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HIST 3392-1. The Middle Ages in Film: Angevin and Plantagenet England Research Paper Assignments

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HIST 3392-1. The Middle Ages in Film: Angevin and Plantagenet England

Research Paper Assignments, N. Marafioti

Paper I: *The Lion in Winter* (6-7 pages)

Prompt

How does the film *Lion in Winter* engage the history of the late twelfth century? Choose one scene from the film and examine how it adapts medieval events and sources. Your paper must be 6-7 full pages long and use at least six secondary sources.

Schedule of Due Dates

T 9/4	List of Possible Research Questions Library Research Session		Th 9/13	Annotated Bibliography: 2 sources
Th 9/6	Preliminary Bibliography: 8 sources		9/18-20	In-Class Research Presentations
T 9/11	Précis of selected scene: 250 words Annotated Bibliography: 3 sources		T 9/25	Final Paper Due: 6-7 pages

Breakdown of Preliminary Work

List of Possible Research Questions. Propose THREE historical research questions that you might want to pursue in this paper. For each question, write two or three sentences explaining your interest in the topic.

Preliminary Bibliography of EIGHT Secondary Sources. This should be an initial list of sources—scholarly books, essays, and/or articles—that you intend to consult in the course of your research.

- Your list must include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ At least one peer-reviewed journal article ■ At least one chapter of a scholarly book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ At least one electronic source ■ At least one print source
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- Each source must be at least 15 pages long.
- Bibliographical information for each item should be formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style.
- The list should be arranged alphabetically by author's last name.

Once you have a list, begin collecting books and articles to read. If you need to ILL an item, start now! Remember that this is a preliminary list: you can drop sources that aren't useful for your topic, and you don't have to include all of these preliminary items in your final paper.

Précis of Selected Scene. In approximately 250 words, summarize the scene you've chosen to write about. Be sure to identify the major characters, provide an overview of the plot and dialogue, and include any additional information you think is important.

Annotated Bibliographies. Begin reading. For each source, write an annotated bibliography entry of approximately 150-200 words. Each entry should include:

- Bibliographical information for each item, formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style;
- A concise summary of the author's argument and any other relevant information;
- One or two sentences evaluating the merits of the piece and explaining how it applies to your topic.

Logistics. Your final paper must be 6-7 pages long and include:

A research question. What historical question(s) about your scene will you address in this paper?

A précis of your scene. In no more than one page, summarize the scene in as much detail as possible: explain its context, introduce its central characters, give an overview of the narrative, and describe its importance to the film as a whole.

Historical research. Your paper must incorporate research from at least SIX scholarly, secondary sources on medieval history. These six sources must include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ At least one peer-reviewed journal article○ At least one chapter of a scholarly book	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ At least one electronic source○ At least one print source
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The following items do NOT count toward your minimum of six historical sources, but you are welcome to use them to supplement your historical sources:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Scholarship on <i>Lion in Winter</i> or on film in general○ Encyclopedia and dictionary entries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Film reviews and book reviews○ Readings assigned on the syllabus
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Conclusions. Propose an answer (or answers) to your research question. In particular, consider the following:

- What has your research revealed about the historical circumstances on which your scene is based?
- How does *Lion in Winter* adapt that history—and why?

Full citations and a bibliography of works cited. Every source you quote, paraphrase, or reference in the paper must be cited using Chicago Author-Date style in-text citations. Your bibliography should also be formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style and include only items cited in the paper.

Objectives

By the time you've completed this assignment, you should be able to:

- Identify historical problems and formulate research questions
- Write clear, concise, and informative overviews of film and textual sources
- Access, evaluate, and synthesize secondary historical scholarship
- Formulate conclusions based on your own assessment of secondary sources

Paper II: *Robin Hood* (8-10 pages)

Prompt

Find two medieval primary sources that address a historical event, individual, or issue raised by the film *Robin Hood*. What do these primary sources reveal about how your topic was perceived, understood, or addressed in the Middle Ages?

NOTE: It is your choice whether or not to reference the film in your paper. In either case, however, your paper should focus primarily on the medieval material—not the film.

Schedule of Due Dates

Th 10/4	List of Possible Research Questions Library Research Session		Th 10/18	Primary Close Reading: 1 source, 300 words Annotated Bibliography: 1 source
T 10/9	Preliminary Bibliography of THREE primary and SIX secondary sources		T 10/23	Detailed Paper Outline: 3 pages In-Class Research Presentations
Th 10/11	Summary of one primary source: 200 words Annotated Bibliography: 1 source		Th 10/25	In-Class Research Presentations
T 10/16	Summary of one primary source: 200 words Annotated Bibliography: 2 sources		T 10/30	Final Paper Due: 8-10 pages

Breakdown of Preliminary Work

List of Possible Research Questions. Propose THREE historical research questions that you might want to pursue in this paper. For each question, write two or three sentences explaining your interest in the topic.

Preliminary Bibliography of THREE Primary and SIX Secondary Sources. This should be an initial list of sources—scholarly books, essays, and/or articles—that you intend to consult in the course of your research.

- Bibliographical information for each item should be formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style.
- The list should be arranged alphabetically by author's last name.

Once you have a list, begin collecting books and articles to read. If you need to ILL an item, start now! Remember that this is a preliminary list: you can drop sources that aren't useful for your topic, and you don't have to include all of these preliminary items in your final paper.

Annotated Bibliographies. Begin reading. For each SECONDARY source, write an annotated bibliography entry of approximately 150-200 words. Each entry should include:

- Bibliographical information for each item, formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style;
- A concise summary of the author's argument and any other relevant information;
- One or two sentences evaluating the merits of the piece and explaining how it applies to your topic.

Primary Close Reading. Choose a passage from one of your primary sources and write an analytical close reading of 300 words. Your reading should engage directly with the medieval text. What historical conclusions can you draw from a close analysis of the its themes and language? What can a centuries-old document reveal about the culture that produced it? What can you learn about the text's author and audience—and the society they lived in? Go sentence by sentence through your passage, pose historical questions, and propose logical explanations. Please remember that a close reading should not provide generalizations but a specific, analytical analysis of a particular text and its context.

Detailed Paper Outline. In approximately 3 pages, provide an outline for your paper. You should include your research question(s), the main points of your argument, and the most important sources for each section. The outline can be in bullet points or continuous prose, but it should provide a detailed overview of your paper.

Logistics. Your paper must be 8-10 full pages long and include:

A research question. What historical question(s) will you address in this paper?

Historical context. In no more than one page, provide an overview of the historical context for your topic. Introduce any central historical figures, political circumstances, social institutions, or contemporary events that are relevant to your analysis.

Primary analysis. Your paper should be structured around the historical analysis of TWO medieval sources of any genre (e.g. historical, legal, literary, religious), at least one of which dates from the period c.1175-c.1225. For each source, you should provide:

- Its title, author, language, date, and place of composition
- A concise summary of its content (200 words maximum)
- A close historical reading of the text
- An explanation of the text's relevance to your research question
- A comparison with the other primary source

Secondary research. Your paper must incorporate research from at least FIVE scholarly, secondary sources.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Each source must be at least 15 pages long○ At least TWO of your five sources must address your primary medieval texts |
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The following items do NOT count toward your minimum of five historical sources, but you are welcome to use them to supplement your historical sources:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Scholarship on <i>Robin Hood</i> or on film in general○ Encyclopedia and dictionary entries | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Film reviews and book reviews○ Secondary readings assigned on the syllabus |
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Conclusions. Propose an answer (or answers) to your research question. In particular, consider the following:

- What can the similarities and differences between your two primary sources reveal about medieval attitudes toward your topic?
- Why did the two medieval authors choose to approach the topic the way they did? What biases are evident in their work, and what did they intend to communicate to their respective audiences?

Full citations and a bibliography of works cited. Every source you quote, paraphrase, or reference in the paper must be cited using Chicago Author-Date style in-text citations. Your bibliography should also be formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style and include only items cited in the paper.

Objectives

By the time you've completed this assignment, you should be able to:

- Access, evaluate, and interpret medieval texts relevant to a research question
- Apply secondary historical scholarship to your own primary analysis
- Write clear, concise, and informative overviews of primary texts and historical problems
- Formulate conclusions based on your own synthesis of primary and secondary sources

Paper III: *Braveheart* (10-12 pages)

Prompt

Write a research paper on the historical background behind a medieval individual, event, institution, or cultural phenomenon depicted in the film *Braveheart*. Your paper should include a historiographical review of important scholarly literature, an analysis of at least one primary source, and a bibliography of at least ten secondary sources.

NOTE: It is your choice whether or not to reference the film in your paper. In either case, however, your paper should focus primarily on the medieval history—not the film.

Schedule of Due Dates

Th 11/8	List of Possible Research Questions Library Research Session		Th 11/29	Historiographical Review Draft: at least 3 secondary sources, at least 500 words
T 11/13	Preliminary Bibliography of EIGHT secondary sources		T 12/4	Detailed Paper Outline: 3 pages
Th 11/15	Annotated Bibliography: 1 source		11/29 12/4	In-Class Research Presentations
T 11/20	Annotated Bibliography: 3 sources Updated Bibliography: TWELVE secondary sources and TWO primary sources		M 12/10	Final Paper Due: 10-12 pages

Breakdown of Preliminary Work

List of Possible Research Questions. Propose THREE historical research questions that you might want to pursue in this paper. For each question, write two or three sentences explaining your interest in the topic.

Preliminary Bibliography of EIGHT Secondary Sources. This should be an initial list of sources—scholarly books, essays, and/or articles—that you intend to consult in the course of your research.

- The list should be arranged alphabetically by author's last name. Bibliographical information for each item should be formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style.
- Once you have a list, begin collecting books and articles to read. If you need to ILL an item, start now!
- Remember that this is a preliminary list: you can drop sources that aren't useful for your topic, and you don't have to include all of these preliminary items in your final paper.

Annotated Bibliographies. Begin reading. For each source, write an annotated bibliography entry of approximately 150-200 words. Each entry should include:

- Bibliographical information for each item, formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style;
- A concise summary of the author's argument and any other relevant information;
- One or two sentences evaluating the merits of the piece and explaining how it applies to your topic.

Updated Bibliography of TWO Primary and TWELVE Secondary Sources. This should be an updated list of sources, which may include items from your preliminary and annotated bibliographies, which you intend to consult in the course of your research. Each entry should include:

- Bibliographical information for each item, formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style;
- One or two sentences explaining how you found each source. Did you track down a citation from another source? Browse a bibliography? Use an electronic database?

Detailed Paper Outline. In approximately 3 pages, provide an outline for your paper. You should include your research question(s), the main points of your argument, and the most important sources for each section. The outline can be in bullet points or continuous prose, but it should provide a detailed overview of your paper.

Historiographical Review Draft. In 500 words or more, begin drafting your historiographical review. This draft should incorporate information from at least THREE secondary sources and follow the guidelines listed under logistics (below).

Logistics. Your paper must be 10-12 full pages long and include:

A research question. What historical question(s) will you address in this paper?

Historical context: 1 page maximum. Provide an overview of the historical context for your topic. Introduce any central historical figures, political circumstances, social institutions, or contemporary events that are relevant to your analysis.

Historiographical review: 3-5 pages on at least FOUR scholarly sources. Historiographical reviews offer an overview of the seminal scholarship on a historical topic. For your research paper, the review section should:

- Identify and briefly summarize the most important scholarship—current and past—on the topic.
- Compare the different historical approaches to the topic and explain why these differences are significant. If historians' interpretations have changed over time, explain how. If there have been controversies or debates concerning the topic, explain why.
- Evaluate the different historical approaches scholars have taken to the topic. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each approach? Which one(s) do you find most convincing?

NOTE. As you search for scholarship for your review, seek out books and articles that are regularly cited or discussed by other secondary authors. If you're stuck, try consulting reference works with bibliographies, such as *The Dictionary of the Middle Ages* or *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Secondary research. Your paper must incorporate research from at least TEN scholarly, secondary sources (including the four sources for your historiography). The following items do NOT count toward your minimum of ten historical sources, but you are welcome to use them to supplement your historical sources:

○ Scholarship on <i>Braveheart</i> or on film in general	○ Film reviews and book reviews
○ Encyclopedia and dictionary entries	○ Secondary readings assigned on the syllabus

Primary analysis. Your paper should include an analysis of at least ONE medieval primary source of any genre (e.g. historical, legal, literary, religious). For each primary source, be sure to provide:

- Its title, author, language, date, and place of composition
- A concise summary of its content (200 words maximum)
- A close historical reading of the text
- An explanation of the text's relevance to your research question

Conclusions. Propose an answer (or answers) to your research question. In particular, consider the following:

- What insight has your research provided into the history of your topic?
- How have the methods or interpretations you discussed in your historiographical review shaped your own understanding of the topic?
- How has your research contributed to the scholarship on this topic? What new historical questions has your research raised?

Full citations and a bibliography of works cited. Every source you quote, paraphrase, or reference in the paper must be cited using Chicago Author-Date style in-text citations. Your bibliography should also be formatted according to Chicago Author-Date style and include only items cited in the paper.

Objectives

By the time you've completed this assignment, you should be able to:

- Identify, access, and evaluate seminal scholarship relevant to a research question;
- Write a historiographical review that assesses the merits of different historical approaches;
- Construct a historical argument based on extensive secondary research and primary analysis;
- Propose complex historical conclusions supported by textual evidence.

