



## The Horsemen of the Apocalypse Can't Ride Unicorns: Adventures in Medieval Drama

Linda Marie Zaerr, Boise State University

Returning to my office to pick up my *vielle*, I passed two of my students engaged in earnest conversation, too busy to notice me. One carried an assortment of hobby horses, while the other expostulated, “The horsemen of the apocalypse can’t ride unicorns!” As part of my Medieval Drama course, they were preparing a production of the Wakefield *Last Judgment*. Like their medieval antecedents, they were grappling creatively with the gap between their resources and the content of their play. They cared about how the fifteenth-century text could be effectively embodied, and they were not looking to me for answers.

Including a performance component in a course on Medieval Drama facilitates personal investment in the material. Students make ready connections between their own production and other dimensions of the medieval performance tradition. As in the Middle Ages, performances can draw creatively on available resources both in the university and in the community, no matter how limited those resources may seem at first. Students are able to explore texts in greater depth and complexity when the end result of their work is practical and public. Drawing on ten Medieval Drama productions, this article will offer suggestions for teaching a performance-based course and offer suggestions for recognizing unique resources. It will also include a flexible sample script with a dramatic song an inexperienced cast can easily sing.

### **Pedagogy**

I teach Medieval Drama in a three-hour block once a week. For the first two thirds of the semester, the first part of each session is strictly academic, and the final hour and a half (when students are mentally satiated) is devoted to preparing a public production which also involves community members. The last third of the semester is devoted entirely to that production, though students still turn in journal entries linking their production work to what they have learned in the academic portion. After the performances, the students turn in reflection papers connecting their individual involvement in the production with what they have learned in the class. Before the semester begins, I create a schedule of rehearsals and performances so that community participants know exactly when and where the events will take place.

The academic portion of the course draws heavily on the resources discussed in the excellent review essay on Medieval Drama published in the last volume of *The Once and Future Classroom*.<sup>1</sup> I will not repeat that material here, but I would like to suggest that a broader range of materials is available as well. During the past twenty years, it has become increasingly apparent that medieval people did not distinguish between drama and narrative the way we do today.<sup>2</sup> This means that a course on medieval drama might legitimately include fabliaux, romances, and other texts that have been classified as “narrative.” Furthermore, music was closely bound up with medieval drama, whether sacred or secular, and this extends the bounds of the course to include materials such as the Gallician-Portuguese *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. I will discuss these lively narrative songs more in the sections on music and developing a script.

Sometimes I begin the semester by asking two students to read the roles of Antigone and Ismene when they plan to bury their brother in Sophocles’ *Antigone*, lines 44-92. Then other students read one of the early liturgical dialogues enacting the moment when Jesus’s followers encounter an empty tomb.<sup>3</sup> I also describe a funeral I attended in Cameroon where people walked three times around the village drumming and singing, “Where is he?” The contrast between the three scenarios provides a context for discussing the difference between drama as entertainment and drama as ritual, efficacy versus entertainment. We also consider what constitutes tragedy and how the early dramas about the church may or may not fit into the ancient Greek notion of tragedy or our own concept. We consider how plays about spiritual and physical warfare might be relevant in today’s society. In other words, rather than simply learning information about drama of the past, we connect it with and differentiate it from our needs and understandings today.

It is common to include a discussion of folk ritual and secular drama in a course on medieval drama, acknowledging that secular performance traditions continued through the Middle Ages, but were rarely documented. Frequently this dimension of medieval drama doesn’t go beyond a chapter in a secondary source, quickly forgotten because it lacks vivid embodiment. Instead of skipping over this influential and diverse tradition, I like to have students read and perform primary texts that show evidence of this alternative realm of performance. Romances, fabliaux, and mardi gras traditions contain evidence of dramatic practice. Many of the fabliaux become full-fledged dramatic texts when you simply insert character designations before direct discourse. Ironically, some sermons document contemporary dramatic practices by describing activities they abhor, as in “The Cursed Dancers of Colbec” from Robert Mannyng of Brunne’s *Handlyng Synne*.<sup>4</sup>

Hildegard von Bingen is usually left out of medieval drama anthologies, though her play about the virtues is one of the first church dramas, and it is both innovative and evocative. The Devil tempts the Soul to draw away from God, and the Virtues help rescue her. It intrigues students that this play was sung by a community of women, with the one male cast member shouting the role of the Devil.

I like to begin with students speaking the first few lines of an English translation.

PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS [spoken by the students]

Who are these, who seem like clouds?

VIRTUES [spoken by me]

O ancient holy ones, what about us makes you marvel?

The word of God gleams forth in human form,

and therefore we shine clear with him

The words go by fast, and students acclimated to vivid digital media are not much impressed. Then I project a facsimile of the beginning of the *Ordo Virtutum* from the Riesencodex.<sup>5</sup> I zoom in on those first lines, written in Latin, with the character designations in red (rubric) and the music on an infinite staff with a red line for *f*.

Then I teach the students to sing the first line, and suddenly the words are filled with mystified curiosity and awe. Instead of notes there are neumes, gliding from one pitch to another, clustering or stepping lightly. The students live through the subtle and expressive connection between the words and the contours of music. We practice until the students can sing that first line by themselves, and then we go back to the dialogue. This time there is a surging urgency for knowledge, a fluid mystery. Then I sing the reply, and the Virtues leap into ethereal splendor. From the narrow range the students sing, the Virtues glide to the fifth and then the octave. You can see it in the manuscript, bold lines moving upward across the staff. Marveling, and the word of God, and scintillating light are embodied through infinitely varied musical patterns and ornaments.<sup>6</sup>

Then, when we discuss the English translation of the play, the students are ready to wonder why Chastity is so highly sexual, why Humility is the leader of the Virtues, and how Soul's love of God's creation could have led her away from God. By participating in the terms the drama establishes, the students engage imaginatively in material that can seem dauntingly scholarly, and they leave the classroom singing the opening wonder.

A similar approach could be taken with the earliest fragment of liturgical drama, the brief *Quem quaeritis* trope, where the Angel intervenes in the grieving confusion of the disciples. *The Play of Daniel*, another sung drama, is particularly well adapted to junior high or high school study, since it claims to have been created by the youth of Beauvais. Students can watch video clips and consider other ways the play could be sung and acted.<sup>7</sup> They can act out the play, and think about how the disembodied hand might write on the wall in a production, and what it would be like for sacred vessels to be used for beer and pizza, and what it means for children to be renamed, and of course, the lions' den has infinite participatory potential.

The course production is intimately tied to student learning. When you draw on skills students have gained in previous classes, you reinforce their prior learning and provide opportunity for them to forge connections between their courses. A Creative Writing major who had taken my Chaucer class, for example, wrote a performance translation of the Wakefield *Last Judgment*.

Non-academic skills can also engage students with material they might otherwise find tedious. A student who was a drummer in a rock band played the tabor in our last production. By engaging actively with medieval rhythms and a historical instrument replica, he began to see how what he was doing enhanced other dimensions of the production, and in the process he gained enthusiasm for non-production dramatic texts we were studying.

Connections with community further help students extend their academic learning into a broader context. Many of my students work full time, and they often bring in their employers as sponsors or draw on their work expertise in developing a production. These connections strengthen community awareness of the university, and they also help make employers more sensitive to students' time constraints. A student who was a roofer was particularly adept at building sets and props. A student who worked in the state governor's office got an official commendation from the governor for us to photocopy into the program.

## Music

Music was as essential in medieval entertainment as it is in our movies today. Early dramatic texts were sung rather than spoken, and even the later works involved considerable music. Yet students and many faculty members are uncomfortable singing and disoriented by the different conventions of medieval music.

While you can create an effective and meaningful production without music, it doesn't have to be impossible to include some music. Some songs are simple and reward a little work richly. There are a number of delightful rounds.<sup>8</sup> I choose songs that are easy to learn and the entire cast sings them. *Singing Early Music* provides a practical guide to pronunciation of a number of medieval languages.<sup>9</sup>

The 420 *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, too, offer lively tunes and vivid stories that provide rare glimpses into the ordinary people of the northern Iberian Peninsula, and these are themselves dramatic performance texts. Our Medieval Drama Guild has a tradition of including one *cantiga* in each production. The entire cast learns the chorus, and individual actors learn the lines their characters speak. If you perform these in Gallician-Portuguese, the lively action makes the stories easy to follow, and you can include a plot summary in the program. Alternatively, you can write a performable translation. This makes it easier for the actors to learn their parts and for the audience to follow the story in greater detail.<sup>10</sup>

Each rehearsal can begin with ten minutes' work on a song to be sung by the entire cast. Begin with just the first line repeated again and again, bit by bit, until everyone is comfortable. Then at the next rehearsal, review the first line and work on the second. When all the parts are solid, students can begin singing as a round, and they are amazed and delighted with the effect.

More involvement with music may be possible if your institution has an early music performance group. Instrumental background music can give the production a polished finish and intensify emotional effects. Music should be avoided when actors are speaking since it can easily drown them out, but it is wonderful during action scenes – battles or chases or transformations – and it provides interest during scene changes. Collaboration with another campus or community entity can enrich both, and strengthen ties. However you choose to use music, it should always relate thematically to the production as a whole.

## **Developing a Script**

Unfortunately, not one medieval performance text was written in Modern English. You can work with the original language and aim for a limited and scholarly audience, or you can use a translation. Developing your own translation or adaptation has the benefit of avoiding copyright issues, or you can find a text with a Creative Commons license or a similar arrangement. In general, I have found it effective to use Modern English for most of the material, but include one or two songs in their original language. Many narrative texts can be turned into play scripts simply by adding in character designations.

If possible, it is helpful to draw on a large cast in which no one has too much responsibility, and humor is an essential component in a production by an inexperienced cast. Here are a few suggestions for performance texts that do not appear in anthologies devoted to medieval drama, though they are clearly designed for performance.

In the romance *Silence*, Merlin prophesies that only a woman can capture him, so people are surprised when the young knight Silence compels Merlin to court. But they are even more surprised when Merlin reveals that Silence is a woman. This romance brings to life the story of

Cador and Eufemie, brought together by love; and their child Silence, who is born a girl but brought up as a boy because of unjust inheritance laws. Silence becomes a famous minstrel and then a valiant knight, facing perilous challenges in both roles. Startlingly relevant and complex, the story of Silence tackles challenging questions of gender identity, and heredity versus environment, against a vivid background of medieval court life.

The story of *Aucassin and Nicolette* also inverts both medieval and modern assumptions. Aucassin, the son of the Count of Biaucaire, loves the foreigner Nicolette, but his father won't let him marry her. They run away to the land of Torelore, where the women fight battles and the men bear children. Eventually the couple are taken captive and separated. Nicolette turns out to be the daughter of the King of Carthage, but when he tries to marry her to a nobleman, she runs away disguised as a minstrel. She returns to Biaucaire, where her beloved Aucassin is moping on the stairs. Nicolette plays the vielle and sings to him the story of their love, and in this way they are reunited.

In *The Tournament of Tottenham*,<sup>11</sup> the conventions of tournaments are parodied when rough peasants from the village of Tottenham stage an elaborate combat for the hand of Tyb, the Reeve's daughter. Bowls are their helmets, winnowing fans their shields, and flails their weapons. The participants quickly grow weary. Terry tries to abduct Tyb, but the hero Perkyn the Potter stops him. Almost by default, Perkyn wins the tournament, Tyb's hand, a fine brood hen, and a cow and pig. The losers limp to the wedding and, after the festivities, go to sleep in great disarray amid much music. This text works surprisingly well in Middle English even for a general audience, and a large number of actors can be easily involved. Depending on the staging, however, the entire performance lasts only 14-20 minutes.

Many medieval performance texts are short by modern standards. A typical modern audience member might drive for twenty minutes, park for ten minutes, and walk for five minutes. After going to this effort, they are bound to be disappointed with a twenty-minute production, however magnificent. I have found it effective to bundle together different types of text in one event, aiming for a total of just over an hour, with a small consort of musicians providing musical entertainment as people arrive.

It is vital for the overall production to be unified in some way, and this can be done thematically. For example, *Hells Bells* was a boisterous presentation of four tales about devils. In *The Last Judgment*, a fifteenth-century mystery play, the demon Tutivillus cracks jokes as he gathers sinners. In *Soul Food*, a fabliau, an actor going home in costume after playing the role of the devil frightens some poachers and then has difficulty returning the abandoned rabbits to their owner. Sung to a lively melody, the thirteenth-century Galician-Portuguese *cantiga* about *The Knight and the Devil* tells how a knight who has lost his wealth vows to serve the devil, but is rescued from the bad contract. Finally, in *The Lady Prioress*, another fabliau, a woman tricks her unwanted suitors by sending them to a chapel where a dead man comes to life and a demon attacks.<sup>12</sup>

In class, students explored medieval notions of evil, considering their own ideas about evil: how it is manifested and how it can be combatted. They were surprised that devils and demons are almost always ludicrous in medieval representations. While the students were sometimes shocked by the juxtaposition of broad humor with serious religious concepts, they came to recognize that humor did not diminish the importance of a subject in the Middle Ages. Humor has the added benefit of coming across well in a production by inexperienced actors.

During the semester, students did research directly relating to the production. For example, the person playing the devil in *Soul Food* wrote a paper on the medieval tradition of

playing the role of the devil. One student concentrated on devil costumes, considering how medieval costuming practices reflected medieval attitudes to theater. Together the students brainstormed ideas for the program. Although we did not focus exclusively on the theme of evil in the class, there were natural connections with texts the students studied. For example, on a midterm, I asked students to consider how evil is characterized in the Beauvais *Play of Daniel*, discussing a similarity or contrast with the Wakefield *Last Judgment*.<sup>13</sup>

Other themes are possible besides the obvious choices of love or death or transformation. *Just Axe Me* was about provoking pain. The texts were linked by characters taking action that invites punishment. In the fifteenth-century mystery play *The Killing of Abel*, Cain kills his brother Abel and thus casts himself into emotional banishment. In the Middle English romance *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Sir Gawain violates his vow in an exchange game and receives an axe wound in return. And finally, the weaver in *Cantiga 18* fails to weave the veil she has promised, but she receives, instead of the punishment she fears, an undeserved gift she could never have earned.<sup>14</sup>

Another way of combining multiple texts is to use one play as a frame and nest others within that structure, and I have included a link to a script for *Knightmares*, developed on this pattern. You are welcome to use the entire play or one of its components without worrying about copyright. *Knightmares* revolves around the story of Sir Handsome Stranger, and the theme is unexpected challenges. What haunts heroes in their sleep at night? Not dragons and giants, but bewildering enchantresses, war-monger dogs, and garbage-flinging children.

Sir Handsome Stranger sets out with a minstrel and a messenger damsel to rescue the Lady of Synadoun. But their adventures twist and writhe, shaping a new vision of chivalry. The quest ends in a wedding, where Sir Gawain reveals that he is Handsome's father. Gawain offers to share some of his own encounters with the perils of knighthood, and the other performance texts are incorporated as wedding entertainment. In the quest of the Perilous Graveyard, a younger Gawain is torn between feast etiquette and damsel duty, and he is encumbered by a swelling cluster of damsels as he seeks out a dreaded demon. Back at King Arthur's feast, when Sir Kay laughs at Sir Palomides for following after the Barking Beast, a minstrel reminds the company about the knight who was cast in chains for singing mocking songs. Finally Sir Gawain remembers the time he was the only one who could save King Arthur from death, but he could only do so by marrying a hideous crone.

This composite play incorporates the fourteenth-century English romance *Lybeaus Desconus* (literally *Sir Handsome Stranger*), an episode from the thirteenth-century French romance *The Perilous Graveyard*, the thirteenth-century Galician-Portuguese *Cantiga 363* about the knight who sang mocking songs ([Here is the link to a singable translation](#)) and the fifteenth-century English *Weddyng of Sir Gawen and Dame Ragnell*.<sup>15</sup> In addition to these dramatic texts, the entire cast sings a thirteenth-century French drinking song and a fifteenth-century English Christmas carol.<sup>16</sup> The composite character of the script allowed us to excerpt segments for other purposes. For advertisement, for example, the Gawain and Ragnell cast performed separately at a banquet, and the student drummer and I performed medieval music as feasters arrived.

*Knightmares* illuminates our own bewilderment when we lock blades with ambiguity, when unexpected consequences follow seemingly straightforward choices. These medieval tales move us through festive spinning to unexpected perspectives, concluding with a seasonal celebration of fresh starts and a new year.

Among the students projects related to this production, I was most struck by Jennifer, who played the Virgin Mary in the *cantiga*. She developed a mischievous, elusive Virgin Mary.

At first I was suspicious of this approach in the face of the consistently ardent veneration of the Virgin in the thirteenth century. In her research, however, she found support for her reading of the text, and I began to see how, in the same way that evil can be represented in a humorous way, so, too, can holiness. The *cantigas* do have a whimsical quality, and Mary does delight in subverting expectations. This insight could only have come out in performance.

The feasters in the frame story – King Arthur, Queen Guinevere, and their court – had few or no lines, but they became the soul of the production. Christopher in particular, who had no spoken lines because of stage fright, found powerful ways to enhance the action with his gestures. His comments in his final reflection paper capture the overall experience of the production:

Up went the curtain and my blood began to drain from my legs. I slowly and shakily staggered towards center stage. Then a miraculous thing happened, we all began to sing. All of us, the guy with the deep voice that sounded like Pavarotti, the girl who sounded like Maria Callas, my sweet daughter, the dude who sounded like Ted Nugent, and Me. We all sang our guts out, “Hey Yea”! All of us together rough, small, big, beautiful, gory voices.

The play continued and I forgot to care about the way I sounded. I forgot about the audience. I forgot about being one person by myself in this modern world. I felt community. Not the Disney made for TV, taste like dried toast, so bland there’s not much to dislike but less to like, Madison Avenue marketing kind of community. No. I felt the plow the fields together, build the church by your side, fight the Vikings, starve in July, freeze in January, bury our neighbors, suffer the plague, celebrate the nativity the right way, community.

## Venue

Half the performance venues on campus are booked up months ahead by the Theatre Department and the other half by the Music Department. If you are a member of one of those departments or collaborating with someone in Theatre Arts or Music, you are set, but if you are in an English Department or in Modern Languages, you may feel dispossessed.

On some campuses, a stage is available for special events, and it may be possible to take advantage of this by working around large-scale productions. If your class meets Monday evenings, for example, you may be able to arrange regular rehearsals onstage at that time, with one performance on a Monday evening and one on a weekend afternoon. A large lecture classroom can also be adapted for performance.

It can be productive, however, to look for creative alternatives that interact with thematic material in the production. University choirs often perform in churches, and many medieval plays resonate well in a church context. You may have other community options. For example, I aspire to produce the Second Shepherds’ Pageant in a local cave to bring out medieval iconographic settings of the nativity.

An unusual venue can stimulate creative staging. We were delighted to produce a stage adaptation of the thirteenth-century French romance *Silence* in the university library, and our boisterous production emphasized the irony of a text focused on silence set in a library. The library was spacious and open, but there was no area large enough to accommodate audiences of over 100. So we ended up setting the play in a corner, with rows of chairs set up along each angle in the wide margin of space outside the stacks. The two right-angled strands of audience

could not see each other, but both branches could see the “stage,” and Merlin slid in and out of the stacks murmuring over weighty tomes.

## **Casting**

On the whole, there are more roles for men than women. We know that in the Middle Ages, unlike the Renaissance, women were involved in performance: minstrel guilds describe their membership using both male and female forms. Following medieval practice, there is no need to cast on the basis of gender. For modern audiences, however, some roles convey better with verisimilitude. For example, it might be awkward to cast a man as the Virgin Mary or a woman as Adam. Women can easily play knights, however, or shepherds, or a wide range of other figures.

When Theatre Arts students are involved together with students with less theatrical training, there can be tensions. Theater students can resent the amateur attitudes and lack of basic principles. Casting talented theatre students in key roles tightens up the production, and collaboration can become more amicable if experienced students are involved in training their less experienced peers. They can lead warmups and possibly run some break out rehearsals.

## **Forming a Guild**

I teach at a state university with many “non-traditional” students. When I first taught Medieval Drama, we staged *The Second Shepherds’ Pageant*, and I welcomed family members into the production. Teenage daughters handed out programs, small children clustered around Gill, and husbands and wives mixed with students as actors and production staff. I was astonished as we moved through the academic portion of the course how relieved the students felt to have their families involved with their academic life. Too often they are forced to make sharp divisions between their family and their midterms and course assignments. By sharing the production, students had common ground for discussing what they were learning with their families.

Some students wanted to act but not sing, and others wanted to sing but not act. So we ended up casting separate “singing shepherds” and “acting shepherds,” and the singing shepherds were sheep when they were not singing. I invited a professor to be a singing sheep, and a musicologist to play medieval lute, and I played the vielle. All three of us discovered the delight of working together with students toward a shared goal. This also enhanced the academic component, making students more comfortable exploring ideas together with me, knowing by experience that their voice was important.

After I had taught Medieval Drama two or three times, I found that many students wanted to continue to be part of productions even after they had graduated. So I formed the Medieval Drama Guild, and notified members when a production was coming up, sending them the schedule of rehearsals and performances. A surprising benefit was a mitigation of the harsh barrier between student life and post-student life. By participating in the guild, alumni have been able to stay engaged with academic dialogue and participate in the excitement of university life.

From the beginning, I realized that I would not be able to handle teaching the class and directing the production. In the early productions, a student was the director. The course attracts some students with experience in theater, and I was fortunate to have one person who had directed a community theater group in a nearby town and another who was part of a professional

troupe. One year the student director did such an amazing job that I invited him to come back the next time as a graduate student. James got a job at a local middle school, but he has maintained his involvement in the guild. Now I work with him to plan productions and set the schedules. He is always the director, which means that he has experience with our aesthetics and traditions, and he is knowledgeable about medieval drama. He and I do the casting together and set up section directors.

One year a student with amazing energy and ability set up a cache of costumes for the guild. Amber purchased fabric at astonishingly low prices, designed easy-to-make costumes, arranged for people to make the costumes, and set up large plastic boxes to transport and store them. She even made a spread sheet detailing the costumes, with miniature pictures of each. She has continued to coordinate the costumes, and over the years I have gotten grants for more elaborate costumes and for two suits of chain mail (obtained by mail order, of course). Middle school and high school teachers who are guild members use the costumes when we are not working on a production.

Because James works in a middle school, we draw on his students to play some of the roles. The collaboration benefits both his students and mine, and it creates the diversity that would have been part of many original productions. Medieval payment records often show evidence of family members working together, and both James and I have included our own children in productions. Medieval people made less distinction between public and private roles, and it is instructive for students to see me as a mother as well as an instructor.

One of my colleagues uses a different model for a performance-based class. Matt teaches Shakespeare as a Service Learning course, which he calls "Shake-it-up After School." His students work with children in an elementary school for at-risk children. By careful and creative cutting, his students reduce one of Shakespeare's plays to a one-hour production suitable for children. The students then act together with the children, and with the children they work toward an effective performance. I attended one of these productions, which was engaging and well attended. The students, the children, and their parents, were all rightly proud. A similar model would work well for a Medieval Drama class, and many universities and colleges offer support for service learning.

Sword fights are an aspect of some medieval performance texts, and that can be tricky. Students seem to have swords and like to use them. An experienced choreographer can make stage fights a safe experience, but some directors may choose instead to use foam swords or even swimming noodles, or to find texts that do not require fighting.

A related issue is the Society for Creative Anachronism, a group who enact fighting and feasting in parks and at festivals. The group has established modes of interaction and well defined aesthetics that are not always in tune with the Middle Ages, as the name implies. Members of this group who participate in medieval productions may want to pull the performance in the direction of SCA events and they may be working from false premises which can be detrimental to the production. At the same time, some members of the organization are highly skilled and accurately informed and can be an invaluable asset to a medieval production.

Almost any production costs money, even if just for programs and posters. Fund raising is anathema to me, but I was surprised how many students genuinely enjoy brainstorming ways to bring in money. They take pride in the production and want to share that pride. I have seen at least one instance where a student was offered a job she wanted in part because of her fund raising experience with us. We make tee shirts for each production and wear them ourselves and

sell them at the door. Sponsors are listed on the back of the shirt, and on the front is a design by a guild member highly skilled in graphic art.

Your resources may be very different from mine, and it is worth brainstorming possibilities that may not at first come to mind. No one but you knows your situation, the strengths and resources of your institution and community. A river runs by our campus, and I wonder about staging a summer production of the play of *Noah* in which actors wade in and out of the river. I also hope that someone from our world-renowned Raptor Biology program will bring a falcon onstage for a hunting scene or for Marie de France's *Yonec*. The possibilities are endless.

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<sup>1</sup> Scott O'Neil, "Medieval Drama: An Annotated Bibliography for Teachers." *The Once and Future Classroom* 12, no. 1 (2015).

<sup>2</sup> Carol Symes, *A Common Stage: Theater and Public Life in Medieval Arras*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> David Bevington, ed. *Medieval Drama*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975, pp. 10-28.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Mannyng, *Robert of Brunne's "Handlyng Synne"*. 2 vols. Edited by Frederick James Furnivall. *Early English Text Society* 119 and 123. London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner and Company, 1901 and 1903.

<sup>5</sup> A facsimile of Riesenecodex Hs.2 is available online. The *Ordo Virtutum* begins at the top of the right column on folio 478v <http://tinyurl.com/qbzywyc>.

<sup>6</sup> Here is a recording by Sequentia <http://tinyurl.com/pq7rb4y>.

<sup>7</sup> The Metropolitan Museum of Art provides one such excerpt <http://tinyurl.com/onnpstrf>.

<sup>8</sup> *Music in a Circle*, 2 vols., edited by Shira Kammen. Richmond Average Press, 2007.

<sup>9</sup> Timothy McGee, A.G. Rigg, and David N. Klausner, ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996.

<sup>10</sup> You may find it convenient to work with a transcription of the original text (*Cantigas de Santa María*, 3 volumes, edited by Walter Mettmann, Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1986), a translation of the text (Kathleen Kulp-Hill, *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, the Wise*, Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2000), and a facsimile of the manuscript and modern transcription of the music (*La Música de las Cantigas de Santa María del Rey Alfonso el Sabio*, edited and transcribed by Higinio Anglés, 4 volumes, Barcelona: Diputación Provincial de Barcelona Biblioteca Central, 1964).

<sup>11</sup> In Erik Kooper, ed. *Sentimental and Humorous Romances*. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2006. Available online at <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/kooper-sentimental-and-humorous-romances-tournament-of-tottenham>.

<sup>12</sup> For the Wakefield *Last Judgment*, see Bevington 638-58; for Modern English translations of the original narrative versions of *Soul Food* and *The Lady Prioress*, see "About a Man who Acted in a Play as a Devil" and "The Lady Prioress" in *Medieval Comic Tales*, edited by Derek Brewer, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D.S. Brewer, 1996), 67-9 and 52-5; "The Knight and the Devil" is Cantiga 281 (For editions of the *Cantigas de Santa María*, see note 10).

<sup>13</sup> A production titled *Pigs from Hell* made use of a similar theme but with different texts. In the fabliau *Saint Peter and the Minstrel*, Lucifer entrusts a minstrel with the souls in Hell, but Saint Peter wins them back by gambling with the minstrel (See Brewer 20-26). *Dulcitus*, a play by a tenth-century German woman named Hrotsvit, tells a humorous tale of the martyrdom of three girls (see *The Plays of Hrotsvit of Gandersheim*, translated by Katharina Wilson (New York: Garland, 1989), pp. 37-49). *The Cursed Dancers of Colbek*, an eerie folk tale preserved in a sermon, tells of raucous teenagers forced to dance for an entire year (see *Robert of Brunne's "Handlyng Synne"*, edited by F.J. Furnivall (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner and co., 1901-[03], lines 9016-9260; available online at <http://tinyurl.com/jh253xf>). The *cantiga* which suggested the name to the entire production sings of a monk who has trouble sleeping and is attacked by devils in the form of pigs (For editions of *Cantiga* 82, see note 10).

<sup>14</sup> For the Wakefield *The Killing of Abel*, see Bevington 275-89; [here is the link for our stage adaptation of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight](#); for the original Middle English version of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, see the edition by J.R.R. Tolkien and E.V. Gordon (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), which is available online at <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cme/Gawain/1:1?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>; for editions of the *Cantigas de Santa María*, see note 10.

<sup>15</sup> For the original Middle English version of *Lybeaus Desconus*, see the edition by Eve Salisbury and James Weldon (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2013); available online at <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/salisbury-and-weldon-lybeaus-desconus-lambeth>; for the original Old French

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version of *The Perilous Graveyard*, see *L'atre périlleux*, edited by Brian Woledge (Paris: Champion, 1936), and for a translation, see *Three Arthurian Romances*, translated by Ross G. Arthur (Everyman, 1996); for editions of *Cantiga 363*, see note 10; for the original Middle English version of *The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnelle*, see the edition by Thomas Hahn in *Sir Gawain: Eleven Romances and Tales* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1995); available online at <http://tinyurl.com/krp8ya>.

<sup>16</sup> Shira Kammen has prepared excellent editions of these songs. “Tourdion” appears in *Music in a Circle*, vol. 2 (Richmond Average Press, 2007), and “Nou is Yole Comen” in *A Musical Almanac* (Richmond Average Press, 2008).

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