

A REVIEW OF ROBIN HOOD SCHOLARSHIP PUBLISHED IN 2017-2018

Sadie Hash
University of Houston

Robin Hood scholarship of 2017 and 2018 covered a wide range of topics and demonstrates the depth inherent in medieval studies, medievalism studies, and adaptation studies, as well as in examinations of publishing, reading, and performance practices from the medieval period to the twentieth century.

RE-EXAMINING ROBIN'S VIOLENCE

The first two articles discussed revisit two of the most well-known Robin Hood ballads. In their articles, Renée Ward and R. W. Hoyle present critical examinations of and challenge previous readings of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* and *The Gest of Robyn Hode*, respectively, by teasing out ambiguous wording and exploring the use of those terms in other medieval literature. These authors also examine Robin's place within the social and economic structures through an analysis of Robin's violence and the beheadings committed by Robin.

In "'Thou shalt have the better cloathe': Reading Second Skins in *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*,"¹ Ward focuses her analysis on Guy's "capull-hyde" and Robin's disfigurement and beheading of Guy. She utilizes several types of approaches to support her reading of the symbolic nature of the actions of both men in the larger scheme of medieval economic identities and related social positions. Both the horse-hide and the act of flaying represent a transgression of boundaries between species (human and horse) and social status and economic class (yeoman and knight). When Guy and Robin wear the horse skin it "render[s] their social identities within the estates system potentially fluid and problematic" (Ward 353). Ward argues that Robin's status as outlaw helps reaffirm the structure of society:

The outlaw undoes the problematic meanings the bounty-hunter and his horsehide create, delivers appropriate justice and reinscribes the hegemony that actually excludes him. He exists temporarily within the monetary economy—just long enough to critique and reject it. In doing so, he reinforces feudal structures and, through his restoration of order, demonstrates the importance of outlawry to the maintenance of those structures. (364)

Ward claims Robin rejects the social climbing of Guy who attempts to move from yeoman to knight by claiming a "knight's fee." This examination helps explain the violence of Robin's action. The physical violence he enacts and their consequences are a representation of the metaphorical violence he enacts on society. Ward states the ballad

¹ Renée Ward, "'Thou shalt have the better cloathe': Reading Second Skins in *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*," in *Flaying in the Pre-Modern World: Practice and Representation*, ed. Larissa Tracy (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017), 349-65.

then, resists as it explores the social change of the late medieval period, articulating the inherently contradictory nature of the social system through the “capull-hyde” and its multiple significations, as well as through the violence that Robin enacts upon Guy. These various meanings of “capull”—those connected to bestial and human identities, or to class and social identities within the estates system—ultimately inform the violence within the ballad. (364)

As mentioned above, Hoyle’s essay does similar work in reexamining one of Robin’s more violent moments, and his analysis of the *Gest* centers on Robin’s beheading of the Sheriff.

Hoyle’s essay² was published in *Nottingham Medieval Studies*³ and revisits Robin’s “physical valour” which “is an ever present theme” in the *Gest of Robyn Hode* (88). Hoyle also explores the ambiguous wording of the ballad and examines the specific historical moment. Hoyle argues “The figure that is described in the *Gest* is not a yeoman in an economic sense: he is surely a gentleman, an aristocrat, and so there is a real tension between what Robin Hood says he is and his actions (his deference, for instance, to the knight) and the lifestyle that he demonstrates” (89). Hoyle states:

Robin Hood is not a yeoman in any orthodox sense, but a “good man” of the imagination. Neither he, nor anything like him, existed in reality, whether early fourteenth-century reality or late fifteenth-century reality, but he could exist in a land which was both Far Far Away but needed to have a proximate geographical location. (94)

This idea of Robin’s ambiguous existence also supports Hoyle’s stance regarding the structure of the ballad.

Hoyle, similar to Ward, challenges a traditional reading of the ballad, and he does this by examining the structure of the ballad to demonstrate the ballad is not scattered as generally suggested but rather does have a purposeful structure. Hoyle argues “it does not quite make sense, because it is entertainment, not history” and “the *Gest* is a single cycle” (75). By revisiting the violence and Robin’s reputation (when the King and Robin ride into town and their presence frightens the townspeople) as well as the language and the structure of the text, Hoyle posits a purpose for and an intention behind the *Gest* and its idiosyncrasies: “And so the *Gest* is meant to be funny. It is a tall tale. We are meant to laugh at many impossible things, from the location of the forest through the lifestyle and physical prowess of the merry men, their impossible feats of archery, their fantasy castle under the greenwood tree” (106).

Through these similarities, we can see the importance of continuing to challenge seemingly set readings of the ballads and how fruitful that discussion can be. According to both Ward and Hoyle, though they are examining different ballads, they are focusing on similar moments, and Robin must be outside the social structure in order to critique it, give it form, and maintain it. Robin can only function in peak condition as an outlaw and parody of society.

² R. W. Hoyle, “A Re-Reading of the *Gest* of Robyn Hode,” *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 61 (2017): 67-113.

³ It was noted by Michael Jones that this essay was “[p]erhaps surprisingly” the only Robin-Hood-centered essay published in the journal between the years 2007 and 2016: Michael Jones, “*Nottingham Medieval Studies* at Sixty,” *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 61 (2017): 1-8, 6.

PERFORMANCE (OR LACK THEREOF)

Here our authors each explore the aspect of performance and the differences in adapting the literary tradition. Each author considers how performance and audience impacts the legend in different genres, its presentation, its purpose, and its evolution.

Like Hoyle, Kathryn Funderberg revisits the *Gest* in her essay.⁴ Funderberg examines the evolution of the forest law by using the Magna Carta and the Assize of the Forest as a framing for the *Gest* and how yeoman could have interacted with these laws. Funderberg posits that the *Gest* “allowed for greater comprehension of how someone of yeoman standing might have viewed forest law” and “the narrative grants unique insight into a comparatively poorly documented section of society” (15). She also posits a reasoning for the structure of the *Gest*; she continues with “the ballad composition of *A Gest of Robyn Hode* [was] a format more accessible to the lower classes, especially if performed” (15). This important idea leads us to our next theme of performance of Robin Hood and the adaptation of the ballads into new genres.

Fiona Allen reminds her reader that occurrences of Robin Hood are not in isolation from other traditions. In her essay “Rescuing *Galoshins*, a Scottish folk play,”⁵ Allen explores the connections between medieval English and Scottish plays of the Northern British tradition (4). She uses the references she sees to Robin Hood to explain how the “structure of the morality play...serve[d] as a blueprint for the *Galoshins* play” (2) and the *Galoshin* play’s eventual “slide from respectability” (4). Examining how “the entirety of the *Galoshin* is concerned with the *liminal*,” Allen argues “a relatively primitive people...would have welcomed an entertainment which reassured them that light and warmth would eventually return” (3). The villains and heroes of these plays are “the Black Knight, the Turkish Knight, the Prince of Egypt” and “Saint George, Prince George, King George” (3), which Allen states “This would seem to link the Robin Hood plays quite firmly to the period of the Crusades, wherein (in the terminology of the time) the brave English Christian nobles fought the invading Muslim Saracens” (3). She also explores the connections to the May Games and cites a 1508 “Robin Hood event in Aberdeen” (4). These connections demonstrate, according to Allen, that the “play which had begun life as an important part of civic festivities would undergo many more changes before it became a semi-rural custom practised first by men, then by children, and, in the 21st Century, by groups of mummers, who are gleefully re-shaping it for performance purposes” (4).

The theme of re-shaping through performance is also discussed in Jennifer Reid’s essay on Anthony Munday’s Robin Hood Plays.⁶ Reid explores the “performative turn” in Munday’s plays and how they “recreate [the] legend afresh” (69) through his reexamination of the “relationship between commercial and folk drama,” a strategy that “empower[s] a reading of the former which need not be tied up in ideas of decline or appropriation” (71). Reid argues Munday’s plays are

⁴ Kathryn Funderberg, “Barons and Yeomen, Venison and Vert: A Comparative Analysis of Magna Carta and *A Gest of Robyn Hode* in the Context of Forest Law,” *The Expositor: A Journal of Undergraduate Research in the Humanities* 9 (2017): 7-15.

⁵ Fiona Allen, “Rescuing *Galoshins*, a Scottish Folk Play,” *MEMORIAMEDIA Review* 2, no. 3 (2017): 1-4.

⁶ Jennifer Reid, “The ‘Heavie Writ of Outlawry’: Community and the Transformation of Popular Culture from Early Modern Customary Drama to Anthony Munday’s Robin Hood Plays,” *The Wenshan Review of Literature and Culture* 10 (2017): 69-91.

innovative as the gentrification of Robin is “necessitated by the different mode of performance required by the commercial stage” (78) rather than “a poor attempt to appropriate popular culture for an elite audience and for commercial gain” (71). Viewing these changes in the context of commercial drama “enable[es] an examination of Munday’s changes to the legend which focus on theatrical practice rather than on appropriation or deterioration” (72), and Reid argues how “we can also identify that his deliberate generic hybridity is, not a failure, but part of the play’s overall experiment with form” (72).

The physicality of the early texts is not only important to the Robin Hood tradition, but it is also important to our understanding of how the texts themselves are adapted. This can be observed not only in Reid’s argument about Munday’s plays but also in Carolyn Coulson’s study of her work with students in adapting a ballad for performance at both the Southeastern Medieval Association and the Longwood Medieval Conference. In the collection *The Ballad of the Lone Medievalist*, Carolyn Coulson explores her experience as teacher and director and documents her students’ experiences in her essay “Perpetual Invention and Performance-Based Research: The Case of the Ballad of *Robin Hood and the Potter*.”⁷ Coulson explains how choices in blocking in preparation for the performance and physicality “worked directly with the text” (106). Coulson also analyzes how performing one of the more dialogue-heavy ballads with her non-medievalist students led to a deeper understanding of the language and the ballad itself. Coulson points out how as she worked individually with each student’s pronunciation of each word “sound by sound” and discussed how they “venture[d] into a strange new territory for the students’ learning experience” (102). She posits, “Our experiences clearly support [Stephen] Knight and [Thomas] Ohlgren’s statement that ‘the tone and impact of the ballad may well show more art than has sometimes been assumed...’” (107). This point is important to consider as Coulson concludes that “this project contributed to an empowerment of the students through an exceptionally rich, collaborative learning experience.... I separated creative process and student learning into two different ‘filters,’ but in many ways they are intricately woven together” (107). In these exercises, Coulson’s argument resonates with Reid’s argument and how Munday’s plays create the legend afresh; for Coulson, her students, and her audience, the early poem is also freshly reimagined and better understood.

Stephen Basdeo also asks his readers to reimagine the performativity of the later ballads by considering how these poems in were intended to be shared in intimate spaces. In “Reading *Robin Hood’s Garland* in the Eighteenth Century,”⁸ Basdeo examines the qualities of eighteenth-century Robin Hood ballads which indicate that these garlands “should be viewed as products as reading material for the middle-class home” (5) and provides evidence of how the “publishers facilitated the reading of [ballads]” (2). Basdeo notes “The fact that they were marketed for readers, however, anticipates trends in antiquarian research from the middle of the century onwards, when Thomas Percy, Thomas Evans, and Joseph Ritson emphasized the ‘poetical,’ and hence literary

⁷ Carolyn Coulson, “Perpetual Invention and Performance-Based Research: The Case of the Ballad of *Robin Hood and the Potter*,” in *The Ballad of the Lone Medievalist*, ed. Kisha G. Tracy and John P. Sexton (Earth: The Milky Way, punctum books, 2018), 95-108.

⁸ Stephen Basdeo, “Reading *Robin Hood’s Garland* in the Eighteenth Century.” *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies* 2 (2018): 1-16.

status, of the songs which they had collected in their anthologies” (13). Rather than being sung, these ballads are being embraced and treated as literature.

This performance of the Robin Hood legend continues through to the present day in a different context. In modern Nottingham, England, at the Robin Hood Festival, Sally Everett and Denny John Parakoottathil studied the relationship between tourism and folklorism, “where qualitative data were generated from 20 in-depth interviews with event participants plus periods of researcher participant observation” (30).⁹ They posit how “the five-day Robin Hood Festival is unlike historic reenactments because there are no agreed and documented truths and historical fact” (31). This unique status of the festival “may offer an opportunity to interrogate concepts of escape, imaginative freedom and personality” (31). The authors observe how Robin Hood “provides a fascinating focus given the blurred distinction between fact and fiction, where stories contain both historical truth and assumptions which perhaps provides more opportunity for imaginative development and creative engagement than a purely fictitious fairy tale” (33). These participants seem to use Robin Hood as a way to escape and/or shape their identities anew, similarly to how the following two studies determined the Robin Hood legend was used.

The next two essays introduced here could have fallen into either rubric of performance or politics; importantly, they examine attempts to shape the identity of the audience through the performance of Robin Hood.

Katherine Echols’s book, *King Arthur and Robin Hood on the Radio: Adaptations for American Listeners*,¹⁰ presents the details of twentieth-century radio adaptations and “does not judge the fidelity of adaptations but rather considers the adapter’s approach” (26). While Robin Hood’s legend is created afresh, it is also subsumed into the King Arthur legend and the modern idea of medieval chivalry, portraying the “Sherwood outlaw as [a] civilized chivalric knight” (23). Like Stephen Knight, she sees the evolution of Robin Hood’s character and circumstances as examples of medievalism, which reflects on current society and reinforces values: Robin has been changed to fit audience and the type of medium through which the legend is being presented (22). Echols posits, “Robin Hood and his Merry Men all probably made it to radio because they were familiar to listeners of all ages and were easily adaptable to a restrictive format” (35). According to Echols, most of these programs excised the violence of the medieval texts and cast Robin Hood in a chivalric light more in line with modern ideas of King Arthur’s knights (31). Most of the adaptations are used in an attempt to instill certain values into the listening populace.

Much like American radio programs sought to shape American identity, the historical pageants Angela Bartie and her co-authors examine in their essay¹¹ were similarly used to shape a national or local collective English identity in the early twentieth century. The authors note “pageants in this period were particularly focused on the medieval—and especially the Anglo-Saxon—roots of the English nation and of the Christianity that was held to be a central aspect of

⁹ Sally Everett and Denny John Parakoottathil, “Transformation, Meaning-Making and Identity Creation Through Folklore Tourism: The Case of the Robin Hood Festival.” *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 13, no. 1 (2018): 30-45.

¹⁰ Katherine Barnes Echols, *King Arthur and Robin Hood on the Radio: Adaptations for American Listeners* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2017).

¹¹ Angela Bartie, Linda Fleming, Mark Freeman, Tom Hulme, Alexander Hutton, and Paul Readman, “Historical Pageants and the Medieval Past in Twentieth-Century England,” *The English Historical Review* 133, no. 563 (2018): 866-902.

it. Pageants celebrated the versions of continuous English nationhood” (872). Bartie and her co-authors argue “In keeping with the turn towards romance and legend, pageants also featured local folklore of medieval origin” (888). This essay only briefly mentions a couple of pageants featuring Robin Hood, such as a pageant in Nottingham in 1935 (888), but for those interested in pageantry and medievalism it would be a productive place to start. The second half of the twentieth century saw a shift in interest from pageant to film and television, and pageants had less of an impact on the shaping of collective identities (901-902). The explorations of radio and pageants both lead the authors to briefly examine serial television dramas popular later in the twentieth century.

ROBIN AND POLITICS

It is unsurprising that these adaptations are used to shape an identity in the audience as the legend itself became a politically charged vehicle of expression as demonstrated by the following authors.

In his article, “The Rebellious Robin Hood of the Middle Ages,”¹² Alexander L. Kaufman posits there is a strong connection between Robin Hood and rebellion which begins with Walter Bower’s description: “Bower’s historical context of this entry in his chronicle is one that places the outlaw for the first time within a rebellion” (75). Kaufman explores how Robin’s rebellious nature was used and referenced in a variety of contexts and literature, and while his actions and characterization may not stay the same throughout, these texts do produce one complex claim. According to Kaufman:

Yet the Robin Hoods of the medieval period do reflect a doubling-up of rebellious activity: of a rebellion placed on top of or alongside another form or representation of rebellion. This self-referentiality about the nature of rebellion in medieval English culture, history, and literature that is represented and contextualized in Robin Hood texts signifies a deceptively complex matrix: a rebellious character who resides within the historical and textual world of rebellious activity. (91)

We can see the interaction of this rebellious nature with specific example of England’s politics in the discussion of the following authors.

In “A Critical Edition of *Little John’s Answer to Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster* (1727),”¹³ Stephen Basdeo presents and contextualizes the ballad *Little John’s Answer*, an unexplored ballad located in the Special Collections Archive of the University of Leeds (15). Basdeo notes how “the narrative of the ballad refers to events which occurred between the King, Walpole, Lechmere, and Bolingbroke in 1727” (18). Basdeo analyzes political satire in this ballad as “popular participation in the political discourse of the day” (20), and he argues that these ballads due to their format were meant to “resist the trend towards gentrification” and to be “debated within social spaces such as the coffeehouse” (21).

However, each class seems to have their use for the outlaw; Bradley J. Irish examines an example from two centuries earlier of the opposite. In his chapter, “The Rejected Earl of Leicester,

¹² Alexander L. Kaufman, “The Rebellious Robin Hood of the Middle Ages,” in *Rebellion*, ed. Robert C. Evans, Critical Insights (Ipswich, MA: Salem Press, 2017): 73-95.

¹³ Stephen Basdeo, “A Critical Edition of *Little John’s Answer to Robin Hood and The Duke of Lancaster* (1727),” *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies* 1 (2017): 15-31.

the Rejected Sir Philip Sidney,”¹⁴ Irish argues Robin Hood “became increasingly imagined not as a working-class hero, but as a displaced, disaffected, or exiled aristocrat” (111) as “in the second half of the sixteenth century, as Leicester and Sidney were rehearsing their grievances in the imaginative space of the wild, the Robin Hood of medieval lore was simultaneously adopting a form in which they might increasingly recognize themselves” (111-12). Irish notes:

Leicester and Sidney may have especially admired one particular for-ester of the “wilde Countries”: the infamous Robin Hood. As “chiefe gouvernoure” of the wild, Robin Hood presided over an outlaw court of his merry men, a political subculture bound by the affective affinity of mutual alienation. He enjoyed a robust presence in the folklore of late medieval and early modern England—and we know he appealed to the Sidney family, who staged a Robin Hood performance during their spring festivities in 1574. (111)

Thus, Robin Hood becomes a way for even the aristocrat to make his discontent somewhat safely known.

In his essay “Robin Hood and the Forest Laws,”¹⁵ Stephen Knight explores Robin’s interaction with forest laws as he is moved into new genres “with post-medieval causes and contexts” such as enclosure (1). Knight examines the ballads collected by F. J. Child as well as Anthony Munday’s plays, Ben Jonson’s *The Sad Shepard*, popular prose and verse pamphlets, Thomas Love Peacock’s *Maid Marian*, and Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe* in the contexts of enclosures, the eventual impact of Romanticism on Robin Hood and the forest laws, as well as the modern Robin in the television series of the twentieth century. Knight argues that it is only in the nineteenth century that breach of the forest laws is “the reason for Robin’s outlaw status because the forest laws are taken as symbolic of general authoritarian oppression” (1). Knight posits:

The way the figure of Robin Hood developed after 1800 seems to be a classic of dialectical medievalism: through forest celebration it yearns for the natural beauties of pre-urban, pre-capitalist times; but through the forest laws concept it also stands for an equally modern sense of personal freedom and escape from the unpleasant interventions of authority. (11-12)

Knight argues Robin “and his myth keep on evolving in the service of our considerations and consolations” (12). This idea can be clearly seen in the authors’ discussions of adaptations of the Robin Hood tradition in the following section.

ADAPTATIONS FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The following essays explore adaptations of Robin Hood in the twentieth century, specifically the impact that the current events had upon a poetic adaptation as well as the representation of characters within film adaptations.

¹⁴ Bradley J. Irish, “The Rejected Earl of Leicester, the Rejected Sir Philip Sidney,” in *Emotion in the Tudor Court: Literature, History, and Early Modern Feeling*, Rethinking the Early Modern (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2018), 93-136.

¹⁵ Stephen Knight, “Robin Hood and the Forest Laws.” *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies* 1 (2017): 1-12.

Sadie Hash, “A Review of Robin Hood Scholarship Published in 2017-2018.” *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies* 3 (2019): 23-33.

In his essay, “‘Sherwood in the Twilight’: Re-Working Robin Hood on the Eve of the Great War,”¹⁶ Miguel Alarcão presents in full and examines the poem “Song of Sherwood” by Alfred Noyes. Alarcão argues that the poem is “an example of pre-war heritage poetry” (145) and notes “Noyes’s poetic recall of the medieval outlaw in the post-Victorian twilight (including its Edwardian and early Georgian afterglows)” (149), which supports his contextualization of the poem through the lens of the eve of World War I.

The Robin Hood legend is well situated to media making statements about war. In “Child Soldiers in Medieval(esque) Cinema,”¹⁷ Peter Burkholder and David Rosen analyze the use of children in warfare in medieval films which “are far more concerned with creating an aura of symbolic, emotional, and psychological authenticity than historical accuracy” (147). While most of the films presented in their examination describe children pressed into service, such as Ridley Scott’s *Kingdom of Heaven* (2005) and his *Robin Hood* (2010), which features “orphans [who] show limited agency by offering their military assistance, their role is ultimately ephemeral to the hurdles that the adult protagonists must overcome” (159). The orphans desire to participate in the battle on the beach is motivated by “Marion Loxley’s surrogate motherhood” (163) and “the better living standards afforded them by Marion” (159).

Although female characters are added later to the Robin Hood literary tradition, adaptations provide a way to address their importance in the expanding Robin Hood legend. In her essay “‘She Is My Eleanor’: The Character of Isabella of Angoulême on Film—A Medieval Queen in Modern Media,”¹⁸ Carey Fleiner examines two films, Richard Lester’s *Robin and Marian* (1977) and Ridley Scott’s *Robin Hood* (2010) and provides context for Isabella’s characterizations, which “indicate her passion, her influence on politics, and the weakness and folly of the men around her” (95) in her approximate twenty minutes of screen time between the two films (92). Both films play with time, which allows for Isabella’s appearance in the films and focus on “flashpoints [such as] the teenaged sex toy... [and then] an opinionated woman” (100). Fleiner posits that “Literary history of course can take liberties that scholarship cannot; moralizing biographies, historical fiction, and film fill in gaps in the sparse historical record, recreating the personalities of such powerful women by hanging contemporary attitudes, cultural mores, and experience on the skeleton of intriguing facts provided by the original sources” (101).

While these discussions of adaptations may not focus solely on the character of Robin as most of our discussion up to this point has, they demonstrate the versatility and depth of the Robin Hood legend and all of its characters.

¹⁶ Miguel Alarcão, “‘Sherwood in the Twilight’: Re-Working Robin Hood on the Eve of the Great War,” *Gaudium Sciendi* 14 (2018): 141-52.

¹⁷ Peter Burkholder and David Rosen, “Child Soldiers in Medieval(esque) Cinema,” in *War, Myths, and Fairy Tales*, ed. Sara Buttsworth and Maartje M. Abbenhuis (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017) 147-73.

¹⁸ Carey Fleiner, “‘She Is My Eleanor’: The Character of Isabella of Angoulême on Film—A Medieval Queen in Modern Media,” in *Premodern Rulers and Postmodern Viewers: Gender, Sex, and Power in Popular Culture*, ed. Janice North, Karl C. Alvestad, and Elena Woodacre, *Queenship and Power* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 91-110.

SITUATING ROBIN

Robin Melrose and Stephen Basedo published works which situated the Robin Hood legend within the greater context of medieval literature and history.

In his book *Warriors and Wilderness in Medieval Britain: From Arthur and Beowulf to Sir Gawain and Robin Hood*,¹⁹ Melrose demonstrates the connections between Beowulf, King Arthur, and Robin Hood. He provides a summarized history of the references to Robin Hood with excerpts and focuses on each figure's connection to not only the wilderness and the forest but to each other through the status of outlaw. Melrose argues:

The Arthur of the Welsh tale *Culhwch and Olwen* belonged to the wilderness, and some have seen him as an outlaw like the Irish hero Fionn (or Finn) mac Cumhaill... However, Arthur never regained the outlaw status he may have had ... and the role of the outlaw was taken by other figures...his later medieval descendant Robin Hood. (185)

The final two chapters of the book are on Robin Hood in the late Middle Ages, with Melrose naming him the “Wilderness Hero” and providing excerpts from the poems with explanations and connections.

In his chapter “Robin Hood: ‘That Celebrated English Outlaw’”²⁰ from his 2018 book *The Lives & Exploits of the Most Noted Highwaymen, Rogues and Murderers*, Stephen Basedo also explores “some of the historical outlaws whom researchers have identified as being possible candidates for the ‘real’ Robin Hood” (2). After listing several common possibilities for the “actual” Robin Hood from court rolls, Basedo reminds us “that the name of Robin Hood was often used as an alias by criminals in the late medieval period, and it was used by a variety of people whose actions challenged state authority” (3) He then takes the readers through an accounting of the most pertinent Robin Hood adaptations and makes key points about the figure's relationship with the nation's audience. Basedo argues Sir Walter Scott's reasoning for writing *Ivanhoe* “was to create a shared sense of history around which all people could rally” (10). Later Basedo notes that “Robin Hood is perhaps the perfect hero to be ‘Americanised’; he is the man who stands up for the common man against the strong and powerful, much like an American superhero” (14).

CONCLUSION

While most of the scholarship from 2017 and 2018 seemed to consider the interaction between the Robin Hood legend and politics, the approaches and texts used are quite diverse. As proven by many of our authors, revisiting and reexamining generally accepted claims often leads to a productive and enlightening discussion. Studying performance and adaptation continue to be a critical aspect of Robin Hood scholarship.

¹⁹ Robin Melrose, *Warriors and Wilderness in Medieval Britain: From Arthur and Beowulf to Sir Gawain and Robin Hood* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland 2017).

²⁰ Stephen Basedo, “Chapter 1: Robin Hood,” in *The Lives & Exploits of the Most Noted Highwaymen, Rogues and Murderers* (Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword History, 2018), 1-14.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alarcão, Miguel. “‘Sherwood in the Twilight’: Re-Working Robin Hood on the Eve of the Great War.” *Gaudium Sciendi* 14 (2018): 141-52.
- Allen, Fiona. “Rescuing *Galoshins*, a Scottish Folk Play.” *MEMORIAMEDIA Review* 2, no. 3 (2017): 1-4.
- Banton, Michael. “The Political Sources of the Paradox.” In *What We Now Know About Race and Ethnicity*, 31-49. Berghahn Books, 2018.
- Bartie, Angela, Linda Fleming, Mark Freeman, Tom Hulme, Alexander Hutton, and Paul Readman. “Historical Pageants and the Medieval Past in Twentieth-Century England.” *The English Historical Review* 133, no. 563 (2018): 866-902.
- Basdeo, Stephen. “A Critical Edition of *Little John’s Answer to Robin Hood and The Duke of Lancaster* (1727).” *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies* 1 (2017): 15-31.
- . “Chapter 1: Robin Hood.” In *The Lives & Exploits of the Most Noted Highwaymen, Rogues and Murderers*, 1-14. Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Books History, 2018.
- . “Reading Robin Hood’s Garland in the Eighteenth Century.” *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies* 2 (2018): 1-16.
- Burkholder, Peter, and David Rosen. “Child Soldiers in Medieval(esque) Cinema.” In *War, Myths, and Fairy Tales*, edited by Sarah Buttsworth and Maartje M. Abbenhuis, 147-73. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.
- Coulson, Carolyn. “Perpetual Invention and Performance-Based Research: The Case of the Ballad of *Robin Hood and the Potter*.” In *The Ballad of the Lone Medievalist*, edited by Kisha G. Tracy and John P. Sexton, 95-108. Earth: Milky Way: punctum books, 2018.
- Echols, Katherine Barnes. *King Arthur and Robin Hood on the Radio: Adaptations for American Listeners*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2017.
- Everett, Sally, and Denny John Parakootathil. “Transformation, Meaning-Making and Identity Creation through Folklore Tourism: The Case of the Robin Hood Festival.” *Journal of Heritage Tourism* 13, no. 1 (2018): 30-45.
- Fleiner, Carey. “‘She Is My Eleanor’: The Character of Isabella of Angoulême on Film—A Medieval Queen in Modern Media.” In *Premodern Rulers and Postmodern Viewers: Gender, Sex, and Power in Popular Culture*, edited by Janice North, Karl C. Alvestad, and Elena Woodacre, 91-110. Queenship and Power. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.
- Funderburg, Kathryn. “Barons and Yeomen, Venison and Vert: A Comparative Analysis of Magna Carta and *A Gest of Robyn Hode* in the Context of Forest Law.” *The Expositor: A Journal of Undergraduate Research in the Humanities* 9 (2017): 7-15.
- Hoyle, R. W. “A Re-Reading of the *Gest of Robyn Hode*.” *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 61 (2017): 67-113.
- Jones, Michael. “*Nottingham Medieval Studies* at Sixty.” *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 61 (2017): 1-8.
- Irish, Bradley J. “The Rejected Earl of Leicester, the Rejected Sir Philip Sidney.” In *Emotion in*
- Sadie Hash, “A Review of Robin Hood Scholarship Published in 2017-2018.” *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies* 3 (2019): 23-33.

- the Tudor Court: Literature, History, and Early Modern Feeling*, 93-136. Rethinking the Early Modern. Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2018.
- Jones, Michael. "Nottingham Medieval Studies at Sixty." *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 61 (2017): 1-8.
- Kaufman, Alexander L. "The Rebellious Robin Hood of the Middle Ages." In *Rebellion*, edited by Robert C. Evans, 79-95. Critical Insights. Ipswich, MA: Salem Press, 2017.
- Knight, Stephen. "Robin Hood and the Forest Laws." *The Bulletin of the International Association for Robin Hood Studies* 1 (2017): 1-12.
- Melrose, Robin. *Warriors and Wilderness in Medieval Britain: From Arthur and Beowulf to Sir Gawain and Robin Hood*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2017.
- Reid, Jennifer. "The 'Heavie Writ of Outlawry': Community and the Transformation of Popular Culture from Early Modern Customary Drama to Anthony Munday's Robin Hood Plays." *The Wenshan Review of Literature and Culture* 10 (2017): 69-91.
- Ward, Renée. "'Thou shalt have the better cloathe': Reading Second Skins in *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*." In *Flaying in the Pre-Modern World: Practice and Representation*, edited by Larissa Tracy, 349-65. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017.