 10</b>	<b>March 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup></b>
Topic	Fighting Dirty – Getting Medieval
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapters 18 and 28</li> <li>2. Elliott, chapters 5 and 8</li> </ol>

**\*\*\* Create Your Own Medievalism due in class Monday \*\*\***

**GUARDS! GUARDS!**

<b>Week 11</b>	<b>March 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup></b>
Topic	History as Satire
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapters 17 and 21</li> </ol>
Primary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pratchett, <i>Guards! Guards!</i></li> </ol>

<b>Week 12</b>	<b>March 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup></b>
Topic	Anachronism
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapter 12</li> <li>2. Pugh and Weisl, chapter 6</li> </ol>

**Week 13** **April 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Topic	Playing Knights and Princesses
Secondary Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emery and Utz, chapter 26</li> <li>2. Pugh and Weisl, chapter 4</li> <li>3. <i>Cinderella Ate My Daughter</i> (Course Reserve)</li> </ol>

**\*\*\* Paper 2 due by 4pm on April 15th\*\*\***

### **Late Work**

Late work will be accepted, but subject to a 5% penalty for every 24-hour period the assignment is late. Please do not ask for an extension on the basis of having other courses/exams. This is true for everyone and is not sufficient reason for not completing the assigned work by the due date. Plan your time accordingly.

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance is mandatory, both for discussion and lecture. See above. However, life happens. Every student gets 2 absences at no penalty to their participation marks. No advance notice, excuses, notes, etc. required. Use them wisely. Any absences after the first two will count against your participation marks.

### **Important Information**

**Academic Integrity:** To maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage for more information](#).

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the [St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals](#).

**Note for Students with Disabilities:** The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate

accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

### **Mental Health Services:**

#### **On Campus**

- Counselling Services: [counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca) / 519-888-4567 x32655
- [MATES](#): one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from the Student Life Centre

#### **Off campus, 24/7**

- [Good2Talk](#): Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Extended Assessment Unit Phone: 519-749-4300 x6880
- [Here 24/7](#): Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- [OK2BME](#): Support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 x222

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

### **Writing and Communication Centre**

The Writing and Communication Centre (WCC) works with students as they develop their ideas, draft, and revise. Writing and communication specialists offer one-on-one support in planning assignments, synthesizing and citing research, organizing papers and reports, designing presentations and e-portfolios, and revising for clarity and coherence.

You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or you can drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 25- or 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [uwaterloo.ca/wcc](http://uwaterloo.ca/wcc). Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available.

**Please note** that communication specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not change or correct your work for you.

## What to Expect of Me

### In Class

You can expect me to be prepared and on-time for class each week. Should something arise that requires a change in the reading schedule, what we'll be doing for a particular day, or if class needs to be cancelled, I will inform you via email as soon as possible and will post a note on LEARN.

You can expect me to be respectful of everyone's class contributions during discussion, even when I politely disagree with an interpretation.

You can expect me to manage the class by balancing lecture, explanations, and discussion in a way that results in the least number of glazed eyes and the most participation.

### In the Office

You can expect me to be in my office during my posted office hours. Should a conflict arise, you will be notified via a note on LEARN as soon as possible.

Even if my door is closed, knock. If I am there and not busy with another student, I will open it to you. I prefer quiet to work, so often close my door – it is not a sign that I do not want visitors!

You can expect me to help you with whatever difficulties you're having in class, as well as shoot the breeze and talk about university life.

### Communication

You can expect that the best means of reaching me outside of in-person contact is via email. I answer my emails within 24 hours during the week and within 36 hours on weekends.

You can expect my emails to be polite and to the point, using correct salutation and valediction, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. You can also expect a nudge from me to do the same if your emails do not adhere to standard email etiquette.

You can expect assignments to be marked and returned within two weeks.

*Plundering history to deliver modern indictments serves no rational or benign purpose. To observe the past through the lens of the present invites delusion; so too does ignoring the existence of that lens. However, the burden of understanding lies on us to appreciate the world of the past, not on the past to provide ours with facile precedents or good stories...*  
Tyerman, *The Crusades*, 10.



<b>How to take this course</b>	<b>Star-Gazer</b>	<b>Astronomer</b>	<b>Astronaut</b>
<p>Like all history courses, it's about how deep you go. Students take history for lots of reasons, sometimes because the topic appeals, sometimes because they need to fulfill a requirement.</p>	<p>You need to fulfill a requirement. You want the basic info, main ideas, surface-level knowledge.</p>	<p>You know the basic outlines of medieval, early modern, and/or modern social history and are ready to see the pockmarks on the moon.</p>	<p>You want to actually walk on the moon, go deeper into the past, using the tools of history to think critically and analytically.</p>
<p>You can do well in this course without either liking history or coming away transformed in your understanding of past societies. However, it would be unfortunate if that were the case.</p>	<p>There's nothing wrong with this. This approach will work for you if you're unlikely to take another history course and have little interest in the periods studied.</p>	<p>Maybe you've studied some of this history before, or you're thinking of being a history major. You already know that history is a conversation, and sometimes an argument.</p>	<p>You don't need to be told that history is full of controversy and that historical knowledge is constructed and remade every generation, or that current events can color the past. You actively seek alternate sources, voices, and interpretations.</p>
<p>You can picture this course as having three levels.* Imagine standing on a hilltop in the middle of the night; this course is the universe. Come with me and go as deep as you dare....</p>	<p>Star-Gazers tend to assume that what the professor says in class and what's in the readings are without contradiction or difference in interpretation. Star-Gazers are mainly concerned with WHAT happened in the past.</p>	<p>Astronomers catch when authors disagree with each other; they respectfully challenge assumptions and arguments through lively debate. Astronomers are interested in HOW and WHY things in the past occurred the way they did.</p>	<p>Astronauts don't assume that the structure or content of the course is inevitable or obvious. They seek out and fill in the gaps in the course content. They are curious, passionate, adventurous, and ask WHY HISTORY MATTERS.</p>

\*There is a fourth level, and that is the Astrologer. Astrologers think they are engaging with the history, but they are really seeking to reaffirm preconceived ideas. They insist that Pluto is really a planet, because it's comfortable and familiar and they prefer a solar system with nine planets (or, they insist that everyone in the Middle Ages believed the earth was flat, because that's what their social studies teacher taught them in elementary school). They are not interested in the past, but in a historical fiction that often forgets it's fiction and frequently ignores history.

**Student-to-Student**

Introduce yourself to the two people beside you. Exchange information. If you have to miss class, you now have a ready resource for getting notes.

Student 1: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Student 2: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

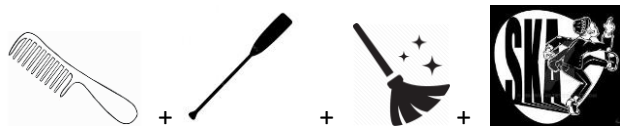
### How do I pronounce your name?

As someone with a foreign name, I am sensitive to how frustrating it can be when someone gets your name wrong. Please don't hesitate to correct me until I get it right.

For my first name: In Polish, Js are pronounced as Ys. Hence Jola is pronounced like Yola.

As for my last name, which is a little trickier, here's a handy Rebus puzzle to help you out:

Komornicka =



(comb) + (oar) + (neat) + (ska)