

## Acknowledgments

In many ways, the acknowledgments for this book could be the entire book. So many people helped along the way, checked in, answered questions, kept me on track, and reminded me why I wanted to write this in the first place. I finished the draft manuscript at the start of a global pandemic, which meant that I had limited access to research materials. Luckily, I *did* still have access to a lovely a community of scholars on Twitter. So many people were willing to reach out, answer questions, help with thorny translations, and even send along PDF scans of texts. These colleagues include, but are not limited to: Carolyn Larrington, Shiloh Carroll, Jonah Coman, James Gifford, Katie DeCoste, Ellis Amity Light, Dainy Bernstein, Blake Gutt, Claudia Wittig, Kara Maloney, Steven Kruger, Matt McCall, Gabrielle M. W. Bychowski, Brooke Findley, Juliette de Bertole, Curtis Runstedler, Kara McShane, Anne Brannen, Taylor Driggers-McDowall, Steven Bruso, A. E. Whitacre, Kavita Mudan Finn, and Esther Liberman Cuenca. I'm also grateful for the ongoing anti-racist work of medievalists like Dorothy Kim, Jonathan Hsy, and Mary Rambaran-Olm. The medieval analysis in this book would not have been possible without all of you, and I love our community.

This is also a book about disability and neurodiversity across time, and I'm particularly indebted to work on medieval disability studies by Cameron Hunt McNabb, Joshua Eyler, and Will Rogers. My own analysis has also been enriched by the work of disabled and neurodivergent scholars: Alison Kafer, Eli Clare, Melanie Yergeau, Julia Miele Rodas, Margaret Price, and Petra Kuppers. Special thanks to Travis Chi Wing Lau for sending me his work on crippling academic time, and John Loeppky, for all his efforts to amplify creative work by disabled artists in Regina (and for always being the one to send a gentle text or DM asking me how I'm doing). Kathryn Nogue's keen editorial eye also helped to shape the book's introduction, and I'm grateful for her own scholarly and community work.

Many of the ideas for this book emerged from classroom conversations, where my students offered brilliant and critical readings of disability representation in pop culture. I'm especially thankful for the contributions of Hannah Grover, Kris Ferguson, Taylor Gilkes-Reed, Joshua Kopriva, Yasmin Woolridge, Quinn Hosking, Amy Langen, Hannah Eiserman, Eric Piapot, and Carrie Fehr. I've been inspired by the fantasy literature of my creative writing students, including Courtney Stroh, Laetitia Adams, Farron Ager, and Matt MacDonald, as well as scholarship on gender and heroism by Apolline Lucyk. I'm grateful for Cody Jackson's work on queer disability studies, and Rosemary McAllister's work on fandom and neurodiversity.

There were multiple podcasts that helped shape this book's discussion. *Hazel & Katniss & Harry & Starr* was invaluable for its treatment of YA literature

(and the precious banter between Joe Lipsett and Brenna Clarke Gray was a balm when I was recovering from surgery). Clarke Gray's educational technology podcast, *You Got This*, also helped me to innovate my online teaching. *Witch Please*, hosted by Hannah McGregor and Marcelle Kosman (produced by Ariana Martinez) offered fascinating discussions of the Potterverse and its impact on YA genres. Matt Baume's *Sewers of Paris* podcast was a source of fascinating interviews, including a perfect discussion with Anthony Oliveira about medievalism in *He-Man*. Andrew Gurza's *Disability after Dark* also influenced my discussion of disability representation, and *Queer As Fact* provided some great historical and literary examples.

My friends and colleagues at the University of Regina have inspired and sustained me throughout this project. Medrie Purdham, there aren't enough words for how much I love you and your family. Mark Lajoie, thanks for always being a voice of reason (I'm devastated I missed out on your mulled wine this year). Rowan Lajoie, you once told me that I should lift everyone I love to see the moon, and I've tried to keep doing that—I'm continually inspired by the person you're growing into. Victor Lajoie, your energy is boundless, and you can do anything. Alexis McQuigge, your friendship is invaluable to me, and I love that you can crack me up with a look. Thanks for renewing my interest in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and for introducing me to other fascinating eighteenth-century authors. Jon Wight, thanks for always being available to talk about spaceships, and for the time you drove me to the hospital late at night (Alexis drove me twice that same year—it was a banner year for emergency visits).

Susan Johnston, thanks for your excellent work on Tolkien and *Game of Thrones*, and for the many conversations we've had about fantasy literature over the years. Marcel DeCoste, thanks for your kindness as department head when I was having a particularly rough time, and for your sense of hospitality. Jason Demers, thanks for your vital public scholarship on incarceration, and for the many quick but sweet conversations by the photocopier (in the before times). Melanie Schnell, thanks for your writing, and for always letting me melt into a puddle of anxiety. Troni Grande, thanks for your poetry, and for all the support you've given me over the years. Michelle Coupal, thanks for your work on the legacy of residential schools, and for all that you bring to our department and community. Jean Hillabold, thanks for your generosity as a writer and reviewer, and for all your community work.

West Coast thanks go to June Scudeler, for all the conversations we've had over the years about academia and beyond. And to Shelley Boyd, for our chats over dinner, and for including my oddball essay on queer food studies in your excellent volume, *Canadian Culinary Imaginations*. To Bea, for all the reasons. To my parents, for instilling in me a love of reading, research, and medieval

history. To Guinevere, whose medievalist name only fueled her tenacity as a cat (she once dispelled an actual dragon from my bedroom).

I wrote this book as a settler scholar living on multiple territories. Treaty 4: traditional homelands of the Nêhiyawak, Anihšīnāpēk, Dakota, Lakota, and Nakoda peoples, as well as the Métis Nation. And Unceded Coast Salish territory: traditional homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, Stó:lō, and Tsleil-Wautuh nations. I acknowledge that I am a guest on these territories, and that I am invested in working towards efforts of decolonization, both in the classroom and beyond.

Finally, this book is a love letter to queer, trans, nonbinary, and neurodivergent scholars, students, readers, and viewers. I hope you keep seeing yourself in the diverse Middle Ages.

