Walsh Library: Seton Hall University

British Medieval Literature

Selection of Resources

INFO 665-900

Collection Management

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**Introduction:**

The Walsh Library of Seton Hall University seeks to provide curriculum support and research tools for the University community. Their mission is to support the students, faculty, and staff through their holdings. The British Medieval Literature collection is an important part of supporting this goal. The section supports researchers among the faculty as well as students taking classes in a variety of fields. As a result, the user community is quite diverse, ranging from undergraduate and graduate students, to faculty researchers as well as the occasional outside researcher who visits the library. With such a wide range of needs, the section must be well-rounded to support the many users at Seton Hall University. While the major users are focused in the English Department, the collection is also utilized by scholars in other fields such as Classical Studies and History.

In order to meet the needs of these users, the following selection criteria have been established. **Curriculum Connection:** Because the Walsh Library’s main goal is to support the curriculum needs of the community, the collection should support the specific research needs of the courses that study British Medievalism. **Quality of Content:** The collection should include sources which are of high academic quality in order to support a high level of academic research. This includes the accuracy of information and credibility of author or producer. **Quality of Product:** Sources included in the collection should also include a level of technical quality based on format. Durable binding, high-quality images, ease of access and use, completeness of supplemental material, and endurance of format are some of the issues that should be taken into consideration when selecting items for the collection. **Originality:** Titles should not duplicate topics of current holdings without adding significant new content. Efforts should be made to fill any gaps within the current collection. **Diversity:** Because of the diverse user base for this collection, every effort should be made to include as wide a selection as possible to include a variety of perspectives and views. **Ongoing Use:** The item should be considered for its long-lasting relevance for the collection. **Currency:** Effort should be made to include not only the classic items and perspectives but also the current moves in scholarship and contemporary translations or editions.

Selection aids used through the process included a variety of sources. Academic journals and databases were useful in finding reviews for specific items or browsing general keyword results. *CHOICE*, *UlrichsWeb*, *Library Journal*, and *Parergon* were all used. Publisher websites were also helpful for locating reviews, summaries, and pricing information, and some offer useful browsing options. Those used for this process were *Films Media Group*, *University of Pennsylvania Press*, *University of Notre Dame Press, Alexander Street Press, A M Productions,* and *Medieval Institute Publications*. Other libraries, catalogs, blogs, and commercial sites were also effective in locating new items. *WorldCat,* Rutgers University Libraries, The Medieval Ages Online list by Louisiana State University, the blog “A Corner of Tenth Century Europe,” and Perrault and Aversa’s resource book *Information Resources in the Humanities and the Arts*, as well as Amazon were useful in locating sources.

**Selection of Current Materials:**

**1.** Alexander Street Press. (2013). *Classical music in video*. Retrieved from <http://alexanderstreet.com/products/classical-music-video>

**Format:** Subscription Database

**Description:** This database offers hundreds of videos of performances, masterclasses, and music history. It also offers a variety of search options and the ability to create custom video clips and playlists.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: This database offers a huge variety of music including a significant section on medieval literature. Many professors incorporate visual and audio supplemental material and this would provide a consolidated resource for this goal in classes such as British Literature I, Medieval Literature, Chaucer, The Drama in Great Britain I, Special Topics on British Literature Pre-1800, Introduction to Drama, Introduction to Poetry, Women and Literature I (Undergraduate, 2013, pp. 138-140), Approaches to British Literature, and Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, p. 83). It also provides access to other classical music, making it valuable for other course in the English Department and in many other departments throughout the university.

2. Quality of Content: Alexander Street Press is known for offering high quality academic music products. The reviews and listing of available content shows this to be a valuable addition to the British Medieval Literature collection.

3. Quality of Product: The search functions, index, transcripts, permanent URLs, and other features make this easy to navigate and use either as an individual or for a course.

4. Originality: As there are few video and audio sources within the British Medieval Literature collection, this video database helps to fill that gap. Although the database is not focused specifically on medieval music, the lack of a resource focused solely on that topic makes this a valuable alternative and addition.

5. Currency: With items continuing to be added, this database offers a current resource for the collection.

**Selection aids used:**

1. LaGuardia, C. (2012). eReviews. *Library Journal, 137*(16), 102. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1142278094?accountid=10559>. This review provides a detailed summary of the capabilities of the search and some of the materials available through the database.

2. Alexander Street Press. (2013). *Classical music in video*. Retrieved from

<http://alexanderstreet.com/products/classical-music-video>. The site offers a detailed description of the database’s options, screenshots, sample clips, and reviews showing it to be a valuable and varied resource.

**Price:** Available as annual subscription or one-time perpetual rights purchase. Scaled to library budget – Alexander Street Press (2012). *Classical music in video* [PDF]. Retrieved from <http://alexanderstreet.com/sites/default/files/products/CLMV%20BrochX.pdf>

Annual subscriptions start at $1,105 for academic libraries - LaGuardia, C. (2012). eReviews. *Library Journal, 137*(16), 102. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1142278094?accountid=10559>

**2.** BBC Worldwide Ltd. (Producer). (2009). *In the footsteps of Sir Gawain and the green knight* [motion picture]. United States: Films Media Group. DVD ISBN 9781616166151

**Format:** Streaming Video

**Description:** This video is narrated by Simon Armitage based on his translation of the famous medieval tale and follows the landscape of the story. Readings and commentary are also provided throughout the video.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: As one of the most famous medieval romances, this poem has been taught in a number of courses including the undergraduate classes British Literature I, Medieval Literature, Special Topics in British Literature Pre-1800 (2013, p. 138) and the graduate courses Approaches to British Literature and Studies in Medieval Literature (2013, p. 83). This film offers a visual interpretation and geographical connection to the work that can supplement any of the above listed courses.

2. Quality of Content: The sample clip shows good film work and excellent sound. As a well-known translator, the narrator provides authoritative commentary.

3. Quality of Product: Produced by the BBC and distributed by Cambridge’s film division, this film appears to hold to the high standards for which both are normally known. The streaming license will allow for easy classroom use.

4. Originality: The British Medieval Collection in the Walsh Library contains virtually no visual media. This provides a valuable addition to this collection without straining the limited space of the building.

5. Currency: Based on one of the most recent translation of *Sir Gawain and the green knight*, this film offers the text as well as the translator’s commentary, providing a valuable and current resource.

**Selection aids used:**

1. WorldCat. (n.d.). *In the footsteps of Sir Gawain and the green knight*. Retrieved from [http://www.worldcat.org/title/in-the-footsteps-of-sir-gawain-and-the-green- knight/oclc/700415972&referer=brief\_results](http://www.worldcat.org/title/in-the-footsteps-of-sir-gawain-and-the-green-%09%09%09knight/oclc/700415972&referer=brief_results). The WorldCat entry offers a summary of the work as well as subject headings which were useful for determining the scope of the video. It also provides a list of other libraries holding the item, which included several other academic libraries including Springfield College, University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Philadelphia University, helping to establish its usefulness in an academic collection.

2. Films Media Group. (2013). *In the footsteps of Sir Gawain and the green knight*. Retrieved from <http://cambridge.films.com/ItemDetails.aspx?TitleId=17018> This source provided a summary as well as pricing information and a preview clip to give a taste of the film’s offerings.

**Price:** $169.95/3 year streaming – Films Media Group. (2013). *In the footsteps of Sir Gawain and the green knight*. Retrieved from <http://cambridge.films.com/ItemDetails.aspx?TitleId=17018>

**3.** Crane, S. (2012). *Animal encounters: Contacts and concepts in medieval Britain*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

**Format:** eBook

**Description:** This book offers an upper level look at the connection between humans and animals in medieval literature and culture. It offers a unique look at the difference between Western thought on the topic and the medieval perception.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: This title is geared toward upper level undergraduates and graduate students and could provide a useful resource for those taking Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, p. 83) or completing their thesis in medieval topics or undergraduates taking Medieval Literature or Special Topics in British Literature Pre- 1800 (Undergraduate, 2013, p. 138) or completing their senior thesis project. It also offers potential use for students taking the history course The High Middle Ages (undergraduate, 2013, p. 149) .

2. Quality of Content: Susan Crane teaches at Columbia University and performs her research in the areas of medieval literature (Columbia). Reviews laud her engaging style and prose as well as the intricacies of her analysis and discussion.

3. Quality of Product: University of Pennsylvania Press eBooks work well within the Walsh Library catalog system. Books offer easy navigation, highlighting, chapter headings, and searching with the title.

4. Originality: The British Medieval Literature collection does not contain any resources on the theory of animal studies. This helps to fill that gap.

5. Diversity: This book adds a new perspective to the collection.

6. Ongoing Use: As this field is just beginning to gain prominence, it fills a gap in literary theory that will most likely continue to grow, creating an ongoing need for a source on this subject.

7. Currency: With animal studies coming forward as a new and influential literary theory, this book adds a valuable new resource to the British Medieval Collection.

**Selection aids used:**

1. Morrison, R. D. (2013). Crane, Susan. Animal encounters: contacts and concepts in medieval Britain. doi:10.5860/CHOICE.51-0131. This review offers a recommendation for this title, particularly suggesting it for upper level undergraduate students through faculty.

2. University of Pennsylvania Press. (2012). *Animal encounters contacts and concepts in medieval Britain*. Retrieved from

<http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15034.html> The publisher’s website offers review snippets as well as additional information concerning the book.

**Price:** $59.95 – University of Pennsylvania Press. (2012). *Animal encounters contacts and concepts in medieval Britain*. Retrieved from <http://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/15034.html>

**4.** Foster, D. W., et. al (Eds.). (2013). *Women’s works, volume 1: 900-1550*. n.p.: Wicked Good Books. ISBN: 9780988282001

**Format:** Print Monograph

**Description:** This volume collects writings by British women of the medieval period all of which are presented with modern translations side by side with original text as well as footnotes and contextual notes.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: Beyond supporting courses on general medieval studies and British literature, this will also prove a valuable addition to the collection for the Women in Literature course which begins in the medieval period. Specific courses for which this title could be used include British Literature I, Medieval Literature, Special Topics in British Literature Pre-1800, The Drama in Great Britain I, Women and Literature I, Illness and Literature, and Introduction to Poetry (Undergraduate, 2013, pp. 138, 140) as well as Approaches to British Literature and Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, p. 83).

2. Quality of Content: This volume offers effective historical introductions to the works and side-by-side translations and paraphrasing. Foster is a professor of English at Vassar whose focus of study is early women writers along with Literature of the English Renaissance (Vassar).

3. Originality: There are no current collections of women writers focused on the medieval period in the British Medieval Literature section. This volume helps to fill a rather significant gap in the collection.

4. Diversity: Since many of these works have never been published before, this monograph provides unique discussion and interpretation.

5. Ongoing Use: Due to the necessity for a work of this type based on the ongoing curriculum needs, this volume will be a useful source for a variety of scholars on a continuing basis.

6. Currency: Having just been published this year and offering a welcome addition to the field of women authors of the Middle Ages, this book adds valuable currency to the section.

**Selection aids used:**

1. WorldCat. (n.d.). *Women’s works volume 1: 900-1550*. Retrieved from

[http://www.worldcat.org/title/womens-works-volume-1-900- 1550/oclc/844955960&referer=brief\_results](http://www.worldcat.org/title/womens-works-volume-1-900-%09%09%09%09%091550/oclc/844955960&referer=brief_results). World Cat offers the Library of Congress headings putting this into the category of sources for this collection. It also provides a lengthy list of other academic libraries which hold this book, lending credibility to its worth in an academic setting.

2. Amazon. (2013). *Women’s works: 900-1550 (volume 1)*. Retrieved from [http://www.amazon.com/Womens-Works-Donald-Foster- al/dp/0988282003/ref=sr\_1\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1384022998&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Womens-Works-Donald-Foster-%09%09%09%09%09%09al/dp/0988282003/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1384022998&sr=1-1)

Although a commercial site, this offers a summary of the work as well as the ability to search inside to see the breadth and quality of the included items.

**Price:** $29.95 – Wicked Good Books. (2013). *Women’s works, volume 1: 900-1550*. Retrieved from <http://wicked-good-books.com/?p=466>

**5.** Jokinen, A. (Ed.). (2011). *Anthology of Middle English literature (1350-1485)*. Retrieved from <http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/>

**Format:** Web Source

**Description:** This website collects information and freely available texts from the Medieval period, placing them in clearly categorized areas with hyperlinks, sources, and an encyclopedia of relevant terms, people, and events. Although not associated with a school or other institution, it has provided high quality access for nearly twenty years.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: This site offers full text of many authors that are studied in various undergraduate and graduate courses including Chaucer, Malory, Kempe, and Lydgate as well as Medieval plays and lyrics. The following courses would find this site a valuable resource: British Literature I, Medieval Literature, Chaucer, The Drama in Great Britain I, Special Topics in British Literature Pre-1800, Great Books of the Western World I, Introduction to Drama, Introduction to Poetry, Women and Literature I, (Undergraduate, 2013, pp. 138, 140), Chaucer, Linguistic History of English, Approaches to British Literature, Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, pp. 82-83), as well as crossing over into courses for the History and Classical Studies Departments.

2. Quality of Content: Although the site is not affiliated with a school or institution, contributors include professors and scholars from well-known Universities such as Temple University, Rutgers, and the University of Toronto among others (Letter, 2006). Information on each page, though brief, appears to be accurate, and the cross-referencing between historical and literary aspects is fairly thorough.

3. Quality of Product: *Luminarium* has a clean and easily navigable interface. The text is readable and great effort has gone into keeping it attractive as well as useful. Although the site does contain some advertisements, they are restricted to somewhat related topics and are integrated in a non-distracting way.

4. Originality: Although many of these works are available via the Walsh Library in print or digital format, the freely available format and easy access make this a valuable addition. The Library currently does not offer links to any free web sources for this collection, allowing *Luminarium* to fill a gap in resources.

5. Ongoing Use: The website is regularly updated and has been maintained faithfully since 1996. Links appear to be well-maintained and the information is not that which would go out of date. Although there are no guarantees with any website, it appears that this will provide ongoing use for users at the Walsh Library.

**Selection aids used:**

1. Perrault, A. H. & Aversa, E. S. (2013). *Information resources in the humanities and the arts* (6th ed.). Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited. This current reference guide states that in their section on open access resources in literature, they have collected only “the best sites that have stood the test of time” (p. 136). The *Luminarium* website and the Middle English Literature section are referenced as one of these valuable resources.

2. Schaus, M. C. (2006). Luminarium, by Anniina Jokinen. *CHOICE, 43*(12), n.p. doi:10.5860/CHOICE.43Sup-0135. The website, including the Anthology of Middle English literature is listed as Essential by the CHOICE reviewer, noting that while there are some minor flaws and commercial content, this source is overall reliable and has maintained an appealing and useful site.

**Price:** Free

**6.** Krén, E. (Ed.). (2013). *Web gallery of art*. Retrieved from <http://www.wga.hu/index1.html>

**Format:** Web Source

**Description:** This freely available web source offers thousands of images of art including paintings, drawings, sculpture, domestic arts, and illuminations. It offers a robust search engine and online tours of specific periods or types of art with histories and hyperlinks to images.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: With a wide variety of art from the Medieval period, this resources offers supplemental material for the Medieval Literature collection at the Walsh Library. Most of the professors employ images in their discussion of literature and culture and as such this will be useful in a variety of graduate and undergraduate courses on medieval literature and British literature. Not only will it support the English Department but also the Art History, Art Education, History, Culture, and Classical Studies Departments.

2. Quality of Content: In the introduction, Krén notes that the site is specifically focused on providing academic level resources for students and teachers (Krén). The material fulfills this focus and the tours offer information that appears to be academically and historically accurate.

3. Quality of Product: The site is fairly easy to navigate with a grid structure. The search offers multiple functions including the ability to sort by time period, artist, school, and other useful limiters. The images are of good quality and allow for printing or bookmarking for easy academic use.

4. Originality: There is a gap in visual resources for the British Medieval Literature section. Although this site is not focused on the Medieval period specifically, it does offer a strong and varied collection of art from that period which will help to fill this gap in sources at the Walsh Library.

5. Diversity: The wide selection of art types provides a diverse collection which will broaden the British Medieval Literature section’s holdings.

6. Ongoing Use: This site is regularly updated with hundreds of new images having been added in July 2013. The site opened in 1996 and offers a chronology of the important additions and changes which have taken place. There is a commitment to providing ongoing access to these materials (Krén).

**Selection aids used:**

1. Jarrett, J. (2013). *Resources*. Retrieved from <http://tenthmedieval.wordpress.com/> Jarrett is a lecturer for medieval studies and offers a list of suggested resources. He does not have specific criteria for what he includes, but he evidences a concern for only linking to high quality resources.

2. Emison, P. (2001). Web gallery of art. *CHOICE, 39*(4). doi:10.5860/CHOICE.39-1993 This review does not give a rating, but does note that the site offers a particularly strong search engine and that the images represent a wide range of periods, artists, and countries and recommends it for upper-division undergraduates and up.

**Price:** Free

**7.** Medieval English Theatre. (2009-2011). *Medieval English Theatre, 31-33*. Retrieved from <http://www.medievalenglishtheatre.co.uk/volindex.html#25>

**Format:** Print journal

**Description:** This international journal offers a variety of articles on topics related to medieval theatre and is published semi-annually. These three most recent issues provide valuable perspectives on important authors and works.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: Not only is drama included in the general classes on British or medieval literature, but there are also classes specifically on the history of drama, creating a need for a journal on this topic. Specific courses of interest include Approaches to British Literature, Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, p. 83), Medieval Literature, The Drama in Great Britain I, Special Topics in British Literature Pre-1800, and Introduction to Drama(Undergraduate, 2013, pp. 138, 140).

2. Originality: This journal offers a more focused perspective on English medieval drama than the two other journals that include this topic. Its international scope also adds to the originality of this resource.

3. Diversity: Publishing international authors and a variety of topics, this journal provides a broad view of topics concerning drama during the Middle Ages.

4. Ongoing Use: The print copies of these journal volumes allows for ongoing use in the library rather than losing access by dropping an online subscription.

5. Currency: These journal volumes present current topics and a mixture of traditional and new literary theories.

**Selection aids used:**

1. UlrichsWeb. (2013). *Medieval English theatre*. Retrieved through *ProQuest*. Ulrich’s provides brief description as well as confirmation of peer review and scholarly reputation for this journal title.

2. Middle Ages Online. (2013). *Periodical publications (journals) in medieval studies*. Retrieved from [http://sites01.lsu.edu/faculty/jgellri/sample-page/periodical- publications-journals-in-medieval-studies/](http://sites01.lsu.edu/faculty/jgellri/sample-page/periodical-%09%09%09publications-journals-in-medieval-studies/). This listing of periodicals is focused on providing a brief summary and recommendation for journals which publish on medieval topics. A variety of high quality and well-known titles add authority to the inclusion of *Medieval English Theatre*.

**Price:** £50, approx. $80 currently – Medieval English Theatre. (2013). *Subscriptions and sales*. Retrieved from <http://www.medievalenglishtheatre.co.uk/subs_sales.html>

**8.** Newman, B. (2013). *Medieval crossover: Reading the secular against the sacred*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. ISBN: 9780268036119.

**Format:** Print Monograph

**Description:** Offering a critical discussion of the secular and sacred during the Middle Ages, this volume emphasizes the differences in culture between medieval and modern and the impact this should have on the reading and analysis of works of the period.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: Not only does this support the multiple courses offered concerning medieval literature such as Medieval Literature, Chaucer, The Drama in Great Britain I, Special Topics in British Literature Pre-1800, Fantasy and Fiath in British Literature (Undergraduate, 2013, pp. 138, 140), Chaucer, Approaches to British Literature, and Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, pp. 82-83) but it also has potential usefulness for the Classical Studies and Religion Departments.

2. Quality of Content: Newman is a well-respected professor at Northwestern University and has edited, translated, and written many other books on the medieval period (Northwestern). This volume offers scholarly criticism and historical context.

3. Originality: While there are other volumes in the collection concerning the reading of medieval texts, this monograph offers a new perspective, both in connecting the spiritual and secular and in its emphasis on a historical reading. It fills a small gap within the collection

4. Diversity: Offering a different perspective than many medieval critics, this work adds to the diverse views of the collection.

5. Currency: Having just been published this year, this work helps keep the collection up to date with a new study in British Medieval Literature..

**Selection aids used:**

1. University of Notre Dame Press. (2013). *Medieval crossover reading the secular against the sacred*. Retrieved from <http://undpress.nd.edu/book/P03046>. The site offers a detailed summary of the book as well as reviews from other scholars and excerpts from journal reviews showing it to be a good fit for the collection.

2. Keymer, D. (2013). Medieval crossover: Reading the secular against the sacred. *Library Journal, 138*(11), 90. This positive review sees the volume as an excellent textual study offering a unique and valuable perspective.

**Price:** $42.00 – University of Notre Dame Press. (2013). *Medieval crossover reading the secular against the sacred*. Retrieved from <http://undpress.nd.edu/book/P03046>

**Process for Selection of Retrospective Materials:**

The first step in finding retrospective materials was considering what the gaps were in the collection. While this was a consideration for new items, as one of the major criteria for the collection development policy, it came to bear much more strongly when searching for older materials. Considering the specific needs of the British Medieval Literature section helped focus the search when sorting through the variety of sources presented through the selection aids. Much of the search was very similar to the process of selecting current materials. However, there was a greater emphasis on browsing rather than narrowing searches by dates. For both newer and older materials serendipity seemed to play somewhat of a role in locating potential items for the collection. Searching for one item could lead to a review in the same journal for another resource that was a better fit for the collection.

Browsing publisher backlists was better when approaching older materials as opposed to newer. Medieval Institute Publications provides nicely categorized lists of their older publications, which made it easy to browse in a focused way. Smaller publisher sites were one of the most useful selection tools for locating older material. Since many academic presses are so small, their back list titles are easier to sort through and are much more focused on the specific subject area.

Reviews were also particularly helpful in locating retrospective items. Without the limitation of currency, more options opened up and browsing through reviews brought multiple items to light that might not have been found elsewise. *Iter*, the medieval bibliography database, doesn’t offer full text, but its ability to sort by document type allowed for browsing by reviews, and its focus on medieval sources made it particularly useful for locating reviews even though those had to then be looked up individually. The third selection aid that was most helpful for retrospective items was WorldCat. Because of its ability to sort by subject headings and the variety of formats documented, WorldCat made it easy to sort through backlist titles and to locate more information on titles uncovered through publisher lists or reviews.

Publisher backlists, reviews, and WorldCat were more useful than other selection tools when it came to retrospective materials because of their ability both to narrow in on a specific subject and then to offer a broad selection within that subject area. Larger presses, other experts, and bigger databases were not as useful because of their broader scope. Once a title was located, they could be useful for finding additional information or other reviews, but for locating sources, more focused tools were superior.

**Selection of Retrospective Materials:**

**1.** A M Productions (Producer). (1991). *Early English aloud and alive: The language of Beowulf, Chaucer, and Shakespeare* [motion picture]. Films Media Group. DVD ISBN: 9781421363288

**Format:** Streaming video

**Description:** Dr. Gallagher presents an overview of the evolution of the English language through visiting significant historical locations, quoting well-known passages, and discussion the changes over time.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: Seton Hall offers a course on the History of the English Language as well as the graduate and undergraduate courses on Chaucer and medieval literature, making this a widely useful source for this collection with crossover appeal to other Departments. Specific courses this source connects to include Medieval Literature, Chaucer, The Drama in Great Britain I, Introduction to Drama, Introduction to Poetry, History of the English Language (Undergraduate, 2013, pp. 138, 140, 143). Chaucer, Linguistic History of English, Approaches to British Literature, and Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, pp. 82-83).

2. Quality of Content: The film offers accurate pronunciation along with useful charts, commentary and discussion of both the development of the English language and the important works that impacted and were impacted by its evolution.

3. Quality of product: As a streaming digital product with 24/7 access and public performance rights included in the cost, this offers a good value. The film itself is also of good quality with appropriate captions when necessary.

4. Originality: This fills a gap in visual media as well as providing the vocal demonstrations of Old and Middle English which is lacking in the collection.

5. Diversity: Connecting the history of the English language to the landscape and historical places provides a unique perspective on this topic.

**Selection aids used:**

1. A M Productions. (n.d.). *Early English aloud and alive “A great cry at dawn.”* Retrieved from

<http://www.amproductions.com/videos/artsandsci/english_language/beowulf.html> This site provides a summary of the film as well as a trailer and stills from the film to show the quality of the source.

2. WorldCat. (n.d.). *Early English aloud and alive: language of Beowulf, Chaucer, and Shakespeare*. Retrieved from [http://www.worldcat.org/title/early-english-aloud- and-alive-language-of-beowulf-chaucer-and- shakespeare/oclc/707966618&referer=brief\_results](http://www.worldcat.org/title/early-english-aloud-%09%09%09and-alive-language-of-beowulf-chaucer-and-%09%09%09%09%09%09%09%09shakespeare/oclc/707966618&referer=brief_results). This entry offers a summary and a listing of other academic libraries with holding of the item including Philadelphia University and Springfield College, helping to establish the usefulness of the film in an academic setting.

**Price:** $169.95/3 year streaming – Films Media Group. (2013). *Early English aloud and alive: The language of Beowulf, Chaucer, and Shakespeare*. Retrieved from <http://cambridge.films.com/ItemDetails.aspx?TitleId=10601>

**2.** King, P. M. & Davidson, C. (Eds.). (2000). *The Coventry Corpus Christi plays*. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications. ISBN: 158044055X

**Format:** Print Monograph

**Description:** This volume is a critical edition of the Coventry Corpus Christi plays which were performed annually during the Middle Ages. It includes notes, a glossary, select bibliography and valuable appendices with historical reproductions.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: Both graduate and undergraduate English programs offer courses dealing with the history of drama as well as medieval literature, of which these plays are an important part. They are also an historical influence on playwrights such as Shakespeare. Some of the curriculum connections are Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, p. 83), Medieval Literature, The Drama in Great Britain I, and Introduction to Drama (Undergraduate, 2013, pp. 138, 140).

2. Quality of Content: With scholarly notes and analysis as well as a bibliography and other resources, this volume is a valuable addition to the collection.

3. Originality: The British Medieval Literature section only contains one other version of the Coventry Corpus Christi plays. This volume adds new content with its notes and appendices of historical information.

4. Diversity: As there is only one other version of these plays, this volume adds additional perspectives and fills a gap in the collection.

5. Ongoing Use: Since these plays continue to be studied both for their own literary merit and for their influence on other literature, this volume will add ongoing value to the collection.

6. Currency: Since the volume of the plays which the Walsh Library currently owns was published in 1957, this version offers a more current perspective and scholarly study on these works.

**Selection aids used:**

1. Medieval Institute Publications. (n.d.). *Early Drama, Art, and Music*. Retrieved from <http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/mip/books/edam.html>. This listing of the publisher’s backlist titles in this genre offers a brief summary of each title along with pricing information.

2. Collett, B. (2001). The Coventry Corpus Christi plays (review). *Parergon, 18*(3), 218- 220. doi:10.1353/pgn.2011.0140. This positive review discusses the academic value of this volume, particularly in its critical notes and appendices. It points out a few minor issues in the introduction, but overall praises this as an excellent resource.

**Price:** $35.00 – Western Michigan University. (n.d.). *The Coventry Corpus Christi plays (CB)*. Retrieved from [https://secure.touchnet.net/C21782\_ustores/web/product\_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=241& SINGLESTORE=true](https://secure.touchnet.net/C21782_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=241&%09SINGLESTORE=true)

**3.** Regents of the University of Michigan. (2001, 2006). *Middle English Compendium*. Retrieved from <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mec/index.html>

**Format:** Web Source

**Description:** This site combines access to web versions of the Middle English Dictionary, a Corpus of Middle English prose and poetry as well as a HyperBibliography of Middle English prose and poetry.

**Selection criteria used:**

1. Curriculum Connection: With its full text options as well as a searchable bibliography and dictionary, this is a valuable resource for multiple course offerings including British Literature I, Medieval Literature, Chaucer, The Drama in Great Britain I, Special Topics in British Literature Pre-1800, Great Books of the Western World I, Introduction to Drama, Introduction to Poetry, Women and Literature I, (Undergraduate, 2013, pp. 138, 140), Chaucer, Linguistic History of English, Approaches to British Literature, and Studies in Medieval Literature (Graduate, 2013, pp. 82-83).

2. Quality of Content: As this compendium was gathered and designed by an academic institution and provides digital access to well-known and respected print sources, it offers quality information.

3. Quality of Product: The site is clean and easily navigable with a variety of search options and search tips and guidelines.

4. Diversity: The variety of options and resources available ensure that it will be useful for students and researchers on a variety levels.

5. Ongoing Use: Although the content of the site has remained the same since its launch, the site itself has been updated and maintained regularly providing assurance that it will be available on an ongoing basis.

**Selection aids used:**

1. Miller, W. (2000). Middle English compendium. *CHOICE, 37*(12). doi:10.5860/CHOICE.37Sup-146. This review notes the easy navigability and search capability of the site calling it “scholarship at its best” that takes advantage of web capabilities.

2. Rutgers University Libraries. (n.d.). *Middle English compendium*. Retrieved from <http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/indexes/mid_eng_comp>. This provides a summary of the source and its uses. It also provides evidence that this source is being used at a similar academic library.

**Price:** Free

**What I Learned:**

Because of the huge variety of selection aids available, selection can become quite complicated. However, I can also see how doing CM regularly would lead to a much better understanding of which ones are most useful and working through a company such as Baker & Taylor could also help to minimize some of the browsing challenges. I did notice that the further into the selection process I got, the better I was at knowing where to go and what selection aids would be better for the type of item for which I was searching. Journals or databases that make it easy to search for reviews such as CHOICE, Library Journal, and Iter made the process more streamlined and offered the additional advantage of reviews to help make selection decisions.

However, because only a fraction of items are actually reviewed, I had to remind myself to go to other selection aids as well. A number of the most useful sources I found, such as the Women’s Literature collection, were not reviewed anywhere but filled significant gaps in the collection. Reviews might make an initial search easier, but they cannot be the end all of the selection process as valuable resources will be missed by relying on them too heavily.

One specific issue that made the process more challenging than I anticipated was the excellent collection management process at the Walsh Library. The problem was not that I couldn’t find quality items that fit my CM policy so much as it was finding those the library hadn’t already purchased. I continually found myself selecting an item only to discover it was already in the holdings, even with items released within the last two months. I took this as a positive sign of my grasp of what would fit the collection. It did, however, cause me to be more creative with my selections.

The British Medieval Literature collection contains virtually no free web sources. I discovered a number of open access journals as well as databases and other freely available online resources, several of which I included. I was impressed with the quality of some of the free sources and feel that the digital collection would be enhanced by including them. The CDP was useful in directing my search as I focused on adding visual and audio materials to fill a significant lack of such items in the current collection. This caused me to lean more heavily toward these formats than monographs. Even with the print resources I found myself searching for items that would fill gaps in the collection. Although it was challenging, I do feel that I made strong selections that would add real value to the collection and to the academic goals of the library and the university.

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