



U3A Dunedin

2020 Series 3 Course G

Title	The Medieval World Through Literature: From Arthur to Dracula
Dates	Thursdays 15 October – 19 November 2020
Time	2.15 pm – 4.15 pm
Venue	Leith Bowling Club, 2 Duke Street, North Dunedin
Convenor	Dorothy Kerin Email: dorothybrowne@hotmail.com Phone: 473 8640 Mobile: 021 029 85377
Developer	Simone Marshall
Course fee	\$45
Bank account	U3A Dunedin Charitable Trust 06 0911 0194029 00

Literature of the medieval world ranges across works on love, temptation, belief, women, cultures, and warfare. In this course we will look at some of the most important literature of the period on each of these topics to learn about the medieval world and explore the issues that were relevant to it. There will be an opportunity to learn how to cut a quill pen and to write with it during the first session.

A Note on Language

This course, designed and presented by Associate Professor Simone Marshall, Department of English and Linguistics, University of Otago, will introduce you to a range of medieval cultures and stories, but all of our texts have been translated into English.

All applications must be received by **Thursday 17 September 2020**. You will receive a response to your application by **Monday 28 September 2020**.

Please contact the Programme Secretary courses@u3adunedin.org.nz, phone 467 2594 with any queries.

The Medieval World Through Literature: From Arthur to Dracula

- 15 October** **Love and loss – grief, passion, and unrequited love**
We will look at the grand French romance, *The Roman de la Rose*; also Geoffrey Chaucer's very personal poem for John of Gaunt about the death of Gaunt's wife, Blanche. These poems reveal the way love touches all parts of life.
- 22 October** **Ever-present temptation in the world of King Arthur**
Stories of King Arthur bring us some of the most thrilling and challenging storylines. The temptation of Lancelot is well-known, but the stories of Gawain and the Green Knight, and the *Wedding of Gawain and Dame Ragnell*, reveal and question social structures and etiquette.
- 29 October** **Belief and salvation**
Perhaps the best known medieval work on struggle, belief, and salvation is Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*. We will tease out Dante's life and world, and his struggles in exile.
- 5 November** **Medieval women – nuns, wives, and widows**
Women seem not to feature much in medieval literature, but writers argued about the questions of how women could participate in the act of writing! Christine de Pisan was a well-known writer in France in the 15th century who engaged in a strong debate about women's roles. Geoffrey Chaucer, too, is often regarded as a champion of women.
- 12 November** **Foreign worlds – travel, mythical beasts, and fabulous stories**
Many maps of the world have survived; often they include lands full of mythical beasts and fantastical creatures. *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* was one of the most popular travel books of the Middle Ages, but it might just be fiction! The journeys of Ibn Battuta across the Middle East, and the stories of the *Arabian Nights* bring places foreign to life.
- 19 November** **Warfare and tyrants – the struggle for power**
Warfare was a part of reality in the Middle Ages. The crusades are an important series of events, but so too are the more localised wars. We will look at *The Wallace*, about the life of the Scot, William Wallace, and at a Russian story about the life of Dracula. Both reveal the local political pressures at play in this period.