Knights, Ladies, and Chivalry
19 University Place, 405
Professor Matthew S. Tanico
Office Hours: (19 University Place, 427)

Edmund Blair Leighton, *God Speed* (1900)

This course examines the concept of chivalry as a social and literary phenomenon from its inception through the medieval and early modern period and into its more modern manifestations. We will explore the changes in what constitutes a knight as the militaristic facets of the title are separated from the social and political distinction the name implies. We will also discuss the role of the lady, in relation to the knight and as an independent figure, including female warriors. Finally, we will look at the decline of knighthood as feudalism gives way to a moneyed, commercial society. The relationship between history and fiction will be a central theme. Looking toward our modern times, we will ask whether chivalry is dead, as well as when, why, and how it fell out of fashion.
**Required texts:** Please buy the translations listed below. All other texts will be available to download on the course site (CS).
The Song of Roland, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers (Penguin)
Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (Dover)
Maurice Keen, *Chivalry* (Yale University Press)

*available as E-book through NYU library

**Tentative Schedule (subject to change):**
Week 1: T Introduction
    R Urban II; Bernard of Clairvaux- In Praise of the New Knighthood (CS);
    Keen Ch. 1- The Idea of Chivalry

Week 2: T Ramon Lull- *The Book of the Order of Chivalry*; Keen Ch. 2- The Secular Origins of Chivalry
    R Lull; Joanot Martorell, *Tirant lo Blanc* ("Tirant and the Hermit", CS)

Week 3: T Christine de Pizan-*The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry* (I: 1, 9-11, 29; 11:16-41; IV: 11, 15-17, CS); Keen Ch. 3- Chivalry, the Church and the Crusade
    R In-Class Exam I

Week 4: T *The Song of Roland*; Keen Ch. 4- The Ceremony of Dubbing to Knighthood
    R *The Song of Roland*

Week 5: T *The Song of the Cid*; Keen Ch. 5- The Rise of the Tournament
    R *The Song of the Cid*

Week 6: T Torquato Tasso- *Jerusalem Delivered* (Cantos 1-3, CS); Keen Ch. 6-The Historical Mythology of Chivalry
    R Torquato Tasso- *Jerusalem Delivered* (6-7, CS)

Week 7: T Torquato Tasso- *Jerusalem Delivered* (11-13, 19, CS); Keen Ch. 7- Heraldry and Heralds
    R In Class Exam 2

Week 8: T Baldassare Castiglione- *The Book of the Courtier*: Books 1 & 2; Keen Ch. 8- The Idea of Nobility
    R Baldassare Castiglione- *The Book of the Courtier*: Book 3

Week 9: T Baldassare Castiglione- *The Book of the Courtier*: Book 4; Keen Ch. 9- Arms, Nobility and Honour
    R Library visit w/ Marybeth McCartin (Meet@ Bobst Learning Studio 743)
Week 10: T Ludovico Ariosto- *Orlando furioso* (selections, CS); Keen Ch. 10- The Secular Orders of Chivalry
R Ludovico Ariosto- *Orlando furioso* (selections, CS)

Week 11: T Miguel de Cervantes- *Don Quijote*: Arms & Letters (I: 1-8, 38, CS); Keen Ch. 11- Pageantry, Tournies and Solemn Vows
R Miguel de Cervantes-Don *Quijote*: Barcelona episodes (54, 60-65, CS)

Week 12: T Met Visit; Keen Ch. 12- Chivalry and War; Brown chapter on Velazquez; Sciberras chapter on Caravaggio (CS)

THANKSGMNG BREAK (Read Twain)

Week 13: T Twain- A *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*
R Twain-A *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*; Pugh, *Queer Chivalry*: Chapter 2: Dialectical History, White Indians, and Queer Anxiety in Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

Week 14: T Superheroes (watch *Deadpool* (2016))
R In-Class Exam 3

Week 15: T Student Presentations
R Closing Remarks

**Student responsibilities:**

To arrive on time (we will start right at 12:30) and ensure regular attendance at all meetings. More than two unexcused absences will be noted; more than three will result in a lower grade.

**TO BRING READINGS TO CLASS.** To reduce the cost of purchasing or printing reading materials, students may bring digital copies of the NYUClasses readings to class. Please do not succumb to the overwhelming temptation to check social media or browse the internet during discussions.

To think. Weekly one-page response papers are intended to gauge your thoughts on the texts from week to week. You also will be expected to participate actively in the discussions. Your grade will reflect your participation. Students will also be responsible for one brief presentation during the semester.

To complete assignments on time. Response papers should be submitted by the second class of each week. A final research paper of 10-15 pages should be submitted no later than midnight on the date of the final exam posted in Albert.

To take three in-class exams.

**Do not plagiarize.** Any evidence of plagiarism will result in an F for the course and possible university discipline. Refer to NYU CAS Academic Integrity policies: [http://cas.nyu.edu/page/academicintegrity](http://cas.nyu.edu/page/academicintegrity)

I will make every feasible effort to ensure student success. Demonstration of progress will be taken into consideration when grading, but a general breakdown of the grading system will be:

- Participation & Attendance: 10%
- Response Papers: 30%
- In-Class Exams: 3 x 10%
- Presentation: 10%
- Final Paper: 20%
Instructor responsibilities:
   To adhere as closely as possible to the syllabus (although I reserve the right to make modifications when necessary).
   To make class interesting and engaging.
   To grade fairly and provide appropriate and timely feedback.
   To be attentive to questions and hold regular office hours.
   To develop your critical thinking and writing skills.
   To remain faithful to the allotted course time.